



## World Day of the Sick 2025

Catholics are being urged to reflect during this year's World Day of the Sick on the "grace-filled encounters" which can emerge at times of adversity.

In his [message to mark the 33rd World Day of the Sick on February 11](#), Pope Francis reflected on this year's theme "Hope does not disappoint", taken from St Paul's letter to the Romans.

"How can we be strong, for example, when our bodies are prey to severe, debilitating illnesses that require costly treatment that we may not be able to afford?" Pope Francis wrote in his message.

"How can we show strength when, in addition to our own sufferings, we see those of our loved ones who support us yet feel powerless to help us?

"In these situations, we sense our need for a strength greater than our own. We realise that we need God's help, his grace, his Providence, and the strength that is the gift of his Spirit."

Pope Francis wrote that God remains close to those who are suffering in three ways: through encounter, gift and sharing.

"How often, when we care for those in need, do we discover love! We realise that we are 'angels' of hope and messengers of God for one another ... whether patients, physicians, nurses, family members, friends, priests, men and women religious, no matter where we are, whether in the family or in clinics, nursing homes, hospitals or medical centres.

"We need to learn how to appreciate the beauty and significance of these grace-filled encounters.

"We need to learn how to cherish the gentle smile of a nurse, the gratitude and trust of a patient, the caring face of a doctor or volunteer, or the anxious and expectant look of a spouse, a child, a grandchild or a dear friend.

"All these are rays of light to be treasured."

The Catholic Church's World Day of the Sick, established by St John Paul II, is held each year on February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. It is an opportunity to devote special attention to the sick and to those who provide them with assistance and care, both in health care institutions and within families and communities.

Archbishop Julian Porteous, the Bishop Delegate for Health for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, said hope lay at the heart of Catholic healthcare services.

“As we celebrate the World Day of the Sick in this Jubilee year – which has the theme ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ – we reflect on the hope that strengthens us in times of sickness,” Archbishop Porteous said.

“As the Holy Father writes, ‘God does not abandon us and often amazes us by granting us a strength that we never expected and would never have found on our own’.”

Catholic Health Australia CEO Jason Kara said World Day of the Sick provides much-needed focus on the needs and experiences of those who are suffering and acknowledges the hope and healing that is fostered by Catholic providers, even in the darkest, or most unlikely of places.

“Our staff and clinicians who work across our 80 hospitals, 350 aged care facilities, and throughout the community give of themselves every day to provide hope and comfort to those who we serve,” he said.

“The Pope’s message highlights the importance of the healing ministry, especially in the ‘dark night of adversity’ which we all face at different times of our lives.

“The legacy of our ministry and the people who have contributed to it across more than 186 years continues to guide us to the most difficult of spaces, where we are called to serve, accompany, and provide care.”

*Catholic Health Australia (CHA) has distributed specially commissioned lapel ribbons to Catholic leaders, politicians and members to wear on the day. CHA is Australia’s largest non-government grouping of health and aged care services, accounting for approximately 15 per cent of hospital-based healthcare in Australia. Our members also provide around 25 percent of private hospital care, five per cent of public hospital care, 12 per cent of aged care facilities, and 20 per cent of home care and support for the elderly.*

Media resources can be found [here](#).

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