12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care, May 4, 2017

“Let us not underestimate the power of so many voices united in prayer.” – Pope Francis

At the November national executive meeting, it was decided to once again call upon this power of prayer through 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care on May 4, 2017. This is designed to take place as a powerful lead-in to the National Hospice Palliative Care Week of May 7 to 13, 2017, (organized by the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association) as a profound witness to the sanctity of human life.

It is hoped that all members will find some way to support this day of prayer, either on May 4th or on a day during the week of May 7 to 13. The prayer can take place within a parish church, a home or elsewhere. Participation may include a large congregation, a few friends or solitary prayer at home. The 12 hours can be designed around local schedules.

In this “care kit” of information, there is a message of support from National President Margaret Ann Jacobs and an Information and Resources package in PDFs, which includes a press release, planning and promotion guides, information and links to palliative care resources, prayer resources and a petition (French and English versions) for circulation.

This information is available below:

- A Message from National President Margaret Ann Jacobs Page 2
- Planning Guide Page 3
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- Definitions Page 6
- Resources Pages 7-9
- Prayers and Reflections Pages 10-18
- Petition Instructions Page 19
- Printable Petitions separate file
- Poster separate file

An invitational YouTube video is also available on the national website as a lead-in reminder of the Day of Prayer.

Thank you to the many people who were involved in the creation of this care kit. It has been our pleasure to work with you and to work on this project for the League.

Fran Lucas, National First Vice-President and Chairperson of Education and Health
Becky Kallal, Sub-Committee Chairperson
A Message from National President Margaret Ann Jacobs

It is with pride and conviction that The Catholic Women’s League of Canada announces 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care 2017 on May 4th. We invite councils across the country to become actively involved in this initiative by inviting all parishioners, members of other churches and the community at large to gather in prayer on this day, or at some time during National Hospice Palliative Care Week May 7th to 13th.

Human life is a precious gift from God. However at end-of-life stages, our human weaknesses and frailty often leave us vulnerable. It is a difficult time of life where we need the reassurance that we will be treated lovingly and with respect.

Those of us who have witnessed the gentle affirming compassionate support/touch, offered through palliative care, have experienced first-hand the sense of respect, comfort and reassurance so welcome at such a fragile time in one’s life. This is not so for all Canadians!

Through our resolution, petition, personal letters, government visits and now our prayer day we are promoting a culture of life that includes quality palliative care for all citizens. We want all Canadians at end of life stages to experience the comfort, love and sense of accompaniment that we know is possible and that can truly reflect the love that God created in us and for us.

“… Come you that are blessed by my Father ... I was sick and you took care of me... I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me…” (Matthew 25:34-40)
Planning Guide

CWL 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care: May 4, 2017
National Hospice Palliative Care Week: May 7 to 13, 2017

National President Margaret Ann Jacobs invites “councils across the country to become actively involved in this initiative by inviting all parishioners, members of other churches and the community at large to gather in prayer ... promoting a culture of life that includes quality palliative care for all citizens.”

Suggestions for planning parish council events:

- Plan your event in concert with 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care day (May 4th), where possible, or during the week of May 7th to 13th.
- Invite members of the parish, Knights of Columbus, youth groups, family and friends to join you.
- Invite neighbouring parishes or other faith communities to join your council in prayer.
- Encourage participation in the petition to the House of Commons urging recognition and funding for hospice palliative care across Canada.
- Offer refreshments and a time for fellowship and information sharing.
- Distribute the Palliative Prayer Card to all members in your council.
- Encourage shut-in members to watch Vision TV’s mass on May 4, sponsored by the League and offered by National Spiritual Advisor Bishop William McGrattan (Peterborough).
- Supply brochures or information on local, regional or provincial palliative care facilities and services, where possible.
- Welcome and support those who wish to share their own experiences of giving and receiving care.
- Take a free will offering for a local palliative care facility.
- Discuss ways that your council can assist in this important work.
- Watch the Euthanasia Deception video in your council.

