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