

We give thanks to

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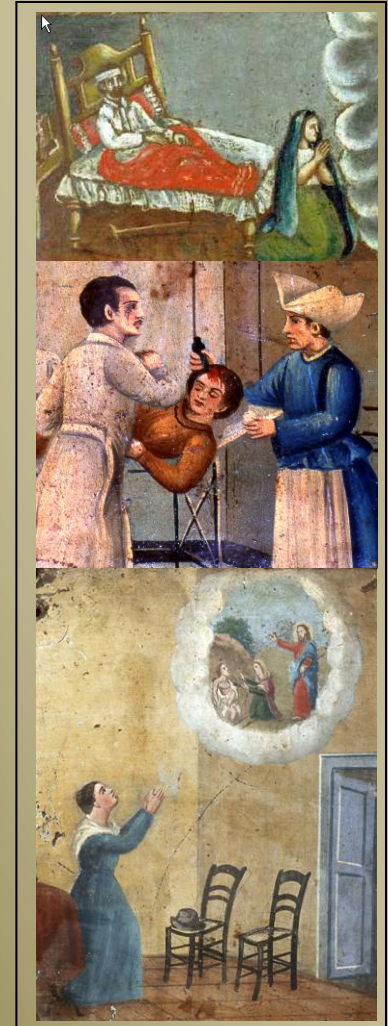
The National Library of Medicine
8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20894
301-435-5241

Exhibition web site at:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/exvotos>



Everyday Miracles: Medical Imagery in Ex-Votos



This exhibition was developed and produced
by the National Library of Medicine.

Curated by Jill L. Newmark

Everyday Miracles

The expression of our relationship with illness is wonderfully illustrated in the ex-voto, a small devotional painting that gives thanks to a saint or deity for a miraculous healing or blessing.



The faithful have always used prayer to invoke the aid of saints as a means to heal the sick and end one's suffering.



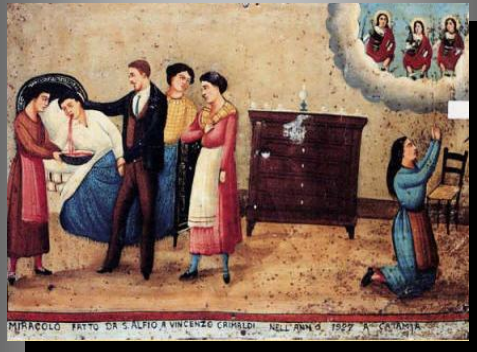
Courtesy Kira Phillips

Usually painted on tin, ex-votos are created as a personal expression of thanks and a public testimony to faith and gratitude.

Miracoli Giornalieri

Ex-votos offer a rare opportunity to view health, healing, and illness through the eyes of the ordinary person.

The tradition, believed to have originated in Italy in the 15th century, continues to be practiced today.



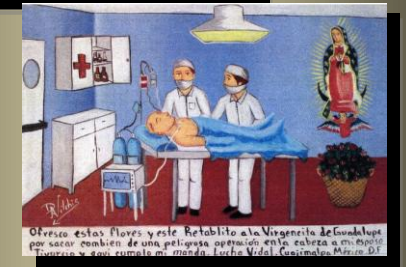
Vincenzo Grimaldi has tuberculosis. His physician and several female relatives tend to him in his home while a family member prays to the Martyred Saints Alfio, Cirino, and Filadelfo for his swift recovery.



Nunzia Leonardi undergoes an operation on October 14, 1914, Catania (Sicily).

Milagros Diario

The ex-voto tradition came with the Spanish to the New World in the 16th century where it flourished as an expression of the faithful.



The tradition can still be seen today in modern Mexico. Expressions of thanks are given not only for a healing miracle, but also for a special event or favor in an individual's life.

