



Second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

With the celebration of its second edition, the *World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly* enters the ordinariness of the pastoral practice of our ecclesial communities and is set to become a tradition.

Attention to grandparents and the elderly, in fact, cannot be something extraordinary since their presence is not exceptional but an established fact of our societies. The Holy Father invites us to become aware of their relevance in the life of our countries and communities and to do so in a way that is not episodic but structural. That is, it is not a matter of chasing after an emergency, but of laying the foundations for long-term pastoral work that will involve us for decades to come. After all, in some places in the world-especially in Europe and North America-they represent 20 percent or more of the population. Within our communities, therefore, a change of perspective is required, putting aside those arguments that make the elderly appear as distant and extraneous people to be taken care of and getting used to a pastoral focus marked by ordinariness and long-term planning.

In the perspective of a commitment destined to develop over long periods of time, the catecheses that the Holy Father is dedicating to old age are of particular relevance. They offer an articulate and innovative reflection on this age of life and can be both the basis for immediate pastoral work in preparation for this year's Day and for long-term planning.

The catecheses and the Holy Father's message for the second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly are at the heart of this pastoral kit and contain a rich range of indications that can be used, if necessary, adapting them to one's own context.

Both the catechesis and the message can be found at this link <http://www.laityfamilylife.va/content/laityfamilylife/en/eventi/2022/ii-giornata-mondiale-d-ei-nonni-e-degli-anziani.html>

This year's Day comes at a particular time, unexpectedly marked by war. In the message, the Holy Father recognizes a link between the fading testimony of those who





lived through World War II and the resurgence of conflict in Europe. This is the reason why he calls on grandparents and the elderly to be "creators of the revolution of tenderness" and to live especially intense prayer for peace, in Ukraine and beyond.

The mission that the Holy Father entrusts to the elderly at this particular juncture manifests how he believes that grandparents and the elderly have their own particular vocation that makes them a relevant part of God's holy faithful People. This is the real alternative to the culture of discarding: it is not about making a gesture of charity or begging for a little better treatment, but about the affirmation of the centrality of the elderly in society and grandparents in the family.

Below we list some simple indications that, we hope, will be of help in organizing the next *Day*, but we are sure that each of you will be able to find with creativity the most appropriate way to celebrate it starting from your own pastoral context.

Aware of the variety of initiatives that were taken on the occasion of the first edition and those that, we hope, will mark the second one as well, we have developed a logo that can be used freely and that will allow them to be identified with the *Day*. The logo represents an embrace, and a detailed explanation is attached.

In the hope that the second *World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly* will contribute to countering the culture of discarding and making grandparents and the elderly protagonists in the life of our communities, we send cordial greetings in the Lord.

P. Alexandre Awi Mello, I. Sch.

Secretary

Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

Card. Kevin Farrell

Prefect

Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life





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Pastoral directions

Visiting the lonely elderly

- The second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly will be celebrated in a situation in which in many countries the health emergency has ended, which will allow initiatives to be taken with greater freedom and to put personal encounter and embrace at the center of each one.
- In order for the message of closeness and consolation that the Day wants to express to reach everyone - even those who are most isolated - we ask people to make a visit to their grandparents and the lonely elderly in their community and to deliver the Holy Father's message to them.
- The visit, a tangible sign of the outgoing Church, is a way to reaffirm that the elderly, even the loneliest, are at the center of our communities.
- The visit shows the personal choice to get up and go quickly to others (cf. Lk. 1:39), just as Mary did to visit the elderly Elizabeth.
- The visit can be an opportunity to bring a gift, such as a flower, and to read the Day's prayer together.
- Visiting a lonely elderly person is one of the possibilities for obtaining the Plenary Indulgence granted on the occasion of the Day.
- The encounter between young and old, the friendship that can result, is one of the signs that "In old age they will still bear fruit."
- To spread the message of the day, pictures of the visits can be posted on social media with the hashtag **#ElderlyAndGrandparents**





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The preparation of the day with the elderly

- The elderly are the main recipients of the Day's activities. The Holy Father's message is addressed to them.
- It is important to make sure that as many elderly people as possible participate in person in the Sunday liturgy celebrated on the occasion of the Day.
- Since the pandemic, in many contexts, the participation of the elderly in Sunday Mass has declined. Influencing this is the persistent fear of contagion, but also the habit, acquired during the various lock downs, of attending celebrations on television or online. The Day can be an opportunity to help the elderly regain the habit of attending Mass in presence.
- Elders from the parish or from one's own ecclesial reality can be invited for a time of reflection on the Pope's message for the Day, which can be distributed to all participants.
- Through visits to the elderly who are alone, the text of the message can also be delivered to those unable to attend the meetings.
- The Holy Father's prayer intentions accompanied by the special intentions of one's own community can be entrusted to all grandparents and elders reached on the occasion of the Day.



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Preparing for the day with young people

- You can convene the youth of your community a few weeks before the Day to explain it and be sure that they reach as many elders as possible with their visits.
- Similarly, one can meet with the youth after the celebration to share the fruits of the meetings.
- Young people can organize social campaigns to spread the contents of the Day using the hashtag #ElderlyAndGrandparents

Plenary Indulgence

- The Apostolic Penitentiary promulgated a decree granting Plenary Indulgence on the occasion of World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.
- For the elderly, it is possible to obtain the Indulgence by attending one of the Masses celebrated on the occasion of the Day.
- Considering that some elderly people are unable to attend Mass in person for health reasons, the Indulgence is extended to those who take part through television, radio or the web.
- The Indulgence is also granted to all those who, on the occasion of the Day, perform a 'work of mercy through visiting a lonely elderly person.



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Liturgy Notes.

- Let one of the Masses on Sunday July 24, be dedicated to celebrating the Day with grandparents and the elderly of the parish or community.
- To encourage the presence of the elderly at the Mass, community members can be involved to arrange transportation for those who are unable to move on their own.
- During the celebration, young people from the parish or community can deliver the Holy Father's message to grandparents and the elderly.
- Liturgical celebrations of the Day on July 24 and the days immediately preceding and following can be planned within hospitals and residences for the elderly involving, where possible and in compliance with health regulations, members of the parish so that the masses are appropriately animated.
- The collection from the Day's Masses can be dedicated to support projects in favor of poor elderly people in one's community.





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Suggestions for the prayers of the faithful

- For all of us elders, that we may become creators of the revolution of tenderness and that we may teach everyone to look at their brothers and sisters with the same gaze that we look at our dear grandchildren. Let us pray.
- For young people, that they may go with joy to meet the elderly and show them God's tenderness. For the world to be filled with the overflowing joy of a new embrace between the young and the old! Let us pray.
- For all of us grandfathers and grandmothers, that even in old age we may bear fruits of wisdom for our families and that we may learn to pass on the treasure of faith to our grandchildren and to the new generations. Let us pray.
- That all of us, grandparents and elders, will not be afraid to intercede for the salvation of the world, just as Abraham did, that peace will come everywhere and especially in Ukraine. Let us pray.
- For the Church, which everywhere today celebrates the World Day dedicated to them, to be more and more a welcoming home for grandparents and the elderly. For Pope Francis that the Lord will bless and protect his ministry. Let us pray.





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Final Blessing

Blessing on a long life

God of mercy,

You have given your children the gift of long life,

And they ask for your blessing.

Let them feel the tenderness and strength of your presence.

As they look back to the past,

let them rejoice in your mercy.

As they look to the future,

May they persevere in hope that does not fade.

To you be praise and glory for ever.

