

World day for grandparents and the elderly

Assembly prayer

Prepare for this assembly by having your students bring photos or preparing a picture of their grandparents or elderly friends and identifying something they love about them, ideally for digital display. This will be used for the reflection.

You may also wish to invite the grandparents and elderly friends from your school and parish communities.

Welcome

- Reader:** Welcome to our prayer assembly, especially to the visitors who have joined us!
- The World Day for grandparents and the elderly was begun by Pope Francis in 2021. It is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, who were the grandparents of Jesus.
- Reader:** This is a day to celebrate the special role that our grandparents and elderly friends play in our lives. It is also a day to remember those who may feel lonely or forgotten.
- Reader:** The theme that Pope Leo has chosen for the 2026 World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly is "I will never forget you" from the book of Isaiah in the bible.
- Reader:** This theme is a beautiful message for grandparents and elderly people. God will never forget you. You are precious and God loves you very much!
- Reader:** This theme is also an important reminder for all of us. We are God's helpers here on earth. God calls us to love and care for our grandparents and elderly friends.
- Reader:** As we begin, we invite you to call to mind your own grandparents and elderly friends. Hold them in your heart as we pray today.

Introductory prayer

Reader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Reader: Dear God,
We come together today to say 'thank you' for our grandparents and elderly friends. As we pray, open our hearts, help us to love our grandparents and elderly friends like you do so that they can experience your closeness and care.
We make this prayer in Jesus name,

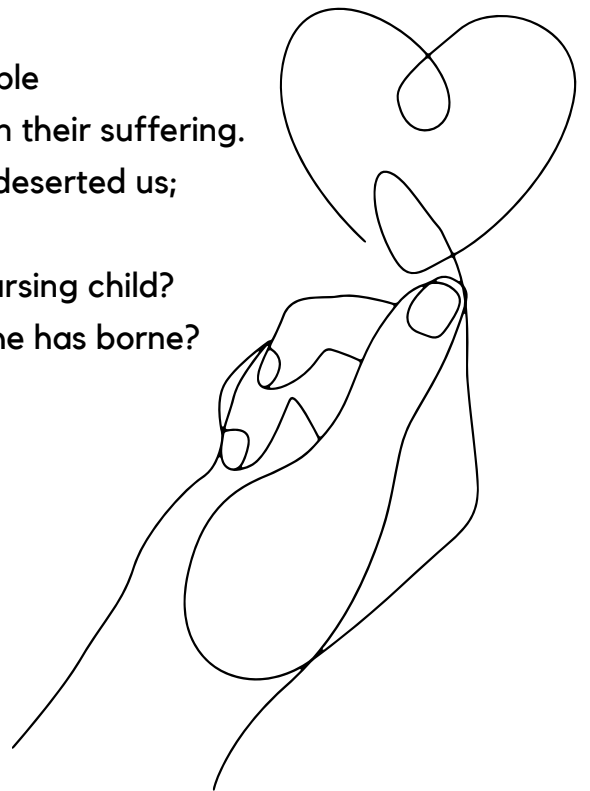
All: Amen.

Scripture

Reader: A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Sing for joy, O heavens!
Rejoice, O earth!
Burst into song, O mountains!
For the Lord has comforted his people
and will have compassion on them in their suffering.
Yet Jerusalem says, "The Lord has deserted us;
the Lord has forgotten us."
"Never! Can a mother forget her nursing child?
Can she feel no love for the child she has borne?
But even if that were possible,
I would not forget you!
See, I have written your name
on the palms of my hands.

All: This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Reflection

What I love about my [grandparent or elderly friend _____]

In turn, display each student's picture or photo and have them say what they love or appreciate about their grandparent or elderly friend.

Prayer of the Faithful

- Reader: Together as one family, knowing that God never forgets us, we bring our prayers before the Lord.
- Reader: For the Church, help us to be a community of faith that welcomes all people, including those who are elderly.
Lord, hear us.
- Reader: For grandparents and the elderly, may they know God's love and be cherished by their families and communities.
Lord, hear us.
- Reader: For those who feel alone or forgotten, may they be comforted by God's closeness and supported by the friendship and care of others.
Lord, hear us.
- Reader: For families and younger generations, may we be grateful for the faith, stories, and wisdom that has been passed down to us.
Lord, hear us.
- Reader: For our community, may we always remember those in need around us and reach out with support so that no one is overlooked or forgotten.
Lord, hear us.
- Reader: For those who have died, especially our own grandparents and elderly loved ones. May they be welcomed into life everlasting with God.
Lord, hear us.
- Reader: Loving God, you never forget your people. Hear the prayers we offer you today and keep us always in your care.

Conclusion

Reader: Thank you for praying with us today!

Song

You might choose one of these songs to finish your Assembly Prayer:

- Don't Forget to Remember - Ellie Holcomb
- Everywhere I Go - Lifetree Kids
- God's Love Is Bigger - Doug Horley (ideal for young children)
- Be Still and Know - Lifetree Kids (more reflective)