

Day 7: October 19

Intercession: May healthcare always respect God’s design and protect His gift of human life.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: Jesus’ care for those who were sick provided a model for all healthcare to follow. His healing mission wasn’t limited to physical afflictions. Rather, He reached “people at the deepest level of their existence,”¹ healing them in mind, body, and soul, calling them to new life in Him.

Healthcare professionals have been entrusted with “a special vocation to share in carrying forth God’s life-giving and healing work.”² The care they give must be in keeping with the well-being of the person in mind, body, and spirit³ and always have as its goal the protection of human life—never its destruction.

Yet in an age of rapid scientific and technological developments, as well as profound social change, this is not always the case. There are many instances in healthcare settings in which God’s design for the human person is violated. Abortion, assisted suicide, euthanasia, IVF, and contraception are just some examples among many. Authentic healthcare must always have as its goal the service and care of human life, and never its destruction.

Acts of Reparation (*Choose one.*)

- Sacrifice snacking today. Enjoy three small, simple meals but refrain from eating in between.
- Offer this “Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe” (usccb.org/prayers/prayer-our-lady-guadalupe) for today’s intention.
- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: When married couples have difficulty conceiving a child and turn to healthcare providers, they might be offered options that are not in keeping with Catholic teaching, like *in vitro* fertilization. Why do some reproductive technologies pose serious moral problems, while others respect God’s design and protect human life? Learn more in “Seven Considerations While Navigating Infertility” (usccb.org/navigating-infertility). Additional reading: “Life-Giving Love in an Age of Technology” (bit.ly/life-giving-love).

¹ *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, Sixth Edition*, p 6.

² *Ibid*, p 7.

³ *Ibid*, p 13.