

WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY

26 JULY 2026 PARISH RESOURCE

Initiated by Pope Francis in 2021. Approved by Pope Leo with a special message available to download from www.vatican.va. Abbreviated version attached.

Suggestions and resources from MARFAM. contact toni@marfam.org.za



SUGGESTIONS FOR PARISHES:

1. **BEFOREHAND.** With parish priest, liturgy team, catechists, school, family ministry, sodalities,..... plan and prepare beforehand. Possibly organize a collection for poor and needy or to provide refreshment after the Mass. Prepare small memento.
2. **ON THE DAY.** Visit elderly and housebound, or bring to church.
3. Incorporate in bidding prayers during the month and especially on the day
4. Invite grandparents and grandchildren to read, share testimony, lead offertory procession.
5. Include the theme in homily, conclude with prayers. Grandchildren and grandparents can read or if printed in the bulletin the whole congregation can join in the prayers.
6. Pray a blessing over grandparents and all elderly.
7. Provide refreshments, especially for poor and old.

SPECIAL PRAYER MOMENT: BLESSING AND PRAYER FOR GRANDPARENTS AT GRANDCHILDREN'S PRAYER:

Lord, today we bring to you in prayer our grandparents. They may be here with us now, or may already have died and are now at peace.

As parents, they gave life and cared for our own parents. We thank you for them and for that gift. We thank you for the memories they created and that they have shared with us.

They were born into a world different to ours. As times have changed they may have struggled to keep up and sometimes lost touch. Forgive us for the times we have been impatient with them and help us to be generous with our love and care for them in their old age. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

GRANDPARENTS' PRAYER :

Heavenly Father, I give you praise and thanks for the great gift of life you have given to me. With wonder and awe I acknowledge that through my life you granted life to my children and they in turn became the parents of my grandchildren.

The world in which they live is different from my world and sometimes we do not understand each other. We need your gifts of acceptance and forgiveness so that we can be at peace. We need your gifts of love and joy so that together we may live your plan for our family and all the families of the world. We ask you to grant us these gifts in Jesus' name. Amen.

BLESSING : We pray for God's blessing on the grandparents of our families and community.

Bless with eternal rest those grandparents who have died.

Bless all grandparents with peace and contentment and an acceptance that their lives have been well spent in service to God and to others.

We ask St Joachim and St Anne, the grandparents of Jesus, to pray with us.

We pray too for all the elderly members in our families and community.

We thank them for all they have done for us over the years of their lives.

May Almighty God bless them all

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



OTHER MARFAM RESOURCES. from www.marfam.org.za

- **FORMAT FOR SIMPLE MOVEMENT OF PRAYER OF GRANDPARENTS FOR GRANDCHILDREN.**
- **THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY AND FAITH SHARING MATERIALS.**

MESSAGE FROM HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV FOR THE SIXTH WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY.

Feast of St Joachim and Anne, 26 July 2026. Theme: *I will never forget you (Is 49:15)*

EXTRACTS: Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord promises that he will never forget any of us, he has engraved our faces on the palms of his hands, his love is greater than a mother's love for her child. Each of us, and everyone can hear that "I will never forget you" spoken directly to them. Often in Sacred Scripture, especially in the Psalms, prayer springs from the despair of those who feel that their lives are of no interest to anyone and are being neglected. The lives of many elderly people seem to be covered by a veil that blurs the features of their faces and shrouds them in oblivion. This happens in homes where loneliness reigns and care facilities where each person's uniqueness risks being reduced to a bed number or an illness.

The digital culture multiplies connections and offers new opportunities for interaction; yet, the human heart retains an irrevocable need for genuine closeness" (Encyclical Letter *Magnifico Humanitas*, 239). The Church understands the suffering of her elderly members; she knows they are all too often viewed through the lens of stereotypes and considered a burden; a profit-driven economy weakens family ties; many elderly people are left behind by children who are forced to migrate or, in some cases, to fight in wars. For each of these reasons, she joyfully proclaims the Lord's promise: "But I will never forget you!"

Even if it does not come naturally to think this way, the truth is that even in old age we do not cease to be sons and daughters; therefore, the invitation to return to the arms of God, - whose love is both paternal and maternal - remains worthwhile at any age. For many, the discovery of God's tenderness takes place over the course of their lives, sometimes even in its final stages. It is increasingly common to reach old age without having had a genuine experience of faith. Old age, beginning with the questions that arise with greater urgency, can become the right time to begin or resume a spiritual life

The celebration of the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly on 26 July is an opportunity to rediscover that the Church is called to be a mother to all. May this day be an inspiration for everyone, especially the young, to revive the beautiful custom of visiting their grandparents, the elderly members of the family and even those who have no one to visit them. Bring them, through this message and your presence, the closeness and affection of the Pope. Do not be afraid of fragility! It is precisely this weakness that holds within itself a new potential, that also illuminates the other stages of life. When "we acknowledge our fragility, our hearts become open to supporting one another and to invoking the One who can grant what no human power can ensure: the profound reconciliation of hearts and, with it, true peace" (*Meeting with the Algerian community*, 13 April 2026).

Dear elderly brothers and sisters, I thank you for supporting me every day with your prayers, especially when you recite the Holy Rosary. I return this gratitude from the bottom of my heart and leave you with this prayer: May the Lord always renew us in faith, hope and love - He who never forgets us!

From the Vatican, 15 June 2026 LEO PP. XIV

GRANDPARENTS' PRAYER :

Heavenly Father, I give you praise and thanks for the great gift of life you have given to me. With wonder and awe I acknowledge that through my life you granted life to my children and they in turn became the parents of my grandchildren.

The world in which they live is different from my world and sometimes we do not understand each other. We need your gifts of acceptance and forgiveness so that we can be at peace. We need your gifts of love and joy so that together we may live your plan for our family and all the families of the world. We ask you to grant us these gifts in Jesus' name. Amen.

GRANDCHILDREN'S PRAYER:

Lord, today we bring to you in prayer our grandparents. They may be here with us now, or may already have died and are now at peace.

As parents, they gave life and cared for our own parents. We thank you for them and for that gift. We thank you too for the memories they created and that they have shared with us. They were born into a world different to ours. As times have changed they may have struggled to keep up and sometimes lost touch. Forgive us for the times we have been impatient with them and help us to be generous with our love and care for them in their old age. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



GRANDPARENTS' PRAYER :

Heavenly Father, I give you praise and thanks for the great gift of life you have given to me. With wonder and awe I acknowledge that through my life you granted life to my children and they in turn became the parents of my grandchildren.

The world in which they live is different from my world and sometimes we do not understand each other. We need your gifts of acceptance and forgiveness so that we can be at peace. We need your gifts of love and joy so that together we may live your plan for our family and all the families of the world. We ask you to grant us these gifts in Jesus' name. Amen.

GRANDCHILDREN'S PRAYER:

Lord, today we bring to you in prayer our grandparents. They may be here with us now, or may already have died and are now at peace.

As parents, they gave life and cared for our own parents. We thank you for them and for that gift. We thank you too for the memories they created and that they have shared with us. They were born into a world different to ours. As times have changed they may have struggled to keep up and sometimes lost touch. Forgive us for the times we have been impatient with them and help us to be generous with our love and care for them in their old age. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

