



World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

"In old age they will still bear fruit."

Psalm 92:15

Excerpts from Pope Francis' message for World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly (May 3, 2022):

"In old age they will still bear fruit" (Ps 92:14). These words of the Psalmist are glad tidings, a true "gospel" that we can proclaim to all on this second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. They run counter to what the world thinks about this stage of life, but also to the attitude of grim resignation shown by some of us elderly people, who harbour few expectations for the future.

Many people are afraid of old age. They consider it a sort of disease with which any contact is best avoided. The elderly, they think, are none of their concern and should be set apart, perhaps in homes or places where they can be cared for, lest we have to deal with their problems. This is the mindset of the "throw-away culture", which leads us to think that we are somehow different from the poor and vulnerable in our midst, untouched by their frailties and separated from "them" and their troubles. The Scriptures see things differently. A long life – so the Bible teaches – is a blessing, and the elderly are not outcasts to be shunned but living signs of the goodness of God who bestows life in abundance...

...The World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly is an opportunity to proclaim once more, with joy, that the Church wants to celebrate together with all those whom the Lord – in the words of the Bible – has "filled with days". Let us celebrate it together! I ask you to make this Day known in your parishes and communities; to seek out those elderly persons who feel most alone, at home or in residences where they live. Let us make sure that no one feels alone on this day. Expecting a visit can transform those days when we think we have nothing to look forward to; from an initial encounter, a new friendship can emerge. Visiting the elderly who live alone is a work of mercy in our time!

Let us pause and pray for all grandparents and 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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We give thanks to you, Lord,
For the witness of those who live a long life
 Taking refuge in You.
May we bear fruit like our elders.

Forgive us, O Lord,
For resignation and disillusionment,
 And forsake us not
When our strength declines.

Teach us to look with hope
 To the future you give us,
To the mission you entrust to us,
And to sing your praises without end.

Make us tender artisans
 Of Your revolution,
 To guard with love
All the little ones who seek shelter in You.

Protect us, O Lord,
 And grant that we may work
To deliver the world from loneliness.
Direct our steps in the way of peace.
 Amen.

Adapted from "Prayer for the Second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly"
[The Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life](#)