



JUBILEE OF FAMILIES, CHILDREN, GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY

This Jubilee celebrates the importance of the family unit, recognising the unique roles played by children and grandparents; and also honours the elderly members of our communities, some of whom are without family members of their own.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
We come before You to praise You
and to thank You for the great gift of the family.
We pray to You for all families consecrated by the Sacrament of Matrimony.
May they rediscover each day the grace they have received,
and as small domestic Churches,
may they know how to witness to Your presence
and to the love with which Christ loves the Church.
We pray to You for all families faced with difficulty and suffering
caused by illness or circumstances of which only You know.
Sustain them and make them aware
of the path to holiness upon which You call them,
so that they might experience Your infinite mercy
and find new ways to grow in love.
We pray to You for children and young people:
may they encounter You and respond joyfully
to the vocation You have in mind for them;
We pray for parents and grandparents: may they be aware
that they are signs of the fatherhood and motherhood of God
in caring for the children who, in body and spirit, You entrust to them;
and for the experience of fraternity
that the family can give to the world.



Lord, grant that each family
might live their specific vocation to holiness in the Church
as a call to become missionary disciples,
in the service of life and peace,
in communion with our priests, religious,
and all vocations in the Church. Amen.

[\(Official prayer for the X World Meeting of Families, 2022\)](#)

TEACHING

From [Pope Francis' Homily for the X World Meeting of Families](#) (2022):

“You are fathers, mothers and children, grandparents, uncles and aunts. You are adults and children, young and old. Each of you brings a different experience of family, but all of you have one hope and prayer: that God will bless and keep your families and all the families of the world.

“All of you married couples, in building your family, made, with the help of Christ’s grace, a courageous decision: *not to use freedom for yourselves, but to love the persons that God has put at your side*. Instead of living like little islands, you became “slaves of one another”. That is how freedom is exercised in the family. There are no “planets” or “satellites”, each travelling on its own orbit. The family is the place of encounter, of sharing, of going forth from ourselves in order to welcome others and stand beside them. The family is *the first place where we learn to love*. We must never forget that the family is the first place where we learn to love.”

From [Pope Francis' Message for the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly](#) (2021):

“In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus tells the Apostles, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (28:19-20). These words are also addressed to us today. They help us better understand that our vocation is to preserve our roots, to pass on the faith to the young, and to care for the little ones. Think about it: what is our vocation today, at our age? To preserve our roots, to pass on the faith to the young and to care for the little ones. Never forget this.

“It makes no difference how old you are, whether you still work or not, whether you are alone or have a family, whether you became a grandmother or grandfather at a young age or later, whether you are still independent or need assistance. Because there is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel and handing down traditions to your grandchildren. You just need to set out and undertake something new.

“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. All of us must “take an active part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies” (*ibid.*, 77). Among the pillars that support this new edifice, there are three that you, better than anyone else, can help to set up. Those three pillars are *dreams, memory* and *prayer*. 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.”





Holy Family with bird, c. 1650, by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo ([Wikimedia Commons](#)).

TESTIMONY

“We were blessed to become “brand new” grandparents in our mid-40s.

“As parents and grandparents, we recognised with minute sensitivity the needs of those we loved and the manner in which we could be of assistance to them, in order to lighten their growing load.

“During the Last Supper, Jesus told his disciples that he had come to serve and not to be served.

“As grandparents, we came to realise this quite quickly as the opportunities to do so multiplied as more grandchildren came our way.

“Our experience of serving was that it built a fruitful basis for meaningful communication, and oftentimes, an eventual path to peace in the family.

“In light of the ever-increasing financial pressures for both parents to go off to work, the offer to care for our grandchildren was an easy one, especially in light of the assistance given us by our own parents.



“We had witnessed the great bonds of love that developed when grandchildren had the time to hear their grandparent’s stories and anecdotes and we desired to have these same opportunities with our own.



“We also found that by looking after our grandchildren, we were afforded the time to pray with them, a practice which complemented and strengthened the aspects of Faith which were taught them by their own parents.

“It is a supreme gift to be a grandparent in today’s culture, which is often adverse to the inherent dignity of human life.”

- Steve and Stella Buhagiar (From [The Catholic Weekly](#))

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

For the Church, that throughout the world she may be able to proclaim and bear strong witness to the beauty of God's plan for the family and to value it as a gift and a vocation.

We pray to the Lord.

For all elderly people, that they may continue to look towards the future and, with their experience and prayers, that they may continue striving to build a more congenial world.

We pray to the Lord.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly](#)

[World Meetings of Families](#)

[X World Meeting of Families \(2022\): Evangelise Plus](#)

[First World Children’s Day \(2024\)](#)

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