If you are active in social media, please share news of your event with #12hoursofprayer.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WINNIPEG, Manitoba—April 1, 2017 —The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, with over 82,000 members across Canada, encourages all people of faith to join nationwide in 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care on May 4, 2017. This day is designed to lead into National Hospice Palliative Care Week, May 7 to 13, 2017, (organized by the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association) as a profound witness to the sanctity of human life.

There is a pressing need for all Canadians to have greater accessibility to palliative care. This end-of-life care is true compassion. It allows individuals who are facing death to not be burdened by pain and suffering but to receive the necessary support that respects their human dignity both physically and spiritually.

Pope Francis emphasizes the need for prayer, mercy, reconciliation and compassion. “Let us not underestimate the power of so many voices united in prayer!” With one heart and voice, all people of faith are urged to focus on that power of prayer.

The prayer can take place within a place of worship, a home or elsewhere. Participation may include a large congregation, a few friends or solitary prayer at home. All people of faith are invited to join in this initiative and share their plans and programs with others across Canada by using the hashtag #12hoursofprayer.

Further information to help with local planning is available online at www.cwl.ca. Included are information sheets on palliative care with links to further resources, prayers and reflections, contact information for hospice palliative care associations and a printable petition (in French and English) urging the recognition and funding for hospice palliative care across Canada.

National President Margaret Ann Jacobs urges, “We want all Canadians at end-of-life stages to experience the comfort, love and sense of accompaniment that we know is possible and that can truly reflect the love that God created in us and for us.”

For more information, please visit: http://www.cwl.ca.

About the Catholic Women’s League of Canada

The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, founded in 1920, is one of the largest organizations of women in Canada with more than 82,000 members represented in every province and territory and the military. The League is organized and pledged to serve all citizens and has often received the commendation and keen appreciation of federal, provincial and municipal authorities for the voluntary services ably performed by its nationwide membership.

For further information or interview requests, please contact (204) 927-2310 or e-mail executivedirector@cwl.ca.
Promotion

Issue personal invitations wherever possible. It is an important opportunity for dialogue on the topic of palliative care and can be a welcome sign of hospitality.

Sample Bulletin Announcement

The Catholic Women’s League of Canada calls all people of faith to join nationwide in **12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care** on May 4, 2017, *(or on May xx, 2017, during National Hospice Palliative Care Week)* as a profound witness to the sanctity of human life.

All parishioners, family and friends are invited to join (name of council) in prayer and solidarity from *(time)* to *(time)* in *(location)*. Coffee and tea will be available. For more information, please contact *(parish office or CWL contact and phone number)*. Those unable to attend are encouraged to join in prayerful support.

Sample Brief Address/Announcement/Invitation *(approximately 2 minutes)*

The Catholic Women’s League of Canada calls all people of faith to join nationwide in **12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care** on May 4, 2017, *(or on May xx, 2017, during National Hospice Palliative Care Week)* as a profound witness to the sanctity of human life.

There is a pressing need for all Canadians to have greater accessibility to palliative care. This end-of-life care is true compassion. It allows individuals who are facing death to not be burdened by pain and suffering but to receive the support that respects their human dignity both physically and spiritually.

The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association notes that, “Support for hospice palliative care is almost unanimous, with the vast majority of Canadians (96%) being supportive, including 66% who are very supportive.” However, they also note that, “Only 19% say it is available to those dying of life threatening illnesses” and that “one-third of Canadians (34%) are not sure to whom hospice palliative care services are available.” Canadians both want and need palliative care.

You are encouraged to sign the **12 Hours of Prayer petition**, which will be available *(at the back of the church today/on May 4/other)*. It requests the House of Commons:

“**TO specifically identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service covered under the Canada Health Act** so that provincial and territorial governments will be entitled to funds under the Canada Health Transfer system to be used to provide accessible and available hospice palliative care for all residents of Canada in their respective provinces and territories.”

