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Spiritual first aid... -
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SPIRITUAL FIRST AID PROCEDURES

for

**LAYMEN
SOCIAL WORKERS
DOCTORS
NURSES**

by

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THE QUEEN'S WORK
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NOTIFY THE PRIEST ON EACH OF THESE OCCASIONS :

- 1) person critically ill,
- 2) again when dying, or
- 3) found recently dead (see note, next page),
- 4) before major surgery.

In cases 2, 3, 4 notify the priest even at night unless you are sure the person has been completely taken care of by him within the last few hours.

Note

When you take a "new case," find out at once what parish you are in and memorize the pastor's phone number. Your promptness in notifying him on the occasions listed above may mean the salvation of a soul. So frequently there are those who, apparently indifferent to religion or unwilling to discuss the matter, welcome nevertheless the help that can be given them by a priest in these important moments. Catholics expect to receive the "last sacraments."

MEANWHILE HELP THE PERSON, IF CONSCIOUS.

- 1) be sorry for having offended God, an all-good and loving Father, for having added by his sins to the sufferings of Christ;
- 2) make an act of faith or belief on God's word in all the truths He has revealed, and explicitly in at least the four basic truths (There is a God * Who rewards the good and punishes the wicked * There are three Divine Persons in God--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit * God the Son became man and without ceasing to be God died to redeem us). These truths are contained in the first few verses of "My Daily Prayer" (p. 5).
- 3) understand about and express a desire to receive baptism, if not baptized.

Baptize the person if danger of death is proximate and certain or if found recently dead and no priest is at hand, provided he has manifested the dispositions indicated above -- desire or INTENTION to be baptized, BELIEF on divine authority (faith) at least in the four basic truths, SORROW for sin together with the promise to abide by the laws of the Christian religion -- or, provided he has sincerely and prayerfully said "My Daily Prayer." The intention must be present for the sacrament to be valid, sorrow for sin and faith for it to be fruitful and grace-giving. But if the person clearly has at least the intention and is dying, baptize him absolutely in the ordinary way. If doubtful about his intention, baptize conditionally, saying: "If you are capable, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (see EMERGENCY BAPTISM, rear cover of folder).

Notes

Recent Death. -- "Apparent death" always precedes real death, which is the separation of soul from body. As long as the soul is present in the body, baptism and/or the last sacraments can be administered at least conditionally. In cases of sudden death this means up to three hours or more after cessation of all signs of life, though less than this when there has been a wasting sickness of months. In doubt phone a priest. Ordinarily the only certain sign of real death is general decomposition of the body.

Catholics are obliged to receive Holy Communion when in danger of death. (Fasting at this time is not necessary.) It will be helpful to suggest this in due time. At any rate, notify a priest.

IF UNCONSCIOUS AND PROBABLY DYING OR FOUND RECENTLY DEAD

It is important to remember that a person who appears to be unconscious may still be able to hear what is said and yet be unable to give any sign that he does. Hence, after phoning for the priest, recite distinctly into the ear short acts of faith, trust, and sorrow for sin.

Regarding baptism, if a person is found dying or recently dead and it is known or found out that he intended to be baptized, one is obliged in conscience to see that he is baptized. If nothing at all can be learned, say from bystanders or identification papers in an ambulance case, it is permissible and praiseworthy to baptize the person conditionally. It may mean the salvation of a soul. But before baptizing, recite clearly into the ear of the person: "My God, have mercy! I believe and trust You. I'm sorry for offending You. I will never offend You again."

PREVIOUS BAPTISM

If there is even the slightest doubt about the previous baptism of a dying person, or about its validity, one should tactfully suggest and help him express the necessary acts of faith, sorrow for sin, and determination to embrace again, and abide by, the laws of the Christian religion--recalling Our Lord's death for us on the cross and how in return we should love and trust Him and live according to His will. (If nothing else can be done, try to make sure the sick person makes earnest use of "My Daily Prayer.") ... Then, without disturbing him, when he is actually dying or found recently dead, one should see to it that he is quietly baptized conditionally. (See EMERGENCY BAPTISM.)

Doubt about the validity of a baptism can easily and with reason occur these days: Did the one baptizing have the intention to perform the rite as instituted by Christ? Did he say the correct words while making the water flow over the skin of the head? Did the person baptized, if he had attained the age of reason, have the intention to be baptized?

DYING INFANTS AND BABIES

--must always be baptized, i. e., any child below the age of reason. If you are not absolutely sure the baby was baptized at all or correctly and validly baptized, and a priest cannot be had in time, baptize without delay (see EMERGENCY BAPTISM). No dispositions of course are required of the child, since it has not attained the age of reason. The same is true also for those mentally deranged from birth, since they are equivalent to infants.

