

HELP IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST

It often happens that the priest cannot be called in time. In such a case be calm and do not show anxiety or agitation. Be concerned with the only thing that matters, namely the eternal salvation of the sick person. Light the candles, give the dying person a crucifix to kiss and bid him have confidence in Jesus, who died in order to save us; and in his blood, which cries powerfully to heaven for mercy.

Sprinkle the bed and the sick person with holy water. Then make with him **Acts of Faith, Hope, Love, Contrition** and **Resignation to God's Will**. If he can speak let him repeat after you, if he cannot get him to follow the words in his heart. Let the acts be short, frequently repeat the name of *Jesus*. Speak slowly and clearly. As death approaches speak louder. Continue even after consciousness seems lost for the sense of hearing may be functioning even after the other senses cease to do so.

Ask those present to pray. Say the **Prayers for the Dying**; and after the beloved one has passed away say the appropriate **Prayers for the Deceased**. Even if the dying person has led a careless life, we ought to help him make acts of perfect contrition. Perfect contrition is the golden key that opens the "Palace of eternity." We need not fear that even the most ignorant will not be able to make an active perfect contrition. An earnest look at the crucifix, a devout recitation of the **Our Father, My Jesus Mercy** or the simple name of *Jesus*, with the grace of God, may contain perfect contrition.

