

# Celebrating The Year of Saint Joseph



## World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

In late January 2021, Pope Francis announced he would establish “World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.” To be sure, some of our “*most faithful*” are counted among them, as we explore this model of Saint Joseph this month.

This year, for the celebration, the Pope has invited us to realize the closeness of God and of the Church to every older person, through the lens of the gospel theme, “I am with you always” from Matthew.

“ ‘I am with you always’ is also a promise of closeness and hope that young and old can mutually share. Not only are grandchildren and young people called upon to be present in the lives of older people, but older people and grandparents also have a mission of evangelization, proclamation and prayer, and of encouraging young people in their faith,” a statement from the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life heralded.

This day will be celebrated each year on the fourth Sunday of July to coincide with the feast of Ss. Joachim and Anne, Jesus’ grandparents.

Often, but not exclusively, Saint Joseph is depicted as an elderly widower. Some believe this was based on speculation among Eastern Churches. Whatever his age, the Gospel clearly gives witness to his charitable faithfulness to God’s will.

## A Child's Prayer for Grandparents

Dear God, please bless my grandparents. Thank you for the life they gave my parents and for the life they give to me.

For the ways they helped me and made me strong, I give thanks. For the ways they love me no matter what, I rejoice. For the ways they have paved the road that leads me here, I am grateful.

Let them grow in wisdom and joy in life. Let them find peace and rest from their work. Let them be healed of every sickness and pain. And let them see with their own eyes your glory and the love of their children and grandchildren.

Bless them always until they come to rest in you.

## Monthly Theme

*Most Faithful*

July 3  
*Feast of Saint  
Thomas the Apostle*

July 4  
*Independence Day*

July 15  
*Memorial of Saint  
Bonaventure, Bishop  
and Doctor of the  
Church*

July 17th/18th  
*Jewish Celebration of  
Tisha B’Av*

July 25th  
*World Day for  
Grandparents and  
the Elderly*

July 26th  
*Memorial of Saints  
Joachim and Anne,  
Parents of the  
Blessed Virgin Mary*

July 2021

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## Monthly Theme *Most Faithful*

This month includes the memorials and feasts of those who, like Saint Joseph, showed they were most faithful to God's will. We invite you to "lectio divina" (a "holy reading") of some of the Scriptures from these days. A few reflection questions are provided to get you started.



### July 3rd — Feast of Saint Thomas the Apostle

Suggested Text: John 20: 24-29

- ▶ Why do you think Thomas needed to see Jesus to believe He had come back?
- ▶ Has there ever been a time when you needed to "see to believe"?

### July 14th — Memorial of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

Suggested Text: Exodus 3: 1-6,9-12

- ▶ How would you have reacted if you were Moses?
- ▶ Why do you think God chose Moses?
- ▶ How have you felt God has called you?

### July 15th — Memorial of Saint Bonaventure

Suggested Text: Psalm 105: 7-15 "The Lord remembers his covenant."

- ▶ What Scriptural account does this psalm call back to?
- ▶ How has God's promise been fulfilled?

### July 22nd — Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene

Suggested Text: John 20: 1-2,11-18

- ▶ Why do you think Mary Magdalene did not recognize Jesus at first?
- ▶ Why do you think Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first?
- ▶ In what unexpected ways/places has Jesus appeared to you?

### July 26th — Memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Suggested Text: Matthew 13: 31-35

- ▶ Why does Jesus use the image of the mustard seed?
- ▶ How does this imagery compare to your idea of the kingdom of heaven?
- ▶ What seeds of faith did your grandparents sow, even if you never met?

### July 29th — Memorial of Saints Martha, Mary, and Lazarus

Suggested Text: Luke 10: 38-42

- ▶ We can all be anxious at times, what is your best strategy to find relief?
- ▶ What burden are you asking the Lord to care about in your life?

**Lectio divina is prayer over the Scriptures. There are four main elements:**

(1) *Lectio* — A careful reading of a passage, perhaps three/four times.

(2) *Meditatio* — Use your imagination to enter into the Biblical scene in order to "see" the setting, the people, and the unfolding action. Through this meditation, you can encounter the text and discover its meaning for your life.

(3) *Oratio* — Prayer or your personal response to the text: asking for graces, offering praise or thanksgiving, seeking healing or forgiveness.

(4) *Contemplatio* — A contemplative gaze toward Christ and the things of God. You may be raised above meditation to a state of seeing or experiencing the text as mystery and reality; experiential contact with the One behind and beyond the text.

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