All parishioners, family and friends are invited to join *(name of parish council)* in prayer and solidarity on May 4*(th)* *(other)* from *(time)* to *(time)* in *(location)*. Coffee and tea will be available and there will be an opportunity to give a free will offering in support of *(local palliative care facility)*. For more information, please contact *(the parish office)* or *(CWL contact)*. Please join us in person or in prayer.

Pope Francis reminds us, “Let us not underestimate the power of so many voices united in prayer.”
Definitions

World Health Organisation (WHO) Definition of Palliative Care

http://www.who.int/cancer/palliative/definition/en/

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual. Palliative care:

- provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;
- affirms life and regards dying as a normal process;
- intends neither to hasten or postpone death;
- integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care;
- offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death;
- offers a support system to help the family cope during the patients illness and in their own bereavement;
- uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated;
- will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness;
- is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, and includes those investigations needed to better understand and manage distressing clinical complications.

WHO Definition of Palliative Care for Children

Palliative care for children represents a special, albeit closely related field to adult palliative care. WHO’s definition of palliative care appropriate for children and their families is as follows; the principles apply to other paediatric chronic disorders (WHO; 1998a).

- Palliative care for children is the active total care of the child's body, mind and spirit, and also involves giving support to the family.
- It begins when illness is diagnosed, and continues regardless of whether or not a child receives treatment directed at the disease.
- Health providers must evaluate and alleviate a child's physical, psychological, and social distress.
- Effective palliative care requires a broad multidisciplinary approach that includes the family and makes use of available community resources; it can be successfully implemented even if resources are limited.
- It can be provided in tertiary care facilities, in community health centres and even in children's homes.
Resources

Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA)

[www.chpca.net](http://www.chpca.net)

The CHPCA is the national voice for hospice palliative care in Canada. Advancing and advocating for quality end-of-life/hospice palliative care in Canada, its work includes public policy, public education and awareness. Established in 1991, the vision of the CHPCA is, “That all Canadians have access to quality end-of-life care.” This is certainly in line with Canadian thought as 96% of Canadians are supportive or very supportive of hospice palliative care.

CHPCA’s “Hospice Palliative Care Fact Sheet,” updated in the summer of 2016, gives information on access, demand, funding, an integrated palliative approach to care, raising awareness and many other topics. It can be downloaded at [www.chpca.net](http://www.chpca.net). Click on the “Projects & Advocacy” drop-down tab to access the National Fact Sheet & Advocacy Strategy, among a variety of other informative documents.

Information on National Hospice and Palliative Care Week can also be found on the CHPCA website through a side tab on the home page.

The CHPCA Marketplace (another drop-down tab on the home page) offers a wide variety of brochures, books and other media that deal with all aspects of palliative care.

Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF)

[www.colf.ca](http://www.colf.ca)


Also on the COLF website is its December 2016 letter to all members of parliament in which COLF expresses support for Bill C-277—An act providing for the development of a framework of palliative care in Canada. (Life Topics drop-down tab, then click on End of Life)
Canadian Virtual Hospice (CVH)

www.virtualhospice.ca

The CVH provides support and personalized information about palliative and end-of-life care to patients, family members, health-care providers, researchers and educators through a web-based platform. It is a reputable source for finding evidence-based information and support, whenever it is needed, wherever in Canada one may live.

The CVH provides an e-health feature called “Ask a Professional.” Through it, Canadians have direct access to a team of expert health specialists who can help them sort through issues related to death and dying. The information and support available at CVH helps make sense in times of confusion, offers compassion in times of isolation, and reassurance in times of anxiety.

In “Programs and Services,” CVH has gathered links to palliative care associations in each province and territory. Just click on the interactive map to find a list of provincial palliative care associations, regional palliative care programs, local palliative care programs and services, home care programs, bereavement services and more. Double click any of these to find detailed information for that province or territory.

Under “Books, Links and More,” CVH lists resources on many topics. “Asked and Answered” and “Most Popular Articles” also contain valuable information.

One item of particular interest on this website is “10 Myths about Palliative Care” found under the “Topics” tab. It is very well done and also directs users to further information related to each myth.

