

SUPPORT LIFE SUNDAY 2021

Supporting and honouring health carers

Liturgical resources

Sunday 10 October 2021

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

These resources have been prepared by Te Kupenga and the National Liturgy Office. Please feel free to draw from and adapt these resources for the particular circumstances your parish community may be in during October, including any restrictions on gatherings due to Covid-19 levels. You may wish to share prayers in your parish newsletter or on websites and social media if congregations are not able to gather on October 10.

READINGS

First reading: Wisdom 7:7-11 *I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded, and the spirit of wisdom came to me*

Psalm 90: *May the gracious care of the LORD our God be ours; prosper the work of our hands for us!*

Second reading: Hebrews 4:12-13 *The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.*

Gospel: Matthew 10:17-30 *For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God.*

REFLECTION

This year Support Life Sunday falls amid many challenges to life in Aotearoa New Zealand. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic requires the ongoing effort of us all to protect the vulnerable; while healthcare workers are also on the frontline in terms of the legislative changes to New Zealand's abortion and euthanasia laws. Health care workers are also among the first to see the impacts when racism breaks into deadly violence, as happened at two Christchurch mosques in 2019, and to alert New Zealanders when life-threatening diseases thrive in situations of poverty.

The change of focus represented in the change of name from "Respect Life Sunday" to "Support Life Sunday" calls each of us to be active participants in supporting life wherever we can. This year the focus is on supporting health carers, who are in the midst of actions

and decisions which affect the life and death of many. Some are professional health care staff, others are family caregivers working in a less visible way. All of our parishes, schools and communities have people who are carers.

The task may seem overwhelming for fragile human hands, but we are reminded in the Gospel that things that may seem impossible to human beings are still possible for God. The first and second readings remind us that praying, reflecting and discerning with the word of God brings wisdom beyond human intellectual knowledge and understanding, and the Psalm calls on God to prosper the work of human hands.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOMILY NOTES – LIVING AND EFFECTIVE LOVE

If I were to interview friends, family, parishioners and strangers on the street asking, “Do you feel fully alive?” most would smile giving replies that suggested that while they were breathing, the fulness of life seems to be elusive. The abundance of life we seek seems to be out of our reach.

However, as we are reminded in today’s Gospel, for us many things may be impossible, but not for God since God makes all things possible.

God knows how much we Kiwis like to be in the action. In difficult times we people of Aotearoa are at our best, setting aside our own needs to ensure that people who are suffering tragedy are cared for.

Think of communities who in recent times have suffered earthquakes, floods and fire, as well as victims of violence and pandemic. News stories at these times happily tell of the great Samaritans in our own land; people at the front line of many of these sufferings and who are the presence of Jesus incarnate anew for us.

We remember first responders and health-care workers, too often forgotten, until we and those we love, need their response and their care. They are indeed the word of God living and effective. Today we give thanks for their presence, their care and their inspiration and especially today we pray for them, for those they love, and for their intentions.

SUGGESTED PRAYERS FOR INCLUSION IN PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Please feel free to adapt one of these or to write your own

- Loving God, all things are possible for you. Bless health carers in the life and death decisions they experience every day.
- Loving Father, may your gracious care for all awaken us in the desire to support life wherever we see that it is under threat.
- God who became a servant to all, we thank you for the work of health carers, especially those from within our parish community. Grant them the gifts of wisdom and insight as they accompany people in times of fragility and vulnerability.

- Heavenly Father, you know the anguish of watching your loved son suffer and die. We ask you to bless family carers who look after loved ones every day. May they know the solidarity and support of the whole community.

PRAYER FOR USE AFTER COMMUNION OR AT HOME

Loving God, who calls each one of us to Support Life,
 We pray for health carers, who are with people making decisions at the beginning and end of life, and throughout its many challenges,
 We pray for family carers and for people who look after others at home every day.
 Bless and keep them in your love.
 Grant them wisdom and insight.
 Show us all how to support people who support people.
 Amen.

LISTENING TO LOCAL VOICES

You may like to consider identifying a health carer in your community and inviting them to share something of their work briefly after communion or after Mass, or alternatively on your website or in your newsletter

SOME SUGGESTED HYMNS

- Christ be our light
- Brother, sister let me serve you
- Prayer of St Francis
- Be still and know that I am God/I am the Lord that healeth thee
- Beauty for brokenness
<https://www.missionstclare.com/music/coll/collhtml/beautyfor.html>
- The Lord's my shepherd/Ko Hēhu tōku hepara
- Nearer my God to thee/Kia tata mai koe

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Focus on caring by using some or all of these activities. Adapt for age appropriate responses.

Using our senses:

What does 'Caring' **sound like**? OR (What does a caring person sound like?)

e.g. Are you OK?; How can I help you?; That looks difficult to manage; ... *more*

Seated in a circle build a sound montage of phrases that indicate a person cares for others.

Record on your smart phone.

What does 'Caring' **feel like**? OR How does a caring person use the sense of touch?

e.g. a hug; giving someone a hand up; walking slowly beside another; a warm blanket; ...

more

Play charades guessing how a person can show different ways to caring for one another.

What does 'Caring' **look like**? OR using the media what pictures suggest people care about others and locate the opposite of an uncaring setting.

Locate images that show what caring looks like and what it doesn't look like.

e.g. Create an art work which shows the contrast. Eg. Clear, flowing stream water v/s putrid rubbish filled drain; someone in a wheelchair by themselves at a sports game etc ...

What does 'Caring' **smell like**?

e.g. Lavender oil; warm soup; cup of Milo or tea/coffee; cut grass; ...

Try massaging in a few different oils onto your wrists OR perhaps make a small posy of scented flowers and donate to someone you know who could do with a sign you care today.

What does 'Caring' **taste like**?

e.g. Chocolate; nutritious food; cool fresh water; clean teeth; oranges at half time ...

Try a blindfold taste test: offer a selection of foods to a blindfolded group. Which one would you need if you were really tired and hungry?

When did Jesus care for others? Looking through the Gospel of Mark or Matthew...

Locate stories where it tells specifically how Jesus encountered others and showed his care and concern. Create a wall mural with these examples in spoken bubbles or on open hands.

Caring Prayers

Morning

Good morning God. Be with me today in everything I will face. Help me to learn well at school. I pray that I will be caring for others around me today. Amen

Daytime

Thank you Jesus for all the care I receive from those around me. May I show that I care about my friendship circle at school by being a good friend. Amen

Bedtime

Thank you God for being with me today. I pray you will help me sleep well tonight. I thank you that you love me and care for me. Amen

Two traditional Catholic prayers seeking care and protection

Guardian angel prayer

*Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
To whom God's love
commits me here,
Ever this day,
be at my side,
To light and guard,
Rule and guide.
Amen.*

St Patricks Breastplate

*Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.*