

World Day of the Sick

BY KELLY FLAHERTY

February 11th is the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and for the past 25 years, it has also been known as World Day of the Sick.

Pope St. John Paul II instituted this special commemoration in 1992 as “a special time of prayer and sharing, of offering one’s suffering.” Pope Francis continues the tradition of keeping others in mind as we celebrate this great feast. His message for this year’s celebration is entitled “Amazement at What God has Accomplished: The Almighty has done great things for me ...” Lk 1,49.

With this theme in mind we must all look at how the Lord has blessed each of us; with health, wealth, spiritual gifts, teaching talents. Whatever our blessings might be we must look with amazement on how we have been blessed and ask how are we to use these blessings to help the sick among us both nearby and far away. The poor are to be considered most of all for they are truly the wealth of the church.

The Servants of Charity serving the poor in the Philippines have discovered an urgent need that must be filled. There are many people suffering from illness that only requires simple medications which they cannot afford. Brother Mauro Cecchinato has begun what is now called Good Samaritan Pharmacy to help provide medication to those poor who are critically in need. The sick and the poor of the Manila area will now have a place of hope and healing.

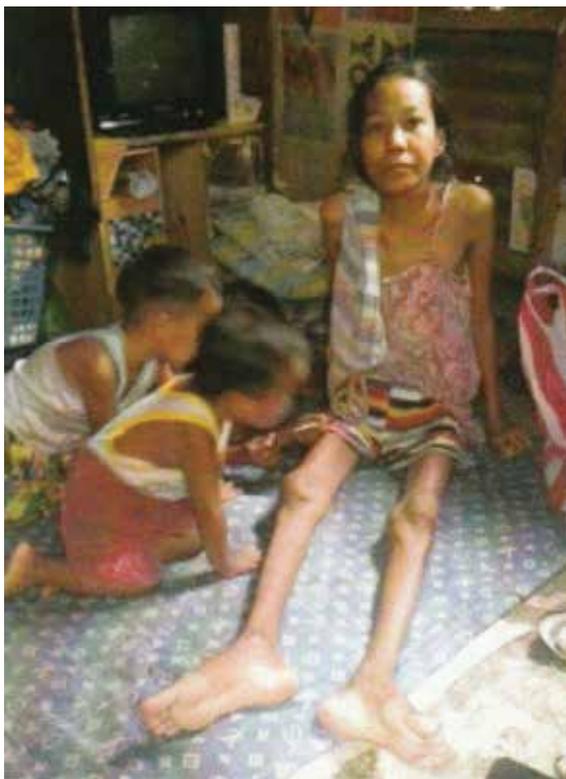
“I was dying and they gave me vinegar to drink. Only a small boy offered Me water in My agony.” (I Thirst by Joey Velasco)



“ I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME FOOD, I WAS THIRSTY AND YOU GAVE ME DRINK, A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME, NAKED AND YOU CLOTHED ME, ILL AND YOU CARED FOR ME, IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME.” MT 25, 35-36

With assistance from the German Procura of the Servants of Charity, generous supporters have come forward to help make Good Samaritan Pharmacy a reality. Gero Lombardo has been working tirelessly seeking donations both of money and medicine for this project. His most generous and eager supporter is the German Pious Union run by the Sisters of St. Josef at St. Trudpert Abbey. Almost an obvious pairing; an organization committed to praying for the suffering and dying providing the means to help ease their physical pain.

As we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes this year, remember in your prayers the sick that you know and those you do not. Offer a glass of water for that person dying of thirst beside you and a prayer that around the globe our brothers and sisters in Christ are doing the same for their needy neighbors. Most importantly, unite your own sufferings with our suffering Savior for the good of others ...for “whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” Mt 25,40



A malnourished mother slowly dies before her children's eyes. What does your conscience say?