

For this brief pause, for this reminder of my own weakness and of my dependence upon you, I thank you, O Lord.

A day such as this, in which I endure a measure of sickness or unease, is a reminder that the redemption of all things is not yet complete. It is a reminder that this body will decline and one day fail, and so it is also a reminder that the ways I spend my days matter—for my hours, revealed like veins of gold beneath a rushing stream, are a limited resource to be purposefully mined or forever lost.

A day such as this is a reminder that good health and vigor are gifts to be consciously and gratefully enjoyed, and to be invested while they might, in eternal things. So let me finish this day, O Lord, wiser than I began it.

Let me live now, in light of the knowledge that a time might come in this life when I feel such sickness and discomfort for a long season, when I must adjust to a “new normal,” when my abilities are limited either by the slow decline of age or from some accident, injury, or disease. Therefore let me use the good health that I have while I have it, presuming nothing. Let me use it to serve well, to love well, to care for your people, your creation, to spend my allotted days
 cherishing hearts,
 creating beauty,
 bringing order,
 offering healing,
delighting in your goodness manifest to me in a million ways, and so to one day come to the end of my days having stewarded them well.

A LITURGY FOR A
Sick Day

FROM THE BOOK
EVERY MOMENT HOLY
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SHOW ME, LORD, MY LIFE'S
END AND THE NUMBER OF
MY DAYS; LET ME KNOW
HOW FLEETING MY LIFE IS.
YOU HAVE MADE MY DAYS
A MERE HANDBREADTH;
THE SPAN OF MY YEARS IS
AS NOTHING BEFORE YOU.
EVERYONE IS BUT A BREATH,
EVEN THOSE WHO SEEM
SECURE. SURELY EVERYONE
GOES AROUND LIKE A MERE
PHANTOM; IN VAIN THEY
RUSH ABOUT, HEAPING
UP WEALTH WITHOUT
KNOWING WHOSE IT WILL
FINALLY BE. BUT NOW,
LORD, WHAT DO I LOOK
FOR? MY HOPE IS IN YOU.
PSALM 39:4–7

Heal my body from this sickness,
O Christ My Healer.
Be gracious.
Give rest.

Raise me again to health with a heightened sense of thankfulness for the unmerited gift of well-being, and also with a greater sense of compassion for those who suffer lingering ailment, disease, or discomfort. Teach me by my own small sufferings to be a better minister and friend to those who suffer greatly.

So let even the unease I feel today work as your servant, accomplishing your better purposes in me.

Amen.