

THE CONCLUDING RITES

BLESSING OF HANDS

PRESIDER: Those who care for the sick and suffering,
please come forward
and gather around the base of the sanctuary.

Pause for ministers to move.

After everyone is in place, the presider continues:

**Holding your hands in front of you,
flex your fingers, rotate your wrists.
Notice how your hands feel and how they move.**

**You have chosen to bless others with your hands
in the work you do.**

Consider these words attributed to Saint Terese of Avila:

**“Christ has no body now on earth but yours;
no hands but yours; no feet but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which the compassion
of Christ must look out on the world.
Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good.
Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people.”**

**Now we are going to bless your hands in recognition
of the Holiness of what you do every day.**

PRESIDER: Holy God,

bles + these hands.

Gentle these hands

as they offer comfort to those in times of crisis.

Purify these hands as they wash in to encounter each patient.

Open these hands

to collaborate well for the good of those [they] serve.

Strengthen these hands

when the mornings are early and the nights are late.

Settle these hands when it is time to rest.¹

Through Christ our Lord.

ASSEMBLY: Amen

After the blessing, the medical professionals return to their seats.

1. Excerpted from "Physician Reflection Tryptic Card," Copyright © 2017 by The Catholic Health Association of the United States.

PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

The bishop then continues:

PRESIDER: The Lord be with you.

ASSEMBLY: And with your spirit.

DEACON: Bow down for the blessing.
There is a slight pause for prayer.

With hands outstretched, he says:

PRESIDER: Merciful God,
your healing power is everywhere about us.
Strengthen those who work among the sick;
give them courage and confidence in all they do.
Encourage them when their efforts seem futile
or when death prevails.
Increase their trust in your power
even to overcome death and pain and tears.
May they be thankful for every sign of health you give,
and remain humble before the mystery of your healing grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ASSEMBLY: Amen.

PRESIDER: And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit
come down on your and remain with you forever.

ASSEMBLY: Amen.