

Prayer for the Dying

Traditional invocations for the approach of death. The Raccolta (1910), no. 427, among the prayers for a happy death.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph,
I give you my heart and my soul.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph,
assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph,
may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

At the Bedside

Ask, when you can, whether your loved one would like you to pray.
Let one person lead slowly, so that voices do not compete.
Pause without expecting an answer or a visible response.
Choose familiar words and keep your presence gentle.

If you are overwhelmed, "Jesus, have mercy" is enough to begin. You may pray for someone even when you cannot be with them.

Call a Priest Early

Ask the parish, hospital or hospice to contact a Catholic priest as soon as serious illness or approaching death makes sacramental care necessary. Do not wait until the final minutes. Ask about Confession, the Anointing of the Sick, and Holy Communion as Viaticum.