

# The beatitudes and a prayer for caregivers

Bill Dodds | Catholic News Service

I don't recall my late wife, Monica, and I ever apologizing to Jesus or the evangelist Matthew for plagiarizing and doing a little rewriting of the beatitudes.

Perhaps I should assume that sometime since Monica's death in January 2013, she straightened the whole thing out face to face.

Two items remain among the most requested from our ministry to family caregivers.

## **Beatitudes for Caregivers**

Blessed are those who sleep poorly because they're worried about their loved one or because their loved one wakes in the middle of the night and needs help, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn because their loved one, though still alive, is slipping away because of dementia, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek who force themselves to speak up and speak out to make sure their loved one receives the help he or she needs, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for answers to why this is happening to their loved one and how much longer it will go on, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are those who show mercy, kindness and compassion to their loved one, for they will be shown mercy, kindness and compassion.

Blessed are those who keep clean a loved one who is physically or mentally unable to keep himself or herself clean, for they will see God.

Blessed are those who help their loved one find moments of peace, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are misunderstood, not appreciated and taken for granted in their role as caregiver, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you whose caregiving efforts are unjustly criticized — or who are falsely accused of not caring about others — because of your love for your care-receiver and your love for God, who has asked you to help his beloved son or daughter.



Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

### **A Caregiver's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, help me better understand and believe I can do what you ask me to do.

Forgive me for the times, even now, when I question your judgment.

As I go about the many daily tasks of caregiving, give me energy.

As I watch my loved one oh-so-slowly walk across the room, give me strength.

As I answer his/her repeated question just one more time, give me patience.

As I look for solutions to whatever is the most recent concern, give me wisdom.

As I reminisce with him/her about the "good old days," give me a moment of laughter.

As I get to know my loved one in a new way, seeing both his or her strength and frailty, give me joy.

As I sit beside my loved one's bed waiting for his or her pain medication to take effect, give me comfort.

Lighten my burden, answer my prayer, and give me the strength to do what so often seems impossible. Give me a quiet place to rest when I need it and a quieting of my anxieties when I'm there.

Change my attitude from a tired, frustrated and angry caregiver to the loving and compassionate one I want to be.

Remain my constant companion as I face the challenges of caregiving, and when my job is through and it's time for me to let go, help me remember that he or she is leaving my loving arms to enter your eternal embrace. Amen.

*Dodds and his late wife, Monica, were the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver (fsjc.org). Bill is the editor of My Daily Visitor magazine and his latest novels are Pope Bob and The World's Funniest Atheist.*

<b>What is most meaningful in the beatitudes for caregivers?</b>	<b>Where does the caregivers prayer hit the mark for you?</b>	<b>How can the group pray for you this week?</b>