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CHANCERY OFFICE

FOURTH WORLD DAY OF GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY

The *Fourth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly* will be celebrated on 28 July 2024 (Sunday) with the theme, “Do not cast me off in my old age” (Ps 71:9).

In his Message on this occasion, Pope Francis reminds us once more that caring for our grandparents and the elderly is not just a sign of gratitude and affection, but a necessity in the construction of a more human and fraternal society. Their value should be recognized permanently, not just once a year or occasionally. The elderly, with their human dignity like any other persons, is an integral part of our Christian family and our common history, and so the Church must give them appropriate pastoral attention.

All too often, loneliness is a bitter companion in the lives of the elderly due to numerous contingent situations, such as the migration of children or wars, or due to the individualistic mentality that makes those who are advanced in years feel like a burden. That there is a time in life when one remains alone has often become a fact taken for granted or considered inevitable, which even the elderly accept with resignation.

This year’s biblical theme, “Do not cast me off in my old age”, recalls the heartfelt plea to the Lord not to be left alone in old age. Indeed, God never abandons His children, not even when strength wanes or life seems less productive. In the Bible, growing age is a sign of blessing.

The Holy Father exhorts us to follow the example of Ruth, who did not abandon her mother-in-law, Naomi, in her old age. It is the hope of the Holy Father that every Church community will strive to experience ‘a day without loneliness’ by visiting the elderly, involving them, and listening to their stories and testimonies of faith.

The Apostolic Penitentiary has announced that, on the occasion of the **Fourth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly**, Pope Francis will grant a Plenary Indulgence to the following faithful, under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion and prayer in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff) —

- (1) grandparents, the elderly and all the faithful who, motivated by a true spirit of penance and charity, participate in the various functions of the World Day that will be held throughout the world;
- (2) the faithful who devote adequate time to actually or virtually visiting the elderly who are in need or in difficulty (such as the sick, the lonely, the disabled);
- (3) the elderly sick and those who care for them, and all those who are unable to leave their homes for serious reasons, if they, detaching themselves from any sins and intending to fulfill the three usual conditions as soon as possible, unite themselves spiritually with the sacred functions of the World Day (especially when the various functions are broadcast through the media), offering to the Merciful God their prayers, pains and sufferings of their lives.

Given at the Chancery Office,
23 July 2024



Rev. Lawrence Lee
Chancellor