

31 Days of the Little Way: A Sick Day

When our little boy is really sick, he needs to be held.

His cold has been getting worse. He creeps into our room during the night and lies on our floor next to the bed, just to be near us. I wake up and hear his rough breathing, so I take him to the bathroom and fill the room with steam from the shower. Then I bring him back to our bed and he sleeps a little.

As I lie there in the dark, thinking of all that I hope to accomplish the next day, I remind myself how blessed I am not just to be a mother, but to be this child's mother. I am so very blessed.

When the sun comes up much too soon and my cup of coffee is much too shallow, I try to hold onto that feeling.

As the day continues, and my baby boy needs me to hold him through the worst of the sickness, I push aside the other tasks that are calling my name. They have to be put on hold, because no one else can fill my role. And I am needed now.

Seeing him sick is so very sad. I wish I could take away the pain and the congestion and the taste of the bubble-gum-flavored medicine. I wish I could promise that he will be all better tomorrow. But I don't know.

All I can do right now is be with him.



And, as I sit with him on the floor, holding him, praying that he will fall asleep, worrying that my legs have already fallen asleep underneath him and I may not be able to move for hours, I realize there's something extraordinary about how much and how little is demanded of me.

I don't need to have the right words or clear ideas or a deep understanding of his illness. I just need to be with him.

And it occurs to me, maybe at times that's all God asks of us, too—just to be with Him, loving and listening and wanting to be close. Maybe that's all I really want from God, as well—just to feel His presence. What a gift He gives us in the Eucharist and in a thousand little encounters each and every day.

