

2007-01-25 – PA - Speciales conceduntur Indulgentiae christifidelibus

Plenary Indulgences for the 15th World Day of the Sick

Since man fell in consequence of original sin which deprived him of both supernatural and preternatural gifts, God the Creator and Redeemer, in his infinite mercy, has closely united in a mysterious bond what justice demands and what forgiveness obtains; therefore, suffering that has a penal character becomes a favourable opportunity for expiating sin and for obtaining the growth of virtue, and hence, for attaining eternal salvation.

This disposition of divine Providence is fulfilled for the faithful by virtue of the Paschal Mystery of Christ, who, in dying, made himself the dispenser of life and in rising is the cause of the firmest hope in our future resurrection.

Therefore, if the very condition which subjects human beings to illness and the suffering that result from it is accepted through acts of Faith, Hope and Charity since, as the subject of God's most holy Will, it is a cause of greater holiness.

It is also necessary to reflect with great attention on the fact that human remedies have a limit, and that a time will therefore come which will bring the human being to the end of his journey on this earth. Sick people in this condition must be given the most careful treatment and the greatest love so that they may be comforted in their passing from this world to the Father by divine consolations.

And therefore - as the Church's prayer for the dying implores - the face of the meek Jesus Christ appears and his voice calling them to eternal glory and happiness resounds.

Holy Mother Church, in her knowledge of this, deeply desires that the annual celebration of the "World Day of the Sick" become an effective catechesis on the teaching, recalled here, of the treasure of Revelation and the value and role of suffering.

Consequently, in order that the faithful participating in the above-mentioned celebration - which will take place in the city of Seoul next 11 February, the liturgical Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lourdes - may be increasingly motivated by these sentiments, the Holy Father has wished to enrich it with the gift of Indulgences, explained below.

A *Plenary Indulgence* is granted to members of the faithful who, on the usual conditions (sacramental Confession, Eucharistic Communion, prayers for the Holy Father's intentions) and in a spirit of total detachment from any inclination to sin, take part devoutly this 11 February in the city of Seoul or in any other place established by the ecclesiastical Authority, in any sacred ceremony celebrated to implore from God the aims of the "15th World Day of the Sick".

The faithful in public hospitals or in any private home who charitably care for the sick as "Good Samaritans", especially those with incurable or terminal diseases, and, because of their service are unable to take part in the ceremony mentioned above, will obtain the same *gift of a Plenary Indulgence* if on that Day, at least for a few hours, they generously devote their charitable assistance to the sick as if they were tending Christ the Lord himself (cf. Mt 25: 40), in a spirit of total detachment from any inclination to sin and with the determination to fulfil as soon as possible the conditions required for obtaining the Plenary Indulgence.

Members of the faithful who, due to sickness, advanced age or other such reasons, are prevented from taking part in the above-mentioned ceremony, will obtain the *Plenary Indulgence* provided that, in a spirit of total detachment from any inclination to sin, with the intention of fulfilling the usual conditions as soon as possible and the desire to take part united with the Holy Father on that day, they share in spirit in the desire for the above-mentioned celebration and offer their physical and spiritual suffering to God through the Virgin Mary, "Health of the Sick".

Lastly, a *Partial Indulgence* is granted to all the members of the faithful who, from 9 to 11 February 2007, at any time, address fervent prayers to the merciful God with a contrite heart, imploring the above-mentioned benefits for the sick, especially for incurable and terminal patients.

This Decree is effective for this occasion. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary.

Given in Rome, at the Offices of the Apostolic Penitentiary, 25 January 2007, on the Feast of the Conversion of the Apostle St Paul.

Cardinal James Francis Stafford
Major Penitentiary

Fr Gianfranco Girotti, O.F.M. Conv.
Titular Bishop of Meta Regent