The child is dying! Its rights to heaven have complete priority over all other rights and considerations --even those of parents who, though perhaps here and now unwilling because not informed or misinformed, assuredly wish everything done to guarantee for their baby the vision of God for all eternity. The baptism is easily taken care of: If visitors cannot be asked to leave the room, the doctor or nurse facing away from them uses a towel with clean water to bathe the child's forehead, then squeezes it; when water is seen to flow, the words are said audibly but in a whisper.

The doctor or nurse must be concerned too about the case of an unbaptized child who is not in danger of death here and now, but will die before it reaches the age of reason--possibly at home after what was meant to be only a temporary release from the hospital. Procedure: Inform the priest (chaplain or parish priest) personally or by phone. But don't put it off.

Note: A child who has reached the age of reason is in the matter of its salvation an "adult." The procedures for helping it spiritually are the same as for adults (see pp. 1 and 2). Or better, follow instructions given in footnote on p. 6.

MISCARRIAGE

A miscarried fetus or embryo, no matter how small, must always be baptized--absolutely if certainly alive, conditionally if doubtfully alive. Maceration (putrefaction or advanced general decomposition) in this case is the only certain sign of real death. Break the membranes, or open the blood clot or mole, surrounding the embryo. Immerse it in a pan of water making sure the water contacts the fetus itself. Then, while moving it about in the water so that there will be a washing or flowing or "baptizing," say the words, usually those for conditional baptism: "If you are capable, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Finally, remove it from the water.

Never fail to follow this procedure even though told in a hospital to take the clot, etc. intact to the medical lab. The water must contact and flow on the fetus or embryo itself. Baptism on the covering membrane is no baptism. Those in a medical lab are not in fact interested in the "intactness" of the membranes. Hence break membranes, baptize, and if necessary explain afterwards.

ALWAYS HAVE HANDY A COPY OF "MY DAILY PRAYER"

--to give or read to the sick. Apart from anything else you can do for a critically sick patient of any faith, this is one all-important first thing. When said earnestly and fervently, or prayerfully listened to by one who cannot read, this prayer with its act of sorrow-for sin-from-the-motive-of-love-of-God (perfect contrition) and its expression of faith in the basic truths to be believed explicitly on God's word will be a wonderful help towards bringing him to, or keeping him in, God's friendship.

Available in twenty-two foreign languages, "My Daily Prayer" is printed on small, handy cards. Keep supplied with them! Distribute them to those who can use them, and before you run out send for more. The nurse or doctor on duty should always have a copy of this prayer in card form, for ready use. So often it is just what the patient himself wants, no matter what his beliefs; and it may be the only means of saving his soul. Particularly will any patient find comfort in the last part of the prayer, an appeal to God, an all-merciful Father, for help and forgiveness. The prayer is also available in Braille. (For copies, see address given in footnote, p. 5.)

RECORDING BAPTISM

Records of baptism are important, for the record, and to prevent repetition of a validly conferred sacrament. Send memo at once to chaplain or parish priest with names (yours, parents, witness, person baptized), dates of birth and baptism, and place (hospital and city). It will be helpful, too, to describe briefly just what was done and said in baptizing so that assurance can be had that it is valid. Since it is not customary to give a name in an emergency baptism, indicate on the memo the sex of the person if there is no name. Record the baptism also when possible on the patient's chart, so that if validly conferred it will not be repeated.



This Folder--

You can do much for the eternal welfare of others and undoubtedly bring God's blessing into your own life if you are alert to get copies of "Spiritual First Aid Procedures" to doctors, nurses, social workers, police and fire department personnel, married couples--in short, to anyone who comes in contact with the critically ill. The cost of the folder is negligible: 100 for \$1.25, 500 for \$5.50, 1000 for \$10.00. Send stamps or money order to:

THE QUEEN'S WORK
3115 South Grand Boulevard
St. Louis 18, Missouri

MY DAILY PRAYER

Basic Truths

I believe in one God. I believe that God rewards the good, and punishes the wicked.

I believe that in God there are three Divine Persons--God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

I believe that God the Son became Man, without ceasing to be God. I believe that He is my Lord and my Savior Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human race, Who died on the Cross for the salvation of all men, Who died also for me.

I believe, on God's authority, everything that He has taught and revealed.

O my God, give me strong faith. O my God, help me to believe with lively faith.

O my God, relying on Thy almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I sincerely hope to be saved. Help me to do all that is necessary for my salvation.

