

Prayer for World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

The Vatican Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life on Friday released the video-prayer for the Catholic Church's first World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which will be observed worldwide on Sunday, July 25.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CRq0gx1o4UK/>

Vatican News By Robin Gomes 23 July 2021, 14:00

"I thank You, Lord, for the comfort of Your presence." These are the opening words of the prayer for World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly that the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life released on Friday in a video format. Led by Pope Francis in Spanish, the video-prayer continues in French, English, Portuguese and Italian, recited by 21 grandparents and elderly men and women from around the globe, including 4 couples. Among them is also 101-year-old retired Canadian Bishop Laurent Noël op of Trois-Rivières, Québec.

Gratitude

Pope Francis starts the prayer in Spanish thanking the Lord for the comfort of His presence which provides hope and confidence even in moments of loneliness. The Pontiff, who is 84, recalls that the Lord has been his rock and fortress since his youthful days.

Then other languages follow in turns, expressing gratitude for the gift of the family and long life, for life's joys and difficulties and for helping in the realization of life's dreams and of those that are still to come.

Channel of Your peace

The elderly thank God for the "time of renewed fruitfulness" to which they have been called. They ask Him to make them a channel of His peace, to teach them to embrace those who suffer more than them, to never stop dreaming and to narrate His wonders to the coming generations.

After urging the Lord's blessing on the Pope and the Church, that "the light of the Gospel might reach the ends of the earth", the prayer invokes the Holy Spirit for the renewal of the world, so that the pandemic may end, the poor be consoled and wars may cease.

The prayer concludes evoking the theme of the first World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which is the assurance of Jesus: "I am with you always" (Mt. 28:30). The elderly ask the Lord to sustain them in their weakness and help them live every moment of life to the full until the end.

The celebration

The Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life is charged with organizing the celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.

In Rome, it will be celebrated with a Mass at 10 am in St. Peter's Basilica. The Dicastery said some 2,000 people of the Rome Diocese and its associations that carry out pastoral activities in favour of the elderly are expected to attend. Most of them will include grandparents accompanied by their grandchildren. Among them will also be elderly people who, for the first time, will be able to leave the homes in which they have been isolated for over a year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the end of the Mass, the young people present will offer the grandparents and the elderly a flower with the Holy Father's message: "I am with you always".

The Dicastery has been receiving news of many community initiatives being organized in dioceses and parishes all over the world for the observance. It has invited everyone, especially young people, to visit their own grandparents and elderly who are lonely in their community.

Indulgence, message by Pope

The Holy Father has also granted the faithful the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence on July 25 by devoting adequate time to actually or virtually visit elderly people in need or in difficulty (such as the sick, the abandoned, the disabled and other similar cases).

The Pope has also released a message to grandparents and the elderly, in which he emphasized that the vocation of the Third Age is to "guard the roots, transmit the faith to young people and take care of the little ones".

Announced by Pope Francis on January 31, the annual day will be celebrated each year on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. The theme chosen by the Pope for this first edition this year is "I am with you always" (Mt 28:20).

Please find below the text of the prayer:

*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.*

https://youtu.be/asLR_IKmhul