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**CWL Palliative Prayer Cards**

Prior to May 4th, distribute to every member the special palliative prayer card created especially to observe this day. These cards were distributed through the provincial presidents to diocesan presidents and then to councils.

Encourage members to carry this card with them on May 4th, and to pray the prayer every hour, on the hour, wherever they may be. Envision the tens of thousands of members praying in solidarity with you.

The beautiful prayer was written by National President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization Anne Gorman and National Spiritual Advisor Bishop William McGrattan. The card was generously designed and produced for the League by Edmonton Catholic Schools.
Possible Council Discussion Starter

Your council may wish to hold a discussion about hospice palliative care prior to hosting 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care so that all members feel fully prepared to participate. There can be feelings of apprehension and misunderstandings related to this topic, and a brief discussion in advance can help to dispel these.

You may wish to start by explaining what is meant by “palliative care”. Use the definitions and resources provided above, or a summary such as the one that follows. Then, offer some discussion questions for members to respond to if they feel comfortable, or to simply reflect upon. Close with one of the prayers provided and invite all members to participate.

Palliative care is a special kind of health care for individuals and families who are living with a life-limiting illness that is usually at an advanced stage. The goal of palliative care is to provide comfort and dignity for the person living with the illness as well as the best quality of life for both this person and his or her family. A “family” is whoever the person says his or her family is. It may include relatives, partners and friends.

An important objective of palliative care is relief of pain and other symptoms. Palliative care meets not only physical needs, but also psychological, social, cultural, emotional and spiritual needs of each person and family. Palliative care may be the main focus of care when a cure for the illness is no longer possible. Palliative care services help people in later life who are ill to live out their remaining time in comfort and dignity.

Palliative care services are helpful not only when a person is approaching death but also during the earlier stages of an illness. Palliative care may be combined with other treatments aimed at reducing or curing the illness, such as chemotherapy. Families also benefit from support when their loved one is dying and after his or her death.

Would you care to share, or reflect upon, a time when you have been involved in providing support to someone in palliative care or approaching death? What supports helped you through this time? What else could have helped you?

How was your loved one’s faith strengthened during his/her journey toward death? How was your own? Or those around you?

What was hardest for you in sharing your loved one’s journey?

Where were you able to experience joy in this journey?

Are there ways that our council could support hospice palliative care initiatives in our community?

Are there ways that our council or individual members could support those in our community who are caregivers to individuals in hospice palliative care? Or caregivers to those approaching death in their own homes?
Prayers and Reflections

“Two life moments are unparalleled in an awakening a sense of awe: beholding a birth, and standing in a presence of death. The mystery of death is illuminated by analogy to birth... Whether we hold a newborn infant or touch the hand of a person near death, a fundamentally similar awareness emerges: life is exquisitely valuable. Language stretches to express it. Life belongs in a wholly different genre of value than measurable, material, temporal goods.” -- Thomas Aquinas

Prayer for the Protection of Human Life

Heavenly Father,
Lord and Maker of all that is good,
fill our hearts with joy before the wonders of your creation.
Open our eyes to the presence of your beloved Son Jesus
in all those we encounter and especially in the weakest and most vulnerable among us.
Where we see life threatened, at its beginning or at its end,
or by poverty and deprivation, inspire us with love and mercy,
so that, empowered by your Holy Spirit,
we may work together to defend human dignity.
Help us to build a culture of life:
a culture in which each and every person is loved and valued as your child,
from conception to natural death, and in every circumstance of life.
Amen.

Mary, Mother of the living, pray for us!

from: Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF)

For those who wish to pray the Way of the Cross at sometime during the day, here are two beautiful versions that have reflections appropriate to the theme of the day.

A Physician’s Way of the Cross
Written by Thomas P. Bouchard, MD
Family Medicine Physician, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Excerpt used with permission from The Measure of My Days,* ISBN/Justin Press

The Way of the Cross Today: Reflections on Suffering in Sickness and Dying
Written by Sr. Nuala Kenny, SC, MD, OC, FRCP

*The Measure of My Days is a collection of stories about good deaths and how they are achieved in the face of, and through, suffering and loss.
Meditations for the Hour
You may wish to begin each of the 12 hours of prayer with the following brief meditations.

