Honoring Grandparents

This year, Pope Francis established the first annual World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. It will be celebrated each year on the fourth Sunday of July, which is the same day as the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and, therefore, Jesus’ grandparents. Given how we just discussed the role of St. Joseph in Jesus’ life in last month’s newsletter, it’s awe-inspiring to think about the role Jesus’ grandparents played in His life. Perhaps it’s similar to the role grandparents have played in our own lives. Do any of these remind you of your grandparents?

#1: Unconditional Love. My grandmothers have always been my biggest fans. From an early age, they made me think that anything was possible for me, and that I always had their support. How about you? Did your grandparents treat you this way? How do you think Sts. Joachim and Anne interacted with Jesus, if they ever met? I would imagine they gave him such pure, innocent love, and were perhaps the greatest grandparents to ever walk the earth.

#2: Involvement. Having children of my own now, I see the desire from my parents to be involved in the lives of my children. Though they live states away, they make it a point to try and be present for birthdays, baptisms, and other milestones. Do you think Sts. Joachim and Anne were there when Jesus was dedicated in the temple? Or maybe even at Mary’s visitation to St. Elizabeth? If you have grandchildren, are you active and present in your grandchildren’s lives? If you are a parent, are you doing what you can to foster a strong relationship between your children and your own parents? Studies have shown that this relationship is beneficial for the self-esteem of both the child and grandparent, so its significance should not be underestimated!

#3: Support. Not only did my grandmothers tell me they loved me, they showed it too. My Italian grandmother used to send me newspaper clippings to inspire me, or tools to help me accomplish my dreams, such as piano song sheets or new crayons for my artwork. How can you help your grandchildren achieve their dreams? How do you think Sts. Joachim and Anne may have supported Jesus and helped Him to reach His full potential?

Saints Joachim and Anne, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary and patron saints of grandparents.
While we’ve just discussed the great ways grandparents support their grandchildren, let’s discuss some ways we can support them. This new special day on July 25 established by Pope Francis gives us an opportunity to think about how we can honor, love and support all grandparents. Here are some suggestions:

**#1: Plan regular phone calls, visits, and/or video calls.** This means so much to grandparents, and gives them a reminder that they are seen, known, and loved. If we don’t schedule things, sometimes they fall off our radar, so to speak. Do you have a plan in place to connect with your own grandparents, or for your children to connect with your parents? If not, make a plan today, and maybe you can share it with them on July 25, as part of your celebration!

**#2: Pray for them, daily.** Do you remember grandparents in your prayers daily, even those that are deceased? This is a great way to love and honor them, and will increase your love for them. During your prayer, or as a result of it, God may inspire in you new, special, and creative ways to strengthen your relationship with them. And be sure to ask for the intercession of their patrons, Sts. Joachim and Anne! They would love to help you honor and love the grandparents in your lives.

**#3: Have pictures of them in your home, and explain your family story to your children.** Kids, and all of us in fact, need to know we are part of a bigger story. By children understanding the role their grandparents (and generations older) played in shaping who they are today, they will see that they are part of something much bigger than themselves. Knowing their place in history and in the world helps them to know they are not alone, God has been watching over their family for centuries, and that God will continue to watch over them if they trust in Him. In an ever-changing world that wants to remove many of the identities associated with each of us, help your children be strong in who they are and who they are meant to be as members of your family, and most importantly, as children of God.

I hope this article has helped you appreciate your grandparents even more, and think of ways you can honor them. I know it has for me as I wrote the words. I think, in a special way, grandparents reveal God’s Love in a way that parents cannot. I think about one day holding my child’s child in my arms, and I can barely imagine the love I will feel at that moment. Just as grandchildren are a gift to grandparents, grandparents are an irreplaceable gift to them. From them we learn our story, our family’s history, and most importantly, unconditional love.

*May God bless each of your families, and I pray you have a wonderful first ever World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on Sunday, July 25!* Make sure to do something special that day to honor the grandparents in your life, and plan ways to honor them the rest of the year. God Bless!

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**Jesus Approaches**

Retreat for Women Oct. 1-3

Join award-winning author and national speaker, Elizabeth Kelly at the Spiritual Renewal Center in Victoria, TX. [Click here for more.](https://www.victoriadiocese.org/family)

**Strength for the Journey**

A Grief Ministry for Parents who have lost their child

Monthly meetings take place from 6:30-8pm at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Ganado. Next meetings are July 13 and August 10. [https://www.victoriadiocese.org/grief-support](https://www.victoriadiocese.org/grief-support)

**HelpOurMarriage.org**

Next Victoria Area Weekend Aug 6-8, 2021

For confidential inquiries call: John/Jennifer Vincent

(800) 470-2230

(361) 580-2770

jbjov@sbcglobal.net

Or visit our web site listed above

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All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in union with St. Joseph. Amen.