Perfect Sorrow

I have committed many sins in my life, but now I turn away from them, and hate them. I am sorry, truly sorry, for all of them, because I have offended Thee, my God, who art all-good, all-perfect, all-holy, all-merciful--my kind and loving Father.

I love Thee, O my God, with all my heart. Forgive me, I implore Thee, for having offended Thee.

I promise, O God, that with Thy help I will never offend Thee again.

MY GOD, HAVE MERCY ON ME

Copies of "My Daily Prayer" in English, foreign languages, and Braille may be obtained by sending a few stamps to: Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis, St. Clare Convent, Hartwell, Cincinnati 15, Ohio, or to its author, Rt. Rev. R. J. Markham, Compton Road, Hartwell, Cincinnati 15, Ohio.... Copies of the prayer in English as also of the "Prayer for Use by Critically Ill Children" (see next page) may likewise be obtained by writing directly to: The Queen's Work, 3115 South Grand Blvd., St. Louis 18, Missouri (price: 50 for 50¢; 100 for 75¢; 500 for \$3.50; 1000 for \$6.50).

PRAYER FOR USE BY CRITICALLY ILL CHILDREN

(E. g., accident or polio victims. See note below.)

Dear God--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--
I believe in You, and I want to be with You some-
time in heaven. I know You must punish us if we do
wrong; but You also reward us when we're good. I
believe, just because You have said so, everything
You have told us, and I'm sorry for hurting You by
doing wrong and not being good.

Please wash away everything--all my sins. I will
never do wrong again. Let me (through baptism)
become Your own child here on earth, so that some-
day I may be with You in heaven.

Dear Jesus, I believe You are God the Son, the Second
Person of the Blessed Trinity, Who while remaining
God became man and died for us on the Cross. I
love You very much! Please help me to love You
more and more!

→ Note on Baptism

In the case of a critically ill, unbaptized child
who has reached the age of reason, explain to him in
very simple language how God wants each of us through
baptism to be washed of sin and become a child of God
and an heir of heaven. Help him as far as possible
(1) to believe on God's word in the basic truths (There
is a God * Who rewards the good and punishes the
wicked * There are three Divine Persons in God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit * God the Son became
man and without ceasing to be God died to redeem us),
(2) to be sorry for offending God by doing wrong and
to promise to live up to the commandments of the
Christian religion, and (3) particularly to have the
intention to be baptized.

This is not hard to do. It's easy if you just chat
with the youngster, "You believe in God, don't you,
Johnny, Who rewards us when we're good but must
punish us if we do wrong?" etc. The all-important
thing is to help him want baptism. Keep in mind these
three things: belief (faith), sorrow, intention; and ex-
plain everything in a child's language. He will know,
for example, about our Lord when you recall Christ-
mas and the Infant Jesus.

Finally, help the child say the above prayer;
leave it with him so that he can say it often by him-
self. It will help guarantee the required dispositions.
Briefly, if nothing else can be done, at least help him
say this prayer with you phrase by phrase.

If the child is in danger of death, see to it at once
that a priest is notified. If danger of death is certain
and proximate and no priest is at hand, baptize him.
If doubtful about his intention, or if he is found re-
cently dead, baptize him conditionally.

Copies of the prayer for children's use may be
obtained from The Queen's Work (see footnote, p. 5).

EMERGENCY BAPTISM

(Summary of Conditions)

Certain and proximate danger of death. Priest not available. Have witness or two if possible without delay. . . . While pouring water on skin of head (forehead) of adult or baby, say: 1

"I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Ghost."

Memorize now, once and for all,
for easy and accurate recall.

If baptism is to be conferred conditionally because of doubt as to previous baptism (whether the person was baptized at all or validly baptized before), of life (whether the soul is still present when one is found recently dead), or of intention in the case of one who has reached the age of reason, say: "If you are capable, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." 2

N. B. -- Record the baptism (see p. 4).

1 If a fetus, break surrounding membranes, immerse, etc. as explained under the heading, "Miscarriage."

2 There can be no certainty of a valid baptism in the case of one who has reached the age of reason unless we are sure the one baptized had the intention to receive baptism, and this previous to his being baptized. Hence, if he is an older person, have him express this intention, and then urge him to recite "My Daily Prayer" (see p. 5). If a child, try very simply to help it express the wish to become a child of God and be washed of sin, etc. through baptism (see footnote, p. 6); then help it say the "Prayer for Use by Critically Ill Children," printed at the top of the same page. . . . If any doubt remains about the intention and the person is dying or found recently dead, baptize conditionally. . . . Should he regain consciousness, inform a priest at once. A dying person is to be rebaptized conditionally if his hither-to doubtful intention now becomes explicit. A nurse or doctor can and should tactfully help him make such an intention.

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