



Helping Grandparents
Pass on the Faith and
to Keep Prayer at the
Heart of Family Life

Wishing you all A Happy & Holy Christmas

Greetings Grandparents and Friends! We bring you heart felt wishes of faith, hope and love during this beautiful season of Advent. We would like to thank you all for your continued support over this past year. It means so much to know that you are supporting us with your prayers and resources, whether spiritual, financial or your very valuable time.

We would like to thank our volunteers, our members, Priests, our Bishops, our Cardinals, and in particular the Pontifical Council for the Family. Without your help and encouragement we would not be able to help Grandparents to 'Pass on the Faith and to Keep Prayer at the Heart of Family Life'. We rely on your contributions to help us and we thank you most kindly for your donations.

Love & Prayers

Catherine Wiley



Australian CGA Launch

His Eminence Cardinal Pell launched the Australian chapter of the CGA. It was launched at a Mass in St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney on December 1st. Cardinal Pell was the chief celebrant. He gave a homily which described the genesis of the CGA, and highlighted the vital contribution that Grandparents make to the family, the Church and to Society. It is hoped that individual parish groups will gradually spring up throughout Australia.



His Eminence
Cardinal Pell

We hope and pray that other countries will follow the lead of Cardinal Pell in Australia.



Establishing in America

Getting established in America is the next crucial step for the CGA. We recently visited the offices of Cardinal Dolan in the Archdiocese of New York, we met with Ms Katherine Wither Director of Family Life/Respect Life and Izabelle Nagle from Marriage Family Life to discuss the possibility of setting up the CGA.



Cardinal Dolan with Catherine Wiley

We also met Bishop DiMarzio to discuss establishing a chapter of the CGA in the Brooklyn Diocese. Bishop DiMarzio said: *"We are excited to explore how to develop the Association here in Brooklyn and Queens, as its mission does satisfy a support that is so often needed yet overlooked in the vocation of Grandparents."* In November we received a letter from Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, endorsing the CGA. He wrote: *"Passing on our Faith to future generations is truly a responsibility that we all need to embrace, and Grandparents are critical to this effort."*



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Keeping Prayer at the Heart of Family Life

Huge Crowds in Attendance for Grandparents Pilgrimage Knock Shrine 2013

We also saw a fantastic turnout for our pilgrimage to Knock. Huge crowds, up to 13,000 were in attendance, and it was wonderful to see Grandparents and grandchildren united in love and prayer building their Faith through pilgrimage. This generation of Grandparents truly treasure and love their Faith and really want to pass it on.

Grandparents are role models for their families. A stabilising force, they are the glue that holds families together particularly in times of trouble. They are an anchor, because their faith is their anchor. They are secured by something far far deeper than themselves.



Msgr Carlos Simon under Secretary to Pontifical Council for the Family with Professor Eanna Johnson member of CGA

Pope Francis and Archbishop Paglia with Grandchildren

The CGA was part of a bigger pilgrimage too this year. Over 250,000 pilgrims flocked to Rome in October for a pilgrimage entitled 'Family, Love, and the Joy of Faith'. During Mass Pope Francis spoke of the importance of Grandparents and shared stories about how his



Grandmother Rosa passed on her Faith by telling stories of the saints. *"A people that does not listen to its Grandparents is one that dies!"* said the Pope. After Mass Catherine Wiley our founder and her husband Stewart were presented to Pope Francis for a special blessing. We greeted the Pope on behalf of Grandparents from all over the world and asked for his help to spread the word about the CGA to create awareness about the vocation of Grandparents.



The First Pilgrimage for Families in Rome
October 2013 Archbishop Paglia & Pope Francis

CGA News

The CGA has gone from strength to strength. Our reach and mission have gone global in this Year of Faith. Catherine Wiley, our founder, travelled widely, taking the CGA mission to the Philippines, Korea, Japan, Slovakia, New Zealand, and the USA. Her travels involved pilgrimages, TV and radio interviews, to discuss the introduction of the implementation of the CGA in various parishes at home and abroad. We have Also filmed a new series called 'Three Wise Women' featuring Dana and Cathy Sinnott for EWTN which will be broadcast early next year.

We have left no stone unturned during the past year to create awareness for the vocation of Grandparents and their vital contribution to the Church, the family and to society. There are many exciting developments still to come for the Catholic Grandparents Association, and 2014 is going to be a very busy and crucial time for us. Please keep the CGA in your prayers. Pray that it continues to receive the members, people, and resources necessary for the vital work of supporting Grandparents in their vocation. Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in the Philippines as they celebrate this Christmas in very difficult circumstances. Please pray for the intentions of our beloved Holy Father Pope Francis who constantly reminds us of his great love and importance of Grandparents and the family.

*May St. Joachim and St. Anne, Parents of Mary, Grandparents of Jesus
Bless you, your children and your Grandchildren.*

Catherine Wiley



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Connecting Grandparents Worldwide in Passing on The Faith

Fun things to do with your Grandchildren

Advent is the perfect time of year to do fun stuff with grandchildren, like making wreaths and cards, decorating the house, or cooking. Why not get them outside, looking for holly and ivy, or else paint a picture of the Nativity scene with them? There's always lots to do, and ways to transmit the Christmas message whilst doing it.

To get you started, here's a recipe for gingerbread that's easy enough for Children to do. Rather than use pastry cutters in the shape of gingerbread men, use star shapes and remind your grandchildren about the Star of Bethlehem and its significance in the Nativity story.

You will need:

350g / 12oz plain flour

175g / 6oz light soft brown sugar

100g / 4oz butter

1 medium egg

4 tablespoons of golden syrup

1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

1/2 half teaspoon of ground ginger

Rolling pin, pastry cutter.

You will need to measure out the ingredients or at least help your grandchild to do so. Remember to remove the butter from the fridge half an hour before you start and it will make mixing much easier. Put the flour, butter, ground ginger and bicarbonate of soda in a mixing bowl. Mix it all together with fingertips until crumbly. Add sugar, syrup and egg and mix until it forms a firm pastry mix. Pre-heat the oven to 180C / 350F / Gas Mark 4. Using the rolling pin, roll out the pastry to about 5mm thick. Make sure the surface and the rolling pin are well dusted with flour. Cut out the shapes with a knife and/or pastry cutter. Place the cut out pastry on a greased baking tray, 2cm apart to allow for them spreading out. Place the baking trays in pre-heated oven. Remove after 15 minutes (check after 10 minutes). Find a selection of anything you like to decorate the gingerbread. You can use cake icing, choc chips, sprinkles, edible silver balls. Put a blob of icing on the gingerbread where you want a decoration to stick.



Print out these CGA Christmas Labels for your presents for all the family

of





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Keeping Prayer at the Heart of Family Life

Members Contribution

We love to hear members' news. If you'd like to get in touch with a story or piece of news please email us on:

marketing@catholicgrandparentsassociation.org.

This contribution comes from Peter Tiernan, reflecting on how a pilgrimage to Rome with the CGA as part of the Year of Faith has inspired his family's Faith:

Our families showed a great interest in my trip to Rome on pilgrimage with the Catholic Grandparents Association. Like every Grandparent I wondered what meaningful present I could bring back to our 15 grandchildren, not to mention their parents. After much discussion with my wife we settled on rosary beads. But it was a busy time and there wasn't much opportunity to have objects blessed. So what about the rosaries? I was walking through St. Peter's Basilica and I saw this little Priest, in a hurry. I stopped him and I started taking the beads out of my bag. Quick as lightning, before I could even get my bag open, he made the Sign of the Cross and was gone!

I wondered whether they were really blessed. The next day I was walking along the street and saw another Priest, so I asked him. He agreed, and out came all the beads. He recited the most meaningful prayers one could wish for. He said, "May all those who pray the rosary with these beads be strengthened in their faith". I was now happy that, in my estimation at least, the beads were now truly blessed – perhaps twice over!

Subsequently some one told me that Pope Francis had blessed objects. So you could say they were well and truly blessed. About a month after I came home our five year old grand-daughter phoned. She said, "Grandad, I say my night prayers with your rosary beads around my neck every night and then put them in the little box under my pillow. I pray to Jesus, God and Saoirse." Saoirse is a grandchild of ours who was stillborn, and is represented in this photographic family tree alongside another stillborn grandchild, Lucy: they are depicted as two angels. Our 15 grandchildren range in ages from 21 years to one month.



Grandparents Pilgrimages 2014

Saturday 26th July 2014

Annual Grandparents Pilgrimage,
Walsingham

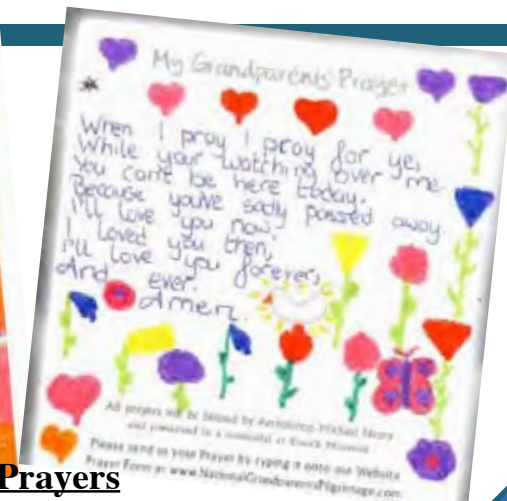
Sunday 14th September 2014

Annual National Grandparents Pilgrimage at

The Shrine of Our Lady of Knock

Chief Celebrant - Archbishop

Charles J. Brown, Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland



Grandchildren's Prayers



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Rejoice, the Lord is Near!

Small Steps to Stewardship:

Our week began with “Gaudete Sunday.” Gaudete means “rejoice” in Latin. The spirit of joy that began this week comes from the words of Paul. “The Lord is near.” This joyful spirit was marked by highlighting the third candle of our Advent wreath, which is rose coloured. Take a small step this week to contemplate Advent. This letter says it all....

*Thank you to Cindy Nau, Stewardship
Director, Ascension Catholic Church, Florida*



Advent is almost over - have I missed it?



Dear Jesus

It's halfway through Advent and I'm not sure what happened. I really wanted to make this a reflective and calm season, preparing for your birth and pondering how you came into this world in such a stunningly humble way. But it's so busy and I'm distracted and sometimes even short-tempered with those I love the most. Where are you in THAT?

I am discouraged and wish I could start over. But as I sit here in the rare moment of silence I contemplate your birth. In a bed of straw, with the smell of manure everywhere. It's a mess in that stable... and come to think of it, my life is a little messy, too. I suddenly see that it is not just into the mess of the stable but into my mess that you enter the world. You came into a humble place and that humility is often where I live my life = feeling guilty or distracted and wishing I were a better person. But if I stop thinking of myself and focus on you, I realise that there you are, waiting to love me, even though I have so many unfulfilled good intentions about prayer, so many desires of how to change this fleeting Advent season.

I can begin Advent today and make this season deeper by making room in my heart for you. I can take just a moment before I get out of bed in the morning and feel the empty place in my life I so often fill with my busy-ness. It is there I need you the most. Come, Lord Jesus. Come into that dark and lonely spot in my heart. You know what my needs are more than I do. Let me feel your love. If I only carry that thought with me each day, it will prepare me for Christmas.

Thank you, Jesus. It's not too late. You are waiting to enter my life today, where ever I let you in. Help me to open my heart in these remaining days.



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Reflection

As we prepare ourselves through Advent for the celebration of Christmas, it is worth taking a moment to reflect on the role of St Joachim and St Anne in the Nativity. We know little about them but we know that as the parents of Mary, they nurtured her, taught her, and brought her up to be a worthy Mother of God - a young woman who 'found favour with the Lord'. Their teaching formed her, and led her to respond to God's invitation with a simple Fiat: "Let it be done to me according to your word." They must have been filled with wonder at the miracle of Jesus's conception and birth. Perhaps Mary followed their example of parenting as she brought up Jesus. Perhaps she asked them for help and advice. Their faith laid the foundations for the courage and strength Mary showed in standing with her son at the foot of the cross. They are an example to parents and Grandparents everywhere. As we move through Advent towards Christmas let us pray for their intercession as we ask for the graces to be parents and Grandparents like St Joachim and St Anne.



May St. Joachim and St. Anne, parents of Mary, Grandparents of Jesus bless you all the days of your life.

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Heavenly Father,
Help us to recognise the strengths in our family,
the gift of sharing our experience with others,
and our willingness to bear witness to the vocation of Grandparents.
Amen



St Joachim and St Anne, intercede for us.

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Luke 2.10

Prayers from Grandparents & Grandchildren



prayers by Kathleen Grehan

Prayer to the Holy Family
Holy Family of God, Jesus Mary + Joseph
+ Mary's parents, St. Joachim + St. Anne
all the Angels + Saints in Heaven
+ the Souls in Purgatory
With the help of the Spirit of love in our hearts
intercede for our families
help us to put our lives in order
help us to do "our duty" for our family
protect our children + grandchildren
help us to be good parents + grandparents
+ direct our path, so that we may enjoy
the peace of our home in Heaven forever.
Amen
Holy Family of Nazareth, pray for us.
14/02/2011

LET US BE RECONCILED

Grandmother Saint Anne, you have always unconditionally welcomed all people who have confided in you.

We come before you today with divisions of all kinds in our families, in our communities, in our country, and in our world. We long to say, "Let us be reconciled"; however, we cannot achieve this on our own.

Help us obtain from your Grandson Jesus the grace of peace and reconciliation for our broken hearts, as well as for our entire world.

Come to our aid so that we may say, with complete sincerity, "Let us be reconciled."

Good Saint Anne, pray for us.

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www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org