



# 1ST WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS & THE ELDERLY

25 JULY 2021

I would like to invite the young to perform a gesture of tenderness towards the elderly, especially the loneliest, in their homes and in residences, those who have not seen their loved ones for many months. Dear young people, each one of these elderly people is your grandparent! Do not leave them by themselves. Use the inventiveness of love, make telephone calls, video calls, send messages, listen to them and, where possible, in compliance with healthcare regulations, go to visit them too. Send them a hug. They are your roots. An uprooted tree cannot grow; it does not blossom or bear fruit. This is why the bond and connection with your roots is important. 'The blossom of a tree comes from what it has underground', says a poet from my homeland. Therefore I invite you to give a big round of applause for our grandparents, everyone!

Pope Francis





**GOD HAS A LARGE POPULATION OF GRANDPARENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. NOWADAYS, IN SECULARIZED SOCIETIES IN MANY COUNTRIES, PARENTS DO NOT HAVE, FOR THE MOST PART, THE CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND LIVING FAITH THAT THE GRANDPARENTS HAVE WHICH THEY CAN PASS ON TO THEIR GRANDCHILDREN. THEY ARE THE INDISPENSABLE LINK IN EDUCATING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE FAITH. WE MUST GET USED TO INCLUDING THEM IN OUR PASTORAL HORIZONS AND TO CONSIDERING THEM, IN A NON-EPISODIC WAY, AS ONE OF THE VITAL COMPONENTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES. THEY ARE NOT ONLY PEOPLE WHOM WE ARE CALLED TO SAFEGUARD. THEY CAN BE THE PROTAGONISTS OF A PASTORAL EVANGELIZING MINISTRY, PRIVILEGED WITNESSES OF GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE.**

**FOR THIS I THANK ALL OF YOU WHO DEDICATE YOUR PASTORAL ENERGY TO GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY. I KNOW WELL THAT YOUR COMMITMENT AND YOUR REFLECTION ARE BORN OF REAL FRIENDSHIP WITH MANY ELDERLY PEOPLE. I HOPE THAT WHAT IS TODAY THE SENSITIVITY OF THE FEW WILL BECOME THE PATRIMONY OF EVERY ECCLESIAL COMMUNITY. DO NOT BE AFRAID, TAKE INITIATIVES, HELP YOUR BISHOPS AND YOUR DIOCESES TO PROMOTE THE PASTORAL SERVICE TO AND WITH OLDER PEOPLE. DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED, KEEP GOING! THE DICASTERY FOR THE LAITY, FAMILY AND LIFE WILL CONTINUE TO BE AT YOUR SIDE IN THIS TASK.**

**POPE FRANCIS**



The annual celebration of a day dedicated to older people is a way of incorporating attention for the frail elderly into the routine fabric of our pastoral work

Pope Francis





**THIS WORLD DAY IS NOT AN  
OCCASION TO PRODUCE  
A DOCUMENT ON OLD AGE, BUT  
RATHER THERE IS A MESSAGE  
ADDRESSED TO THE ELDERLY IN  
WHICH THE HOLY FATHER ASKS  
THEM TO SHARE  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAY  
THE CHURCH WILL  
GO IN THE FUTURE AND TO TAKE  
PART IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF  
THE WORLD AFTER THE  
PANDEMIC**

**POPE FRANCIS**

## **PRAYER FOR THE FIRST WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY**

I thank You, Lord, for the comfort of Your presence:  
even in times of loneliness,

You are my hope and my confidence,

You have been my rock and my fortress since my youth!

I thank You for having given me a family and for having blessed me with a long life.

I thank You for moments of joy and difficulty,  
for the dreams that have already come true in my life and for  
those that are still ahead of me.

I thank You for this time of renewed fruitfulness to which You call me.

Increase, O Lord, my faith, make me a channel of your peace,  
teach me to embrace those who suffer more than me,  
to never stop dreaming and to tell of your wonders to new generations.

Protect and guide Pope Francis and the Church,  
that the light of the Gospel might reach the ends of the earth.

Send Your Spirit, O Lord, to renew the world,  
that the storm of the pandemic might be calmed,  
the poor consoled and wars ended.

Sustain me in weakness and help me to live life to the full  
in each moment that You give me, in the certainty that you are with me every day,  
even until the end of the age.