1st hour: We pray for the children who watch a family member or friend struggle with their illness. That we will reach out and comfort them with words and actions of love. We ask our Father to lift their spirit in knowing that true happiness will come for those who suffer when they return to their Creator.
Thank you, New Brunswick.

2nd hour: We pray for those who are facing the end of their earthly life and for those who care for them. In Food for the Journey, Sr. Juliana Casey, IHM, addresses the grace and courage they share. “Many dying persons are a source of wisdom and grace. Their own courage increases ours. Their dignity speaks radiantly of the image of God that we all are. ... Courage, finally, is grace. Given to us in God’s Spirit, anchored in belief in the Resurrection, courage sustains us before what will remain mystery until the end of time.” Thank you, Alberta Mackenzie.

3rd hour: Good and gracious God, who gave Jesus Christ the power to heal the sick, comfort the dying, sooth the suffering and give rest to the weary. In Your mercy, grant all caregivers the patience, love and compassion to provide strength and contentment for those approaching their final journey on earth. The day-to-day challenges that a caregiver is faced with are many. Let their eyes be open to all opportunities that surround them. Let them use them to interact and stimulate those in their care. Let them know that spending time with the dying is a blessing and a privilege, not a burden. Keep watch O Lord over all who watch, work and weep. Let Your healing power of love be the instrument that makes the earthly transition possible, prayerful and peaceful. May you know that as you care for others, God cares about you and loves you tenderly. Amen. Thank you, Newfoundland and Labrador.

4th hour: We pray for all families journeying with their loved ones through terminal illness, that the support and compassion shown to them in palliative care facilities will sustain them in their grief and sorrow of loss. That hope will abide in them of God’s loving grace.

5th hour: Touching is one of our basic human senses. We touch others and others touch us in different ways. We touch others physically by putting our arms around their shoulders, hugging them or kissing them. Others touch us by the look in their eyes, by the words they speak, by the acts of charity that they do for us. Touching is a beautiful means of communication. By our touch we can communicate comfort and support. We can communicate love and affection. We can communicate a sense of unity. When the woman with the haemorrhage touched Jesus cloak she was healed. We pray for all those who loving touch comforts those with terminal illness. Thank you, B.C. & Yukon.

6th hour: Heavenly Father, we come to you to help us understand the trials and tribulations that others are experiencing at this time with illnesses. Give us the wisdom to understand their pain and suffering. Keep us in your loving embrace and as we share that embrace with those in pain, may we experience your strength and mercy as they also experience it. O Father, let them find happiness and fulfillment in their lives so that they may rejoice when they come into Your presence. Thank you, Prince Edward Island.
7th hour: We pray for those who fear the process of terminal illness. May they find in the caregivers in palliative/hospice facilities a relief of the anxiety through the knowledge and support, both physical and spiritual, given them by the staff.

8th hour: We pray for the children who will accompany their parent through the process of terminal illness. May they be sustained in their grief by the support of family, friends and medical and spiritual personnel they encounter in the palliative care process.

9th hour: We pray for all palliative care/hospice facilities that they may receive the funding needed to adequately provide the necessary care of those journeying through terminal illnesses.

10th hour: For all families, physicians, health care providers and those involved in the palliative care programs. Send forth Your Spirit to all involved in the discussions and decision-making process of those who cannot speak for themselves. We pray to the Lord.

For all doctors counselling patients. May they always be aware of the patient’s feelings as well as the disease. We pray to the Lord.

For all caregivers, affirm their trust in the Lord. Rid them of all anxiety so that they can be attentive to the needs of their loved ones. We pray to the Lord.

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God’s Call. May we remain united in faith, always available and obedient to carry out Your work devoting ourselves to the needs of others. We pray to the Lord. Thank you, Nova Scotia.

11th hour: Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion — inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Thank you, Ontario.

