



INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SICK
IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST

Fargo Diocese Liturgy Office

INTRODUCTION

Because of the health situation due to Covid-19, hospitals and nursing homes may not be allowing priests to visit sick patients. This brochure is meant to be a guide for families, and individuals, to prepare themselves and their loved ones for the possibility of hospitalization without the consolation of the Sacraments. Below are some principles and Catholic prayers to help us stay close to Jesus during these difficult times.

ACT OF CONTRITION

If the ill person is conscious, they should be encouraged to make an Act of Contrition. The Church teaches that the Sacrament of Confession certainly forgives the guilt of sin when all mortal sins committed since the last Confession are confessed with true contrition. However, if a priest is not available for Confession, a good Act of Contrition can also draw God's forgiveness to the repentant soul. Below is an Act of Contrition.

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Likewise, the Church teaches that the sacramental reception of Holy Communion gives grace to the soul when received in the state of grace, and with devotion. However, when one cannot receive Holy Communion, a Spiritual Communion can draw grace to the soul also, uniting us to God through charity.

Below is a prayer of spiritual communion.

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

PLENARY INDULGENCE

A Plenary Indulgence is a full remission of the temporal punishment due to sin committed. Our sins may be forgiven through Confession, but often we still need to repair the damage done by sin to ourselves and others. This is temporal punishment. During the Coronavirus situation, the Church has granted a special plenary to those who are dying, and cannot receive the Sacraments of Anointing and Viaticum.

To receive this indulgence, the ill person must simply have been in the habit of reciting a few prayers during their life, be in the state of grace, and be disposed to receive the indulgence. The Church supplies the regular requirements for a plenary indulgence, though prayer with a Crucifix is recommended to receive this indulgence.

OTHER SUGGESTED PRAYERS

Apostles Creed
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be
Divine Mercy Chaplet
Rosary

Prayer To St. Joseph For A Happy Death

O Blessed Joseph, who yielded up thy last breath in the arms of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me this grace, O holy Joseph, that I may breathe forth my soul in praise, saying in spirit, if I am unable to do so in words: "Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give Thee my heart and my soul. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you. Amen."

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches, because you have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Act of Hope

O my God, relying on your infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

Act of Love

O my God, I love you above all things with my whole heart and soul, because you are all good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you. I forgive all who have injured me and I ask pardon of those whom I have injured. Amen.

HOLY ITEMS TO HAVE IN ROOM

Rosary
Crucifix
Holy Water