# Prayer at the Time of Increasing Struggle with Illness

*By David Sparks, United Church of Canada minister, and Sheila Noyes, former co-president of Dying with Dignity Canada*

Loving God,

You know I have done everything I can to get better, *eating well, exercising regularly, sharing feelings and memories with trusted friends*, and you know, Loving God, that I continue to get sick. You know my pain level has increased and my mobility has decreased. I want my health to turn around and it will not! I am frustrated that I cannot get better! I shout, I scream, at the unfairness of it all.

I will not resort to unproven remedies and obscure therapies. I will trust my medical advisers and will faithfully follow their directives.

I will not bargain with you, Loving God, and promise prayer and church attendance in return for more time to be with family or for a restored life.

I will be straightforward with my nearest and dearest, *name, name, and name,* and not offer them unrealistic hopes.

I will rejoice in those commonplace routines and activities that I am still able to share with my family, *coffee around the kitchen table, browsing through the photo albums, a visit to the park,* but I fear the time when pain will turn the joy I feel now to a hard uphill grind.

Be my companion, Loving God, as I tread this difficult troubled path. In my good days I will know you in laughing friends and hugging family members. In the tough days you will be with me as I endure. You will still be with me when my living has fully declined into a painful, hopeless existence. At that time, Loving God, I know you will let me decide on the time and place of my death and will give me a little extra strength to prepare my loved ones for my departure and the grief that will surely follow.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. He trod the hard path to death, knew loneliness, and was let down by those who knew him best, but he came through gloriously. Amen.