12th hour: Thank You, Lord, for Your presence with us this day. As we depart from this space soon, we ask you to bless us throughout the remainder of the day and guide us safely home. Bless all who walk with someone who suffers. May Your Spirit guide them in their endeavours. We ask this in the name of Jesus, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Amen. Thank you, B.C. & Yukon.
The Ship
What is dying?
I am standing on the seashore.
A ship sails in the morning breeze and starts for the ocean.
She is an object of beauty and I stand watching her
Till at last she fades on the horizon,
And someone at my side says, “She is gone.” Gone where?
Gone from my sight, that is all;
She is just as large in masts, hull and spars as she was when I saw her,
And just as able to bear her load of living freight to its destination.
The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me, not in her;
And just at the moment when someone at my side says, “She is gone,”
There are others who are watching her coming,
And other voices take up a glad shout:
“There she comes!”—and that is dying.
—attributed to Bishop Charles Henry Brent

A CAREGIVER’S PRAYER
Heavenly Father, help me better understand and believe I can do what You ask me to do.
Forgive me for the times, even now, when I question Your judgment.
As I go about the many daily tasks of caregiving, give me energy.
As I watch my loved one oh-so-slowly walk across the room, give me strength.
As I answer his/her repeated question just one more time, give me patience.
As I look for solutions to whatever is the most recent concern, give me wisdom.
As I reminisce with him/her about the “good old days,” give me a moment of laughter.
As I get to know my loved one in a new way, seeing both his or her strength and frailty, give me joy.
As I sit beside my loved one’s bed waiting for his or her pain medication to take effect, give me comfort.
Lighten my burden, answer my prayer, and give me the strength to do what so often seems impossible.
Give me a quiet place to rest when I need it and a quieting of my anxieties when I’m there.
Change my attitude from a tired, frustrated and angry caregiver to the loving and compassionate one I want to be.
Remain my constant companion as I face the challenges of caregiving, and when my job is through and it’s time for me to let go, help me remember that he or she is leaving my loving arms to enter Your eternal embrace. Amen.

Monica Dodds (catholicherald.com/stories/The-beatitudes-and-a-prayer-for-caregivers,26621)
Reflections to Lead Each Mystery of the Rosary
The Luminous Mysteries

Leader: During our recitation of the rosary, we place our petition for increased palliative care and hospice care, and for the renewed protection of the rights of conscience for individuals and faith-based institutions, in Our Blessed Mother’s hands, to present to her Son. Jesus has promised that He would not deny anything that His Mother asks of Him.

1. **Baptism of the Lord**
   We pray today for those in palliative care. That they may feel the love and compassion that their faith can bring. We pray that they feel God’s love as they did on the day of their baptism.
   
   *Spiritual Fruit: Gratitude for the gift of faith; God will hear our prayers for palliative care.*

2. **The Wedding of Cana**
   We pray today for the children and spouses of those in palliative care. That they may find solace in prayer, and in the love of God the Father during this time of their lives. We pray that they find the support they need, so that they may bring comfort to those whom they love.
   
   *Spiritual Fruit: Fidelity; for continued commitment to the sanctity of life from conception to natural death.*

3. **The Proclamation of the Kingdom**
   We pray today for all health care professionals. That they may be able to care for their patients in palliative care with courage and compassion. We pray that they are able to continue their important work without the fear of having to go against their beliefs regarding the sanctity of life.
   
   *Spiritual Fruit: Desire for holiness; moving us to action in support of access to palliative care and protection of rights of conscience for individuals and faith-based institutions.*

4. **The Transfiguration**
   We pray today for the families and friends who accompany those walking through their last days. That they find the support they need as their loved ones take their final walk towards the Lord. We pray that they have the courage to accompany those whom they hold dear.
   
   *Spiritual Fruit: Spiritual courage; to support the sanctity of life in spite of contrary public opinion.*

5. **The Institution of the Eucharist**
   We pray today for those in palliative care. That they might wrap themselves in God’s love and offer themselves up to him as God gives himself to us in the Eucharist. We pray that comfort is found in the Lord.
   
