



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 4: Building the Kingdom of God on Earth

8. The Apostolate to the Sick

Wherever men are to be found who are in want of food and drink, of clothing, housing, medicine, work education, the means necessary for leading a truly human life, wherever there are men racked by misfortune or illness, men suffering from imprisonment, Christian charity should go in search of them and find them out, comfort them with devoted care and give them the help that will relieve their needs.

Vat II *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 8



The tradition of the OFS...places great stress on charity toward the sick and infirm. Francis saw the Christ of the Gospels not only preaching the kingdom...but also going out of his way to relieve pain and sickness...**Secular Franciscans must make it a matter of special concern to visit the sick...with sympathy, encouragement and fraternal charity.** Nothing could be closer to the mind of St Francis than to see Christ in the sick and to relieve his pain. The merit of suffering is only increased by the smiles we bring to the faces of the sick and through the encouragement our sympathy brings to their hearts. Most of all, our prayers bring them strength to continue their present task in the Mystical Body.

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others. Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend towards the ultimate encounter with the Father. Rule 19

Foley, Weigel, Normile *To Live as Francis Lived* Reflection 43 (p 160)

Brother, let me be your servant,
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.

When we sing to God in heaven
We shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
We are brothers on the road;
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.

Brother, let me be your servant,
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
Speak the peace you long to hear.

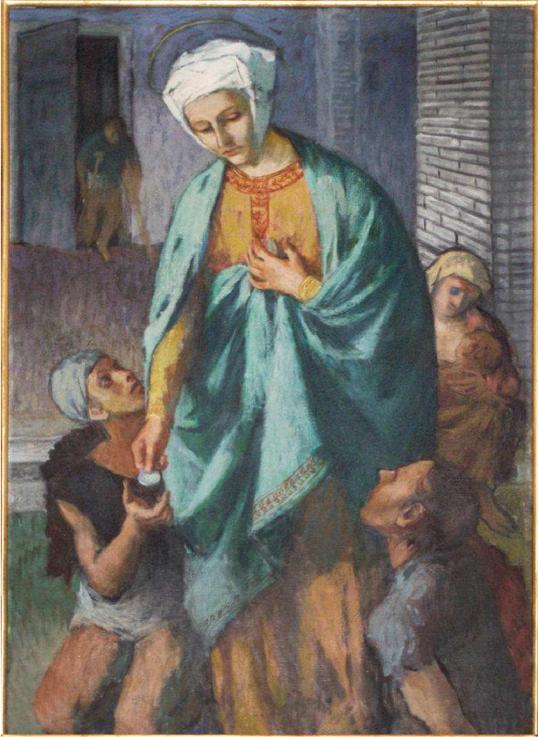
Richard Gillard

I will weep when you are weeping,
When you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through.

What is the Anointing of the Sick?

The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is the rite in which one who is seriously ill is prayed for by the Church and anointed with oil as a sign of healing (Cf. Jas 5.14-16)

Herbert McCabe *The Teaching of the Catholic Church* 125 (p 24)



Scripture—

Ps 34. 18-22

The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord rescues them from them all. He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken. Evil brings death to the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Jas 5. 13-16

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the Church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.