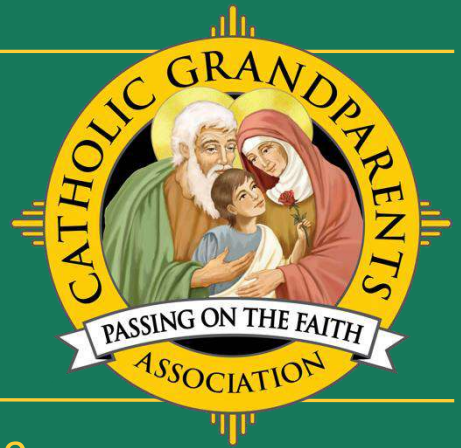


# GRANDPARENTS NEWS



Issue 32 – September/October 2019

*Dedicated to the National Grandparents Pilgrimage, Knock  
2019*





## Dearest Grandparents & Friends,

### Knock Shrine and Grandparents Pilgrimage 2019

As believers, we know that more than one miracle has occurred at the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock in Knock, Ireland. The first, recognized by the Church, on the night of Thursday, August 21, 1879, when a group of local people saw an apparition of the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist at the south gable of the church at Knock, Co Mayo. The apparition is depicted in a glorious larger-than-life mural above the altar.

In September, the Church in Ireland confirmed that a woman, Marion Carroll, seriously ill with multiple sclerosis for 17 years, experienced a complete healing of all her symptoms while on Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine in September 1989.

The cure of this mother of two and Grandmother of 5, is the first officially recognized healing associated with Ireland's National Marian Shrine since the apparition in 1879.

On the day that the miracle occurred, Marion had been taken into the Basilica on a stretcher, paralyzed, blind in one eye, incontinent, etc. from her lengthy illness. Marion was blessed with a monsternce during Anointing of the Sick by then Bishop Colm O'Reilly of Ardagh and Clonmacnois. Following Mass, she was taken to the Rest and Care Center on the Shrine campus, where she asked that her stretcher be opened. She then stood up and walked.

Marion now volunteers at the Shrine assisting pilgrims. She will share her story the weekend of November 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> in Knock.

We are truly blessed and grateful for the support and assistance of Father Richard, Shrine Rector and all involved who make our yearly National Grandparents Pilgrimage a huge success. The template for the Pilgrimage is available for use in your Ministry. Miracles happen.

Love and Prayers,

*Catherine Wiley*

Catherine Wiley—Founder of the Catholic Grandparents Association



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## Grandparent's Mass Celebrations Around The World

Christ the Good Shepherd members prepare 500 gift bags containing rosaries, which were handmade by members. Gift bags were given to grandparents after all Masses at CGS on Sept. 8 to celebrate National Grandparents Day and the Feast of the Nativity of Mary. Luminous Mysteries Meditations for Grandparents booklet was also provided.





[illegible]

## Homily of Bishop Kevin Doran for the National Pilgrimage Knock 8<sup>th</sup> September 2019



From time to time, since I was first ordained as a priest, I have been asked to move from one parish or pastoral situation to

another. There has always been a certain amount of sadness in saying goodbye to people but, over the years, some of those relationships have become real friendships, and have remained strong, even though we didn't see one another so often.

The Letter to Philemon is the shortest book of the New Testament and it gives us some insight into a relationship just like that. Philemon was a wealthy man who became a Christian, during one of the missionary journeys of Saint Paul. He became a friend and supporter of Paul and they remained close, even after Paul moved on to preach the Gospel elsewhere. When Paul was a prisoner in Rome, one of the slaves of Philemon, Onesimus, turned up in the city. He had run away from his master and it seems that Paul welcomed him. In our second reading today, Paul describes Onesimus as "a dear child of mine, whose father I became while wearing these chains". It seems that Paul must have Baptised Onesimus and sees himself now as his father in faith.

In the Letter to Philemon, it is very clear that Onesimus was a source of practical support to Paul, while he was under house arrest. Paul's appreciation of Onesimus goes far beyond the fact that he was useful. He values Onesimus as a fellow Christian and as someone who reminds him of his old friend Philemon in Colossae. When he sends Onesimus back to Philemon, he asks Philemon to

welcome him "no longer as a slave, but as a dear brother in Christ". It might seem strange to us that Saint Paul doesn't seem to condemn slavery or to criticize Philemon for having slaves. I think Paul probably realized that, before you can change social structures, you have to change people's hearts. So he begins by inviting Philemon to enter into a new kind of relationship with Onesimus. He knew that if Philemon once recognized Onesimus as a dear brother in Christ, things would inevitably begin to change.

You might say to me: "that's an interesting story". You can imagine the emotions that come to the surface when Philemon begins to realize the implications of what Saint

Paul is saying to him. But what has that got to do with us today? Slavery has been abolished. Do these words of Saint Paul have anything to say to grandparents?

