



Pope's February prayer intention: 'For children with incurable diseases'

Pope Leo XIV releases his prayer intention for the month of February, and invites Catholics to pray with him to recognize the face of God in every suffering child.



By Devin Watkins, Vatican News

“Lord Jesus, who welcomed the little ones in your arms and blessed them tenderly, today we bring before you the children living with incurable illnesses.”

Pope Leo XIV opened his monthly Pray with the Pope video with that prayer for suffering children.

He recalled that their “fragile bodies” are a sign of Jesus’ presence and that their smiles in the midst of pain bear witness to God’s Kingdom.

“We ask you, Lord, that they may never lack proper medical care, human and compassionate attention, and the support of a community that accompanies them with love.”

Pope Leo prayed for the families of children who are ill and for their caregivers and doctors, expressing his hope that the Holy Spirit may enlighten their decisions and grant them patience and tenderness.

“Lord, teach us to recognize your face in every suffering child,” he said.

“May their vulnerability awaken our compassion, and move us to care, accompany, and love with concrete gestures of solidarity.”

In conclusion, Pope Leo invited Catholics to pray that the Church may know how to uphold fragility and become a source of comfort in the midst of suffering.

Millions praying for suffering children

A press release by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, which organizes the Pray with the Pope initiative, said Pope Leo is carrying suffering children in his heart this month.

The video accompanying his prayer intention was recorded in the Church of St. Pellegrino in the Vatican. As he speaks, the Pope can be seen holding drawings from children suffering from different illnesses who are being cared for at the Bambino Gesù Pediatric Hospital in Rome.

According to the World Health Organization, around 400,000 children and teenagers are diagnosed with cancer each year, making it one of the leading causes of infant and adolescent death.

UNICEF, the UN children's agency, says over 2.1 billion children and teenagers under 20 are affected by chronic illnesses or long-term health conditions. Around 1 million children under 20 die each year due to these illnesses.

As Fr. Cristóbal Fones, Director of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, said, "It fills us with hope knowing that more than 20 million people in more than 90 countries are joining in prayer for this intention. It means that this challenging and difficult reality touches their hearts and deepens their commitment."

Pope Leo's prayer for children with incurable diseases

Lord Jesus,

who welcomed the little ones in your arms and blessed them tenderly,
today we bring before you the children living with incurable illnesses.

Their fragile bodies are a sign of your presence,
and their smiles, even in the midst of pain, are a testimony of your Kingdom.

We ask you, Lord, that they may never lack proper medical care,
human and compassionate attention,
and the support of a community that accompanies them with love.

Sustain their families in hope,

in the midst of weariness and uncertainty,
and make of them witnesses of a faith that grows stronger through trial.

Bless the hands of doctors, nurses, and caregivers,
so that their work may always be an expression of active compassion.

May your Spirit enlighten them in every difficult decision,
and grant them patience and tenderness to serve with dignity.

Lord, teach us to recognize your face in every suffering child.

May their vulnerability awaken our compassion,
and move us to care, accompany, and love

with concrete gestures of solidarity.
Make of us a Church that,
animated by the feelings of your Heart
and moved by prayer and service,
knows how to uphold fragility,
and in the midst of suffering, becomes a source of comfort,
a seed of hope, and a proclamation of new life.
Amen.