

*Prayer for the
Right Use of Illness*

LORD, BLESS THE SICK. All who know
or feel that they are sick,
all who are in pain,
all who are about to die.

Bless them not merely with enough strength to
endure the pain,
bless them also so that they may learn
to bear it for you and
to see in suffering a grace.

Show them that every suffering has been
given a meaning by your suffering on the Cross,
a meaning that the Father has integrated
into the meaning of your own suffering
and has made useful for the redemption of the world.

Show them that, if they are willing
to suffer in your name,

pain and illness become fruitful;
that you can use them to help others,
to lighten *their* load,
to unblock paths
that would otherwise be closed.

Give them not only strength and courage but also
patience.

Give them, lastly, love for the sufferings
that are asked of them:
the love that can spring only from your love
and can bear fruit only together with your love—
even though this fruit is hidden from their sight,
even though they do not know where you
intend to use the grace that comes
from their suffering.

May your grace enable them to radiate such love
in the midst of their illness
that others are infected by it,
that their suffering helps
to transfigure the suffering of others,
that it reveals to the nurses and doctors who work
with them
a reality that until now they had not known,
that it becomes a fresh revelation to their visitors
of the meaning of life and death.

Give them all such a state of maturity
that they may accept absolutely everything
as coming from your hand

and see in every pain
something that surpasses all pain:
your grace. *Amen.*