

Prayer of the Faithful – Fifth World Day for the Grandparents & the Elderly

27 July 2025

For Pope Leo XIV, that the Lord may bless and protect his ministry, and for the Church, led by him, that it may be more and more a welcoming home for grandparents and the elderly. Lord hear us.

For all of us elderly, that we may continue to look toward the future and that with our experience and prayer we may continue to strive to build a more fraternal world. Lord hear us.

For the youth to offer the bread of their vitality to the Lord, not keeping it for themselves but giving it to God so that He may multiply it and the world may rejoice in the overflowing joy of a new embrace between the youth and the elderly. Lord hear us.

For all of us grandfathers and grandmothers, that we may be a source of wisdom for our families and that we may learn to pass on the treasure of faith to our grandchildren and to the next generation. Lord hear us.

For the end of all war in every part of the world. We implore the Lord to grant consolation to those who have lost loved ones, healing to the wounded, a return home to prisoners, and that ways of dialogue and peace be found everywhere. Lord hear us.

Prayer for the Fifth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

27 July 2025

'Blessed are those who have not lost hope' (Sir 14:2)

How beautiful are these words of yours, Lord!

Help us to continue our pilgrimage through time,
animated by the hope that comes from You!

Help us in this divisive world,
to bring the hope of communion.

Help us in this world, wounded by wars,
to bring the hope of peace.

Help us in this world, which is dehumanizing,
to bring the beauty of an ancient smile.

Help us to be, for our grandchildren, for our loved ones
and for everyone we meet,
the memory of your tenderness.

Help us to bring, in a world distracted from You,
the Hope of a new life that only You can give!

For in You, Lord, nothing is lost

For in You, Lord, everything begins again! Amen

Grandparents Never Give Up – a Jubilee of Hope

This year has been designated a Jubilee Year of Hope — and it is also a Jubilee Year (25 Anniversary) for the Catholic Grandparents Association. As the National Grandparents Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine on 27th July approaches, coinciding with the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, the Church stands at a vital moment in its history. In an increasingly secularised world where individualism threatens the very fabric of family life, Grandparents have never been more essential. This special day exists because of faithful Irish Grandparents. In 2017, gathered at Knock, they began a year of prayer asking Pope Francis to establish a World Day for Grandparents. Not only did he grant their request, but he also included the Elderly. This spiritual legacy, born from Irish Grandparents' prayers and devotion, has now spread worldwide and is honoured in dioceses and parishes everywhere. Today's Grandparents face challenges unimaginable to previous generations: complex family structures, strained relationships, threats to life at its beginning and end, and a culture that dismisses faith as something of the past. Grandparents know better: faith is a treasure for today and tomorrow, and it is their sacred duty to pass it on. In this spiritual battle, Grandparents remain God's secret weapon — the quiet, persistent force keeping families anchored in truth, the glue that holds them together when all else falls apart. While others may stand by, Grandparents never do. They love deeply, pray fervently, and hold fast to what others have forgotten: that faith, wisdom, and life's experience are gifts that cannot be replaced by social media or artificial intelligence. At Knock, they gather to honour Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of Mary and Grandparents of Jesus. Here they find strength, courage, and confidence in one another's witness and prayers. It is a place where miracles have happened in families and in the Church, emanating from Grandparents' faith. This pilgrimage is their annual rallying cry — a chance to stand together against the tide of secularism, to renew their promise to pass on the faith, and to shine their light out to the world. This is their day, when they gather together in love, faith, and hope — a living legacy that now reaches parishes and dioceses worldwide. Grandparents never give up hope, and they never will. Families are encouraged to mark this day not only in the Church but also at home, uniting in prayer and gratitude for all that Grandparents do.

"Grandparents never give up hope." May Saints Joachim and Anne, parents of Mary, Grandparents of Jesus, bless Grandparents everywhere.

NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS PILGRIMAGE 2025

CELEBRATING THE WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS & THE ELDERLY

THEME: 'Blessed are those who have not lost hope' (cf. Sir 14, 2)

Sunday 27 July 2025

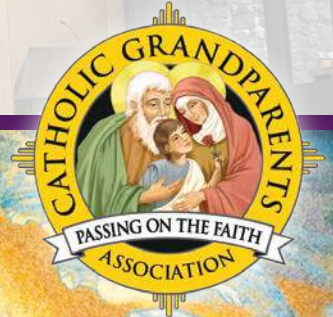


Photo credit: Sinead Mallee

- Chief Celebrant Archbishop Francis Duffy
- Choirs and Music by director Una Nolan
- Special Guest Dana Rosemay Scallon
- Anointing of the Sick in the Basilica - 2:30pm
- Holy Sacrament of Mass - 3:00pm
- Rosary Procession (weather permitting)
- Children's Prayer appeal inviting all children to write a prayer for their grandparents, send it or bring to the CGA Knock Shrine

Organise transport with your local parish.

World Day
for Grandparents
and the Elderly
2025



Plenary Indulgence granted for the occasion

THOSE UNABLE TO JOIN US IN PERSON CAN TAKE PART ONLINE AT WWW.KNOCKSHRINE.IE/WATCH

www.knockshrine.ie - Telephone: +353 (0) 94 938 8100



**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE LEO XIV
WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS
AND THE ELDERLY**

27 July 2025

**Blessed are those
who have not lost hope
(cf. Sir 14:2)**



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DICASTERIUM
PRO LAICIS, FAMILIA ET VITA

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV
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(cf. Sir 14:2)**

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Jubilee we are now celebrating helps us to realize that hope is a constant source of joy, whatever our age. When that hope has also been tempered by fire over the course of a long life, it proves a source of deep happiness.