Amen.

# INTERCESSIONS

WE THANK YOU LORD FOR THE GIFT OF OUR GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY. BLESS THEM FOR ALL THE LOVE AND CARE THEY HAVE SHARED WITH US OVER THE YEARS. BLESS ALSO THOSE WHO LOOK AFTER THEM. LORD HEAR US.

LORD GOD, AS OUR GRANDPARENTS STRUGGLE WITH THEIR AGING BODIES, PLEASE LOVINGLY CARE FOR THEIR HEALTH AND GRANT THEM ENOUGH STRENGTH TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL CHALLENGES. LET YOUR PEACE AND HAPPINESS BE UPON THEM, KEEPING THEIR MINDS AND HEARTS UNDISTURBED AND CALM, SUSTAINING THEIR LIVES AND HEALTH. LORD HEAR US.

DEAR LORD, WHEN FEELINGS OF LONELINESS BEGIN, LET THEM WAKE UP EACH MORNING FEELING YOUR EVER-PRESENT AND BOUNDLESS LOVE AND COMPANIONSHIP. SHOWER THEIR DAYS WITH YOUR COMFORTING PRESENCE. LET THEM PEACEFULLY REST AT NIGHT, CONFIDENT IN THE HOPE OF YOUR PROMISES. LORD HEAR US.

LORD WE ASK THAT YOU MAY BLESS THE GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY WHO, DUE TO THE DEATH OF THEIR OWN CHILDREN, HAVE NOW TAKEN THE ROLE OF PARENTS TO THEIR GRANDCHILDREN. LORD HEAR US.

WE PRAY FOR THE ELDERLY WHO DID NOT HAVE CHILDREN OF THEIR OWN BUT HAVE PLAYED PARENTAL ROLES TO MANY THAT THEY MAY ENJOY THE FRUITS OF THE LOVE THEY HAVE SHARED OVER THE YEARS. LORD HEAR US.

LORD, MAY GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY CONTINUE BEING A BLESSING TO THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM, ESPECIALLY OUR FAMILIES. SHOW THEM HOW TO LEAVE BEHIND A LEGACY THAT EMPOWERS PEOPLE AND HONOURS YOUR NAME. LORD HEAR US.

GRANT LORD ETERNAL LIFE TO ALL DECEASED GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY MEMBERS OF OUR FAMILIES WHOSE LIVES WERE REFLECTIONS OF YOUR LOVE IN OUR LIVES. LORD HEAR US.



**“I AM WITH YOU  
ALWAYS.” WORLD  
DAY FOR  
GRANDPARENTS AND  
THE ELDERLY.**



**SUMMARY OF ‘MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS’**





Dear Grandfathers and Grandmothers, dear Elderly Friends,

“I am with you always” (Mt 28) the Lord promised before his Ascension. He repeats those words to you today. I, as Bishop of Rome and an elderly person too address them to you this 1<sup>st</sup> World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly. The whole Church is close to you, cares for and loves you. This is a difficult time of trial especially for the elderly as the pandemic swept down on us like an unexpected storm. Many of us fell ill, died or experienced the death of spouses or loved ones. Others are isolated and alone for long periods. The Lord is aware and close to you.”

Tradition tells how St Joachim, Jesus’ grandfather, was feeling estranged as he had no children. Thinking how their lives were useless, one sleepless night, while filled with worries and longing, an angel from the Lord brought him a message. “The Lord has heard you.”

Pope Francis reminds us how the Lord is with us even at our darkest moments, as in the pandemic, hoping that those most alone will also receive the visit of an angel. He suggests that angels may have the face of our grandchildren, family or close friends and how we value their hugs and visits even though that may still not be possible.

The Lord's Word bring messages too and reading a passage from Scripture daily can bring comfort. It can also help us understand his message for our lives today. In every season of life we are called to be labourers in his vineyard. He is close now with new possibilities and ideas.

Today, at our older age, he still addresses us to "go and make disciples." Our vocation is "to preserve our roots, pass on the faith to the young and care for the little ones." No matter how old, whether alone or with a family, a young or older grandparent, independent or not there is a new vocation.

Proclaim the Gospel and hand down traditions to your grandchildren.

Recognising our uncertainties he writes, “You may wonder. How can this be possible, my energy is running out, how can I act differently, broaden my vision, care for the poor as well as my family? Isn’t my solitude a sufficiently heavy burden? Nicodemus asked, ‘How can a man be born when he is old?’ We can open our hearts to the working of the Holy Spirit who blows where he wills.”

He repeats his frequent previous observations that we will not emerge from the present crisis as we were before, but either better or worse and adds, “May this not prove to be another tragedy of history from which we learned nothing. If only we might discover once for all that we need one another and that in this way our human frailty can experience a rebirth. (Fratelli Tutti 35) We are all indebted to one another. We are all brothers and sisters.”

We all need to help build, in fraternity and social friendship, the world of tomorrow where we, together with our children and grandchildren, will live after the storm. We all have to take an active part in renewing our troubled society.

Pope Francis suggests especially to the elderly three pillars to support the new edifice. Dreams, memory and prayer. The Lord's closeness will grant the strength for this journey. "Your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men will have visions." (Joel 3:1)

The young can take the dreams of the elderly, of justice, peace and solidarity, for the new vision to build a future together.

He reminds us of the many hardships of life that the elderly have endured and survived. Dreams are intertwined with memory; painful memories of war that must be shared, so the young can learn to value peace. "Keeping memory alive and sharing it with others is a true mission for every elderly person."

He remembers his own grandparents who had to emigrate and leave everything behind. Many people have done so and continue to do so in hope for a better future. Some of those may be at our side, caring for us. Memory is the foundation of life and can help to build a more humane and welcoming world.

Pope Francis writes of prayer as a precious resource; “a deep breath that the Church and the world urgently needs.” He refers to his predecessor Pope Benedict a saintly, elderly person and man of prayer who said, ‘the prayer of the elderly can protect the world, helping it, perhaps more effectively than the frenetic activity of many others.’ In these difficult times for our human family, sailing in the same boat, across the stormy sea of the pandemic, your intercession for the world and the Church has great value. It inspires in us the trust that we will soon come to shore.”

To conclude the Holy Father addresses himself to, “Dear grandmother, dear grandfather, dear elderly friends.” He refers to Blessed Charles de Foucauld, a hermit living in Algeria, but who desired to feel himself a brother to all and who interceded for the poor. (FT 287) Finally Pope Francis asked that we all open our hearts in sensitivity to the sufferings of the poor.

“May each of us learn to repeat to all, and especially the young, the words of consolation we have heard spoken to us “I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS!” Keep moving forward!

May the Lord grant you this blessing.”

# 1<sup>ST</sup> WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS & THE ELDERLY

"May every grandfather, every grandmother, every older person, especially those among us who are most alone, receive the visit of an *angel*! At times those angels will have the face of our grandchildren, at others, the face of family members, lifelong friends or those we have come to know during these trying times, when we have learned how important hugs and visits are for each of us. How sad it makes me that in some places these are still not possible!"

Pope Francis



#IamWithYouAlways  
#7daysGPandE  
#mfloJOZI

# 7 DAY SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVE

18 - 24 July '21



In these 7 days we invite you to :

- ☺ Make and post a 1-minute Video Recording of your grandparent(s) or elderly loved ones, using the guide provided. Tech-savvy grandparents and elderly may of course record themselves.
- ☺ Make and post a 1-minute Video Recording of yourself to honour your grandparent(s) or elderly loved ones, using the guide provided.
- ☺ Use the #tags provided



#IamWithYouAlways  
#7daysGPandE  
#mfloJOZI





# GRANDPARENTS



If you are posting as a Grandparent, please share the following with us:

Your name, age and occupation.

Your fondest memory.

Your number of children and grandchildren.

The life lessons you want to pass on to them the most.



#IamWithYouAlways

#7daysGPandE

#mfloJOZI



# ELDERLY



If you are posting as an Elderly person, please share the following with us:

Your name, age and occupation.

Your fondest memory.

Insights about your "spiritual children".

The life lessons you want to pass on to them the most.



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# LOVED ONE



If you are posting as a loved one, please honour your grandparent(s) and/or elderly loved ones by sharing the following with us (also applies to the departed):

Their name, age and occupation.

How you are related to them.

Your fondest memory of them.

The life lessons you've learnt from them the most.



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