



World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

***I will still be the same when you are old and gray, and I will take care of you.
I created you. I will carry you and always keep you safe.***

Isaiah 46:4

From Pope Francis' message for World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly:

"I am with you always" (Mt 28:20): this is the promise the Lord made to his disciples before he ascended into heaven. They are the words that he repeats to you today, dear grandfathers and grandmothers, dear elderly friends. ...

I am well aware that this Message comes to you at a difficult time: the pandemic swept down on us like an unexpected and furious storm; it has been a time of trial for everyone, but especially for us elderly persons. Many of us fell ill, others died or experienced the death of spouses or loved ones, while others found themselves isolated and alone for long periods. The Lord is aware of all that we have been through in this time. He is close to those who felt isolated and alone, feelings that became more acute during the pandemic. ... I want to tell you that you are needed in order to help build, in fraternity and social friendship, the world of tomorrow: the world in which we, together with our children and grandchildren, will live once the storm has subsided. ... The Lord's closeness will grant to all, even the frailest among us, the strength needed to embark on a new journey along the path of dreams, memory and prayer.

The prophet Joel once promised: "Your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men will have visions" (3:1). The future of the world depends on this covenant between young and old. Who, if not the young, can take the dreams of the elderly and make them come true? Yet for this to happen, it is necessary that we continue to dream. Our dreams of justice, of peace, of solidarity can make it possible for our young people to have new visions; in this way, together, we can build the future. You need to show that it is possible to emerge renewed from an experience of hardship. I am sure that you have had more than one such experience: in your life you have faced any number of troubles and yet were able to pull through. Use those experiences to learn how to pull through now.

Let us pause and pray for all grandparents and all elders in our world and among us, most especially those who feel forgotten or who live in loneliness, as we commemorate this day.

(over)



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O God, Our Sustainer,

You carry each of us into old age and live in the dreams passed on, a future we will not see. We pray in gratitude for the gift of our elders and pray for the strength and compassion to listen intently to all that they have to share with us.

Let their dreams for a future of peace, justice and solidarity become our dreams.

Let their memories be the foundation of our shared work toward a more humane and welcoming world.

Through Christ, our Lord, we pray:

AMEN.