Sacred Scripture offers us many examples of men and women whom the Lord called late in life to play a part in his saving plan. We can think of Abraham and Sarah, who, advanced in years, found it hard to believe when God promised them a child. Their childlessness seemed to prevent them from any hope for the future.

Zechariah's reaction to the news of John the Baptist's birth was no different: "How can this be? I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years" (Lk 1:18). Old age, barrenness and physical decline apparently blocked any hope for life and

fertility in these men and women. The question that Nicodemus asked Jesus when the Master spoke to him of being “born again” also seems purely rhetorical: “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” (Jn 3:4). Yet whenever we think that things cannot change, the Lord surprises us with an act of saving power.

The elderly as signs of hope

In the Bible, God repeatedly demonstrates his providential care by turning to people in their later years. This was the case not only with Abraham, Sarah, Zechariah and Elizabeth, but also with Moses, who was called to set his people free when he was already eighty years old (cf. Ex 7:7). God thus teaches us that, in his eyes, old age is a time of blessing and grace, and that the elderly are, for him, *the first witnesses of hope*. Augustine asks, “What do we mean by old age?” He tells us that God himself answers the question: “Let your strength fail, so that my strength may abide within you, and you can say with the Apostle, ‘When I am weak, then I am strong’” (*Super Ps. 70,11*). The increasing number of elderly people is a sign of the times that we are called to discern, in order to interpret properly this moment of history.

The life of the Church and the world can only be understood in light of the passage of generations. Embracing the elderly helps us to

understand that life is more than just the present moment, and should not be wasted in superficial encounters and fleeting relationships. Instead, life is constantly pointing us toward the future. In the book of Genesis, we find the moving episode of the blessing given by the aged Jacob to his grandchildren, the sons of Joseph; his words are an appeal to look to the future with hope, as the time when God's promises will be fulfilled (cf. Gen 48:8-20). If it is true that the weakness of the elderly needs the strength of the young, it is equally true that the inexperience of the young needs the witness of the elderly in order to build the future with wisdom. How often our grandparents have been for us examples of faith and devotion, civic virtue and social commitment, memory and perseverance amid trials! The precious legacy that they have handed down to us with hope and love will always be a source of gratitude and a summons to perseverance.

Signs of hope for the elderly

From biblical times, the Jubilee has been understood as a time of liberation. Slaves were freed, debts were forgiven and land was returned to its original owners. The Jubilee was a time when the social order willed by God was restored, and inequalities and injustices accumulated over the years were remedied. Jesus evoked those moments of liberation when, in the synagogue of Nazareth, he proclaimed good news to the poor, sight to the blind and freedom for prisoners and the oppressed (cf. Lk 4:16-21).

Looking at the elderly in the spirit of this Jubilee, we are called to help them experience liberation, especially from loneliness and abandonment. This year is a fitting time to do so. God's fidelity to his promises teaches us that there is a blessedness in old age, an authentic evangelical joy inspiring us to break through the barriers of indifference in which the elderly often find themselves enclosed. Our societies, everywhere in the world, are growing all too accustomed to letting this significant and enriching part of their life be marginalized and forgotten.

Given this situation, a change of pace is needed that would be readily seen in an assumption of responsibility on the part of the whole Church. Every parish, association and ecclesial group is called to become a protagonist in a "revolution" of gratitude and care, to be brought about by regular visits to the elderly, the creation of networks of support and prayer for them and with them, and the forging of relationships that can restore hope and dignity to those who feel forgotten. Christian hope always urges us to be more daring, to think big, to be dissatisfied with things the way they are. In this case, it urges us to work for a change that can restore the esteem and affection to which the elderly are entitled.

That is why Pope Francis wanted the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly to be

celebrated primarily through an effort to seek out elderly persons who are living alone. For this reason, those who are unable to come to Rome on pilgrimage during this Holy Year may “obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if they visit, for an appropriate amount of time, the elderly who are alone... making, in a sense, a pilgrimage to Christ present in them (cf. Mt 25:34-36)” (APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY, *Norms for the Granting of the Jubilee Indulgence*, III). Visiting an elderly person is a way of encountering Jesus, who frees us from indifference and loneliness.

As elderly persons, we can hope

The Book of Sirach calls blessed those who have not lost hope (cf. 14:2). Perhaps, especially if our lives are long, we may be tempted to look not to the future but to the past. Yet, as Pope Francis wrote during his last hospitalization, “our bodies are weak, but even so, nothing can prevent us from loving, praying, giving ourselves, being there for one another, in faith, as shining signs of hope” (*Angelus*, 16 March 2025). We possess a freedom that no difficulty can rob us of: it is the freedom to love and to pray. Everyone, always, can love and pray.

Our affection for our loved ones – for the wife or husband with whom we have spent so much of our lives, for our children, for our grandchildren who brighten our days – does not fade when our strength wanes. Indeed, their own

affection often revives our energy and brings us hope and comfort.

These signs of living love, which have their roots in God himself, give us courage and remind us that “even if our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day” (2 Cor 4:16). Especially as we grow older, let us press forward with confidence in the Lord. May we be renewed each day by our encounter with him in prayer and in Holy Mass. Let us lovingly pass on the faith we have lived for so many years, in our families and in our daily encounter with others. May we always praise God for his goodness, cultivate unity with our loved ones, open our hearts to those who are far away and, in particular, to all those in need. In this way, we will be signs of hope, whatever our age.

From the Vatican, 26 June 2025



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