   *Spiritual Fruit: Love of our Eucharistic Lord; providing strength to continue to speak for the vulnerable facing end of life.*

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Beatitudes for Caregivers
(Left side) Blessed are those who sleep poorly because they’re worried about their loved one or because their loved one wakes in the middle of the night and needs help, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Right side) Blessed are those who mourn because their loved one, though still alive, is slipping away because of dementia, for they will be comforted.

(L) Blessed are the meek who force themselves to speak up and speak out to make sure their loved one receives the help he or she needs, for they will inherit the land.

(R) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for answers to why this is happening to their loved one and how much longer it will go on, for they will be satisfied.

(L) Blessed are those who show mercy, kindness and compassion to their loved one, for they will be shown mercy, kindness and compassion.

(R) Blessed are those who keep clean a loved one who is physically or mentally unable to keep himself or herself clean, for they will see God.

(L) Blessed are those who help their loved one find moments of peace, for they will be called children of God.

(R) Blessed are those who are misunderstood, not appreciated and taken for granted in their role as caregiver, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(L) Blessed are those whose caregiving efforts are unjustly criticized—or who are falsely accused of not caring about others—because of your love for your care-receiver and your love for God, who has asked you to help his beloved son or daughter.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

Monica Dodds (catholicherald.com/stories/The-beatitudes-and-a-prayer-for-caregivers,26621)

Eight Beatitudes for Those Who Minister to the Sick and Elderly
Blessed are you who listen to your patients, especially those with constant complaints, for you possess the ears of Christ.

Blessed are you who see the hurts of your patients, especially those overlooked by others, for you possess the eyes of Christ.

Blessed are you who speak kindly to your patients, especially those plagued by fear or anger, for you possess the mouth of Christ.

Blessed are you who touch your patients gently, especially those bruised by insensitivity, for you possess the hands of Christ.

Blessed are you who think prayerfully of your patients, especially those alone and discouraged, for you possess the mind of Christ.

Blessed are you who show love to your patients, especially those with chronic illness, for you possess the heart of Christ.

Blessed are you who walk tirelessly to your patients, especially those with repeated calls, for you possess the feet of Christ.

Blessed are you who persevere in your ministry, especially with compassion to all patients, for you possess the healing presence of Christ, and yours is the kingdom of heaven.

from Caring for the Sick and Elderly; A Parish Guide by Sr. Marie Roccapriore MPF
Prayer intentions suggested for inclusion as General Intercessions

For our community of faith and each of us in our personal responsibilities. That by visiting the ill and the suffering, and by encouraging those who live with disabilities or depression, we witness to the love of God and the beauty of human solidarity. Let us pray.

For doctors providing care to the dying and the severely ill. That they promote treatments which respect human dignity and are an expression of hope and love. Let us pray.

For those who see in euthanasia an act of compassion. That the light of the Gospel transform their vision, allowing them to see the sacredness of all life from its beginning to its natural end. Let us pray.

For medical students. That, during the course of their formation, they meet courageous mentors who have the wisdom to educate and guide their consciences in truth. Let us pray.

For patients and their families who despair at the prospect of suffering and death. That the Holy Spirit open the eyes of their hearts to the meaning of suffering deeply united to that of Christ on the Cross. Let us pray.

For health workers and for all those who devote themselves to caring for the sick and the dying. That Christ strengthen their energy and fill them with love as they strive to love with his heart. Let us pray.

For legislators and judges whose decisions touch issues of life and death. That the Holy Spirit enlighten their minds and consciences by giving them the gift of discernment. Let us pray.

For those who work in the media. That they understand the full scope of the issues surrounding end of life care, and that the Holy Spirit enlighten their minds and consciences. Let us pray.

For those who impact the development of society and culture. That they open their hearts to the message of Christ and contribute to the development, in Canada, of a true culture of life. Let us pray.

“Life-Giving Love” A National Campaign for Palliative and Home Care: Against Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide from the Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF)
Prayer Service for Caregivers

Hymn: “People of Peace” or “Women of Peace”

Opening prayer

All: O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to live in peace by acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with You, our God. (Micah 6:8) We pray that You enlighten the eyes of our minds, so that we may see what hope Your call holds for us. (Eph 1:18) May we be firm in the hope we profess (Heb 10:23) and always ready to give the reason for the hope we have. (1 Pet 3:15)

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 131
Response: In You Lord, I have found my peace.
Left: O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. R
Right: But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me. R
Left: O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time on and for evermore. R
Right: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, R
Left: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

Antiphonal Psalm

Antiphon: May Your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in You.
Left: The Lord looks on those who revere Him, on those who hope in His love. (Ps 33)
Right: Our soul is waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. (Ps 33)
Left: For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. (Ps 84:10)
Right: O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in You. (Ps 84:12)
Left: The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. (Ps 9:9)
Right: Those who know Your name put their trust in You. (Ps 9:10)
Left: Make me know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. (Ps 25:4)
Right: Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation. (Ps 25:5)
Left: Blessed be the Lord, for He has heard the sound of my pleadings. (Ps 28:6)
Right: The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts. (Ps 28:7)
Left: Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who hope in His steadfast love. (Ps 33:18)
Right: Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in You. (Ps 33:22)
Left: For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from Him. (Ps 62:5)
Right: He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. (Ps 62:6)
Left: On the day I called, You answered me, You increased my strength of soul. (Ps 138:3)
Right: The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; His steadfast love endures for ever. (Ps 138:8)
Left: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
Right: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

Antiphon: May Your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in You.

Reading: Romans 15:13

Reflection: What is hope? Where does it anchor when immediate realities point to continued illness and death? How do caregivers help fan hope’s flame as patients address their changing conditions? Sister Karen Dufault showed that hope is a powerful and dynamic life force, a healing yet not curing asset, is operative during all stages of illness, influences coping and quality of life, and is influenced by others. Hope through the eyes of persons with a life-threatening illness is confident with an uncertain anticipation of future good. Hope is personally significant and desirable, and realistically possible. Hope has implications for interpersonal relatedness and is active within the context of actual or potential loss.

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: God establishes His people in hope. Let us cry out to Him with joy:

Response: You are the hope of Your people, Lord.

Leader: Palliative care is an approach that provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms, we ask that You give caregivers the insight to address the needs of each patient, for this we pray, R

Palliative care offers a support system to help families cope during the patients’ illness and in their own bereavement; we pray that caregivers give this loving and compassionate support, Lord, we cannot put days into their lives, but help us to put life into their days, we pray, R

Since palliative care is a public health issue, we pray that the information on end-of-life issues and pain relief be distributed to all people, R

For all caregivers, that they may balance care-giving and concern to maintain their own health, we pray, R

All: Lord, we pray that palliative care be integrated into the global curriculum of professionals in the health care system – including research, surveillance, public information and awareness, education in the best practices and quality care. This we ask through Christ.

Hymn: “All My Hope on God Is Founded”

Reprinted From: Prayers and Workshops for Women of Peace and Hope. The Catholic Women’s League of Canada © 2010 (available for free download at www.cwl.ca)
Petition Instructions

“The document must not be altered either by erasing or crossing out words or by adding words or commentary" as "any alteration will make the petition unacceptable."

“Also the petition must be free of any other matter attached or appended to or written or printed on the petition."

Each petition form must be printed and completed as a singled-sided document only.

Participants may sign the same petition only one time.

Reprintable petition forms in English and French are attached for single-sided printing.

Members are encouraged to circulate petitions at times that are convenient to them and well ahead of the deadline for submission in order to collect as many signatures as possible.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) supports this petition.

Please circulate, collect and return completed petition sheets to:

Nancy Simms
National Chairperson of Legislation
Catholic Women’s League
C-702 Scotland Avenue
Winnipeg, MB  R3M 1X5

Please return all completed petition forms by May 12, 2017.