

Mission Together

Liturgy for the World Day of the Sick



Introduction for Teachers / Leaders

World Day for the Sick takes place on 11th February. The day was introduced by St. Pope John Paul II to help us remember to pray for all those who are ill and for their caregivers. He chose this day because it coincides with the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Lourdes is a Catholic pilgrimage site, where the sick from around the world travel to ask Mary, our mother, to pray with and for them.

In many parts of the world, where the state does not offer free medical care, the Catholic Church provides those living in poverty with vital access to doctors, dentists, medication, clinics and hospitals.

This liturgy incorporates our 3-minute film, 'Sister Sonia's Journey', which shows how a clinic in rural Malawi, backed by Mission Together, is changing the lives of the children there. You may wish to watch the film before the liturgy.

For this liturgy you will need:

- The film: 'Sister Sonia's Journey' found on the homepage of missiontogether.org.uk
- A copy of the Bible reading (see below)
- Six copies of the Prayers of Intercession. (see below)
- The Mission Together Prayer (see below).

Free posters containing this prayer can be ordered via our website

Setting the scene

Please refer to our guide 'How to Pray with Children' which can be found at missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources/

Entrance hymn or recorded music

Our suggestion: The first verse and refrain of 'As I kneel before you'.

Sign of the cross

Introduction for children

Today is a special day. It is the World Day for the Sick, when we ask Our Lady to pray with us for people all over the world who are unwell.

Bible reading

We begin with a reading from the Bible that tells us how Jesus gave his mother, Mary, to us, to be our mother, too. The passage we will hear describes a sad event. Jesus had been nailed to the cross and was nearing the time of his death. From high up on the cross he could see his mother, Mary, and his best friend John. Let's listen carefully now to what Jesus says to them both.

Print out the scripture given below and ask a pupil to read.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St John (19:25-29) *

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and some of the other women who cared for him. When Jesus saw his mother and John, the disciple whom he loved, standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to John, "Here is your mother." And from that hour John took Mary into his own home.

The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

* Scripture in this liturgy has been adapted from the New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)



Explain that when Jesus said these words, he not only meant that Mary was to be like a mother to John, but she was to be a mother to all of us. Just like any mother, Mary loves us and wants the best for us. That is why we can always turn to Mary and ask her to pray for us.

Mary cares for all of us, but she has a special concern for people who are sick, sad, or lonely. On the World Day of the Sick, Pope Francis encourages us to ask Mary to pray with us for those who are unwell.

As well as praying for those who are sick, we can help them in other ways too.

Ask: What else could we do to help someone in our families, or a neighbour who is unwell?

Possible answers: Visit them, make them a 'get-well soon' card, take them some flowers.

Ask: What might we encourage them to do in order to get better?

Possible answers: Visit the doctor, take medicine, rest, eat well.



Explain that there are some children living in poverty overseas who are sick but cannot see a doctor or go to hospital to get medicine. By supporting the charity **Mission Together**, we can help those children with our prayers and by sharing what we have.

In the film we are about to see, we hear how – with the help of children like you – **Mission Together** has helped to build a clinic in a remote village called Lisanjala, in a very poor country called Malawi, in Africa.

Show the film – 'Sister Sonia's Journey' can be found on the homepage of missiontogether.org.uk or via YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=IKaQoryBEKQ

Remind the children that Sister Sonia became a nun and went to Lisanjala, because she wanted to help others and to bring God's love to them. At Lisanjala she discovered that there were no doctors nearby and so when children were ill, they had to make a long and difficult journey to get to a hospital.

Ask: Do you remember what Lisanjala village is like?

Possible answers: It is remote, there is no running water, no electricity, in the rainy season you can't travel in or out.

Ask: What did Sister Sonia and the villagers do with help from **Mission Together**?

Possible answers: They built a clinic, hired doctors and nurses, and provided food and medicine.

Explain that with the help of children like you, **Mission Together** makes sure that the sick children of Lisanjala receive the care they need to get better. Explain that there are other children living in poverty overseas who also need our support but that, if we pray and share, **Mission Together** could help them too.

Let's start helping these children now through our prayers, remembering to ask Mary to pray with us too.

Prayers of Intercession – see pg 3

Conclusion

Today we heard that the World Day of the Sick is a special day to pray for all those who are unwell. We learned how we can help sick people through our prayers and kind deeds. We discovered that we can even help children living in poverty overseas who are sick by supporting **Mission Together**. And we remembered that Jesus' mother Mary is our heavenly mother too, who we can turn to and ask to pray with us and for us.

Closing Hymn Our suggestion: The last two verses of 'As I kneel before you'.



Reader: 1

We pray for children who are sick: those in our school, in our communities and sick children who live in poor countries. May they find the help they need to recover from their illnesses and grow healthy and happy.

We pray to the Lord. **R/ Lord, hear us.**

Reader: 2

We pray for adults we know who are sick. We remember especially adults in our families who are unwell. May they know God's healing and peace.

We pray to the Lord. **R/ Lord, hear us.**

Reader: 3

We pray for those who care for the sick: those who look after loved ones at home and all who work in our clinics and hospitals. May they be blessed with patience, kindness, wisdom and hope.

We pray to the Lord. **R/ Lord, hear us.**

Reader: 4

We pray for children around the world who are sad, lonely or scared. May God keep them safe and help them find joy and friendship.

We pray to the Lord. **R/ Lord, hear us.**

Reader: 5

We pray for Pope Francis, Sister Sonia, and for other missionaries who make God's love known in the world. May the Holy Spirit inspire and encourage them in their work.

We pray to the Lord. **R/ Lord, hear us.**

Reader: 6

We pray for one another. We ask that, as 'children helping children' we might make God's love known in the world too. Join us Mother Mary, as we say together the Mission Together Prayer.

**May all children
In the world
Share love
Share friendship and live
In the peace
Of God's love
Now and forever. Amen.**

