



BISHOP NOEL'S SIMARD'S MESSAGE FOR THE XXVIIIth WORLD DAY OF THE SICK 2020

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28).

Shortly before Christmas, after the mass I presided at the cathedral, I presented my condolences to a gentleman whose wife had died the day before. I knew him well since every Sunday he participated in the Eucharist and afterwards brought communion to his wife and other elderly people. He told me that he had visited his wife with Alzheimer's disease every day for nine years. I was moved by so much compassion and generosity in love. How many people today still do the same, expressing in all simplicity and humility the compassion of Jesus to those whom "illness places, in a particular way, among those who are tired and oppressed," as Pope Francis so aptly wrote in his message for World Day of the Sick 2020, a message that refers to Matthew's text mentioned above. And the Pope reminds us that it is from the gaze and heart of Jesus that the light comes in moments of darkness and the strength to cross the "the dark night of body and soul". The theme chosen for this Day of the Sick by SpiritualitéSanté and the Catholic Church of Quebec is centered on light: With full hands, I welcome, I share and I let the light shine!

Yes, with full hands, let us carry and share the light through these signs of attentiveness, this closeness and presence that sick people desire most and that bring them comfort and relief, as well as the strength to continue to live and taste life. And, in the words of Pope Francis, it is no longer a question of just caring but of taking care.

To all those who work in the world of health, to the natural caregivers, to all those volunteers who put themselves at the service of the sick in hospitals or at home, to those who bring communion to them, I say an immense thank you. By all your care, by all these signs of tenderness and compassion, by your courage and moral strength, you reflect the image of Christ the Good Samaritan; you allow sick people to go to Jesus ("Come to me") so that He may bring them rest and consolation.

✠ Noël Simard
Bishop of Valleyfield