Let me begin by saying that slavery may have been abolished but it is not gone away. Human trafficking is a reality in our society and many migrants workers are valued more for what they can do than for who they are. It doesn't just happen to migrants either. Depending on the kind of relationships that operate in the workplace, people can find that they are used and then disposed of when they are no longer required.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote that there are different ways of thinking about friendship. One way is to say: "you are my friend because you can do something for me", but then, as soon as you can no longer do anything for me, then you are no longer my friend. Authentic friendship, he suggested, is when we see the goodness in someone and love them for who they are. It is when we want what is good for them, rather than just looking for what is in it for ourselves.

Unfortunately, there is – and there always has been – a tendency in society to value people according to their usefulness, rather than for who they are as unique human beings, or indeed, dear brothers and sisters in Christ. If you ask yourself who is most likely to be negatively affected by that





tendency, it is surely those who are not directly involved in the production of wealth; the children, the elderly and those who are sick. They are more easily regarded as a burden.

Our society has rightly been criticized for the way that we treated unwanted or “inconvenient” children in the past. The circumstances may have changed, but the attitude has not really changed that much. At a time when there is far more focus on wanted children, and on children who are wanted almost at any cost, we have just found new and more permanent ways to dispose of children who are not wanted or who don’t measure up to our expectations.

Pope Francis, in his letter of encouragement on the *Joy of Love*, wrote: “Our elderly are men and women, fathers and mothers, who came before us on our own road, in our own house, in our daily battle for a worthy life ... How I would like a Church that challenges the throwaway culture by the overflowing joy of a new between young and old.” He has spoken on many occasions in recent years about the sadness and the emptiness of a society that would put the elderly to one side. “*A society that has no room for the elderly or discards them because they create problems has a deadly virus*” ... “*it is torn from its roots*”.

In recent times, of course, we have discovered the contribution that grandparents can make to the economy. At a time when the cost of housing is very high and people travel long distances to work the availability of lively, mobile and energetic grandparents makes it easier for hard-pressed mothers and fathers to take their place in the workforce. Even if this means that children see less of their parents, it has certainly given rise to the possibility of rich relationships between children and their grandparents. Even in this situation, however, there is the risk at times that the elderly can be valued more for what they can do than for who they are. We need, as a society, to remember that being a grandparent is primarily a relationship, not just a function and that it shouldn’t become a burden.



Just as it was with slavery in the first century, so it is today with the economic structures of our own society. Some people have an influence on the global economy. For most of us, however, our contribution to the building of a better world depends on how we relate with one another in our families and in our local communities. It depends on how, through those relationships, we help to form attitudes of love and care. Just as Saint Paul built up a friendship with Philemon and helped him to see Onesimus in a different light, so I think that you grandparents today can support your grandchildren in developing positive attitudes which they will not pick up from social media. In your conversations with them, you can help them to value themselves for who they are and not simply for what they have or even what they achieve. You can help them to value their parents for who they are and not simply for what they provide. In the process, of course, you will also help them to see yourself for who you truly are.

Pope Francis has also spoken a lot about how children often hear the good news of the Gospel from their grandparents and how it is often grandparents who teach their grandchildren to pray. I have met young adults whose faith was not nourished by their parents, but who greatly value that wonderful gift that they received from their grandparents if being introduced to Jesus and to the life of the faith community.

I have been very conscious in recent years, as I have celebrated Confirmation, how important grandparents are to children. It would be great if you could take an interest in what they are learning about their faith at school. I know that children love it when grandparents tell stories from the past. I want to encourage you also to share the stories of your own faith; not just your faith now, but your faith when you were their age. Let them see that you have had the same questions as they have. Help them to see how you are still nourished by the Eucharist. Help them to see how the gifts of the Holy Spirit still play a part in your own life today. Our first reading today poses the question: “who can know the mind of God?” So you may never know what good things God has in store for your Grandchildren or how God is working through you to bring those plans to fruitfulness.



## Reflection by Catherine Wiley for the National Pilgrimage Knock 8<sup>th</sup> September 2019



As I stand here amongst you today, in this beautiful basilica, filled to the brim with powerful feelings of faith, hope, love and prayer for our children and our Grandchildren, I am full of emotion.

There is no place else on earth that I would rather be at this moment in time, than here with you in Knock, our spiritual home, on our Lady's birthday.

A very special thank you to Bishop Kevin Doran, our chief celebrant, few of you know what a support and friend he has been to us over the years.

We are privileged and honoured to have our Papal Nuncio with us once more. You know since his arrival in Ireland, he has never missed our Grandparents Pilgrimage. What does that tell you?

We have to thank our own Father Richard, who leaves no stone unturned to help us in every way he can - Thank you.

It's hard to think of our Lady's birthday without thinking of her own parents Saint Joachim and St Anne, our patrons. So today our Grandparents day here at Knock is very poignant, as it was also, on this very day, that we had the inspiration for the first Pilgrimage, 17 years ago, which was a present to our Lady on her birthday honouring and thanking her parents, the Grandparents of Jesus, which in turn led to the Catholic Grandparents Association which is now worldwide. I am delighted to tell you that we have ministries for Grandparents in over 59 different countries which prove to be an essential support and encouragement for Grandparents to grow in their own faith and to pass it on.

Reflecting back on the origins of the pilgrimage, we did not anticipate the overwhelming love and support that would follow, and I thank each and every one of you again. Without your loving presence, your prayers and your commitment we would not, could not be here today. Thank you.

We, the Catholic Grandparents Association, strive for opportunities for our children and Grandchildren, to be brought up in a modern and inclusive Catholic faith, whoever and whatever they are, surrounded and supported in their whole lives as we have been, through the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and holy mother Church.

In recent times, the faith has been waning in the younger generation. I sadly see this in my own family, despite our strongest efforts to bring them up in the faith.

It's hardly surprising when they have grown up in an era, only hearing negativity about our Church. In these circumstances, it is essential that we Grandparents, make them feel utterly included and encourage them to recognise the beauty of our faith, remember they are the future of our Church.

We live in unprecedented times, with our Grandchildren facing extreme social pressures and very different and evolving social norms in a thoroughly modern world.

Too often they now experience the disintegration of family units, blended step families and other new ways of living in a family, there is no manual on how to manage these complex situations.

Our Faith can and does provide a safe and supportive bedrock with which to navigate both the turbulent and the happy times.

On a Plane journey back from America with my Grandchildren we had very bad turbulence, I was sitting with Annie, my 11 year old Grandchild, She was terrified, and could not be consoled by the Air Hostess, or by me, she was convinced we were going to crash. The tears were streaming down her face. I cradled her in my arms, like a baby, I said "Annie, do you remember that little prayer we say at night when we're together? would you like to say it now?"

Unbelievably, she launched into 'Angel of God', My Guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this night be at my side, to light and guard to rule and guide.

Grandparents may be the only practising Catholics in the family, there is nobody in a better position than you to pass on the torch of faith which has been passed down to us through the generations, because you love Jesus Christ, you treasure your faith and you want to pass it on.

It is our sacred responsibility to impart as much guidance and help as possible, as we as grandparents and great grandparents are at the head of the family.

You are there during the sad and happy times, you offer support and understanding to single parents left to raise children, to families who struggle with addiction, those who experience financial problems or the challenges of disability or illness. You love and console after the misery of a divorce, when there is a miscarriage - you hurt double when your children are hurting. You keep on caring and helping even when your family's situations may not be what you would have wanted for them. You do not stop loving someone whose marriage has broken down, or if they are in trouble or happen to be gay. In fact, you love them more because they need your love more. When lives are shattered and we feel helpless, we turn to prayer, we pass on our faith by our example through mercy, forgiveness, love, just like Jesus taught us. We have to be Jesus to the family.

Pope Francis has made it plain this new and forward-looking church is one built completely and utterly on love. We must be the heralds of that message. My advice and my own personal experience as a Grandmother, is always meet them where they are at, tell them that you are praying for them every day of their lives, and that no matter what they do you will always love them And make sure they know the door is always open and take care of yourselves, look after your health, because these stressful situations can knock you for six.

Bishop John Hine, told a very touching story at one of our Pilgrimages. He was sitting with his Grandmother holding her hand on her death bed when she looked at him and said, "John, do you know that I have prayed for you every day of your life?" He was moved to tears

Who has prayed for you every day of your life? Think! Who do you pray for every day of your life?

Let your children and your Grandchildren know that you are praying for them. Prayer is hope. You are the guiding light.

A wise Grandparent understands and accepts that he or she is not the parent or in charge and that there may be areas of their grandchildren's upbringing with which we don't identify and can do nothing about. Stop worrying and pray. Pray the rosary, it is our greatest instrument of hope. Hand it over to God and never give up. He will never let you down.

What rings loud clear and true, is that we love our children and our grandchildren with all our hearts, souls and might, As the church loves them also, it is our job to help our children and their children feel and experience that truth.

Working together as a Church we can do this. Speak to your Priest or your bishop. We need a ministry for Grandparents in every parish and every diocese. We need to be included in Pastoral plans to be sure we have a say in the future of our Grandchildren's faith.

We need the Church and the Church needs us, our families need us as long as there is breath in our body, we will never let them down. Grandparents, you are the life blood of the family and the life blood of the Church. We have enjoyed over 2000 years of our precious faith and we will not be the generation that fails to pass it on. This is our prayer, our pledge and our promise to our Lady on her Birthday.

May St Joachim and St Anne bless you and your families all the days of your lives.





# Prayers for Grandparents

## “To my Grandparents in Heaven”

Read by James Cassidy

Dear God

On Grandparents Day,  
I used to be sad  
Coz my grandparents were all in heaven  
I thought that it was bad

But now I'm getting older  
I think my teacher might say bolder  
I know I have a secret weapon,  
In my grandparents up in Heaven

So I wish that they were here today  
But I know they every night when I pray  
They will send me whatever help they can  
To make sure I grow up to be a gentle man

So to Granny Una and Peggy  
Grandad Frank and Paddy  
I want to say that I will always love you  
and will always pray for you

AMEN

## Hugs and Kisses in Heaven

Dear God

Granny was born to a family of 10 children and this she was very glad  
But a lot of her brothers and sisters have died and this has made her very sad  
6 have died and only 4 are left, her love for her siblings she has no regrets

Out of the remaining she is the oldest one left,  
and she is often thinking when will she be next?

But I want you to let her know it does not work that way  
And she will not die suffering like her sisters Nan, Mary, Irene or Gay

Families are not always perfect, but I hope her parents Jack and Mai know,  
How she has kept everyone together and their love will continue to grow.

She has worked hard all her life and now she needs a rest  
And I hope you know God that she is the best

She goes to Mass every Sunday, and prays everyday  
So make sure the day you take her to heaven will be far far away

John, Tom and Kitty are her only siblings left, please God watch over  
them as they are the very best

She is such a strong person, you have certainly put her faith to the test,  
Having her as my Granny, I am so blessed

She has 13 grandchildren that love her so dearly,  
Let's cherish everyday with her sincerely

She is number 1 in our family, please don't ever take her away,  
But please give hugs and kisses in heaven, to Andy, Tony, Mary, Nan, Irene and Gay  
Until she meets them there again one day

Amen

# Children's Activity Page

- Our Lady of Knock -



[www.CatholicPlayground.com](http://www.CatholicPlayground.com)

We please ask Ministry Leaders and members to submit pictures and stories of events, meetings and relevant happenings to [info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.org](mailto:info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.org)

## CGA Ministry Leaders

By invitation only, we have a new Facebook Page for CGA Ministry Leaders only. Please request to be included in the closed group. The page will allow us to share prayer, ideas, events, etc.

[Catholic Grandparents Association Ministry Leaders](#)



## CGA Ministry Leaders & Members

**Our beautiful, exclusive new medal of Saint Joachim and Saint Anne with their grandson, Jesus is now available.**

In Keeping with the charism which is the Catholic Grandparents Association, our exclusive medal has at its' center, the Child Jesus holding a Red rose representing the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Mystic rose. Jesus is surrounded by His Grandparents, St. Joachim and St. Anne so that together, three generations, Grandparents, parents and children are represented as one family symbolizing the communion of the Holy Trinity. Working with renowned arts and craftsmen in Rome, this exquisite design came to fruition after many years of searching for the image that would truly depict the beauty, selfless love and devotion that Grandparents have for their grandchildren. It is our hope that this beautiful image signifying God's plan for the sanctity and unity of familial generational bonds will bring great joy, encouragement and support to Grandparents in passing on their faith.



Sterling Silver - €20, \$20 \*Silver Plated €10, \$10 \* Gold Plated - €10, \$10  
Plus shipping, medal only

To purchase a medal please send an email to [catholicgrandparents@gmail.com](mailto:catholicgrandparents@gmail.com) or call 888-510-5006 for US enquiries or 01328 560333 for Ireland and UK enquires

## Forthcoming Events

### The Dowry of Mary Pilgrimage Triduum

During the course of 2018 to 2020 the statue of Our Lady from the Slipper Chapel at the Catholic National Shrine in Walsingham will be taken to each Cathedral in England for a three-day triduum of prayer, as part of the preparation for the re-dedication of England as the Dowry of Mary in 2020. Each visit will take place between a Thursday and Saturday.

**"A moment of great promise  
.... for the Church in this  
country and for our mission"**

Cardinal Vincent Nichols

## In Remembrance of Grandparents who have been called home – forever in our hearts...

### **Weep Not For Me** *Unknown Author*

Weep not for me though I have gone  
Into that gentle night  
Grieve if you will, but not for long  
Upon my soul's sweet flight

I am at peace, my soul's at rest  
There is no need for tears  
For with your love I was so blessed  
For all those many years

There is no pain, I suffer not  
The fear is now all gone  
Put now these things out of your thoughts  
In your memory I live on

Remember not my fight for breath  
Remember not the strife  
Please do not dwell upon my death  
But celebrate my life



If you would like to send names of loved ones/members who you would like to have remembered in an issue contact us via our email address [info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.com](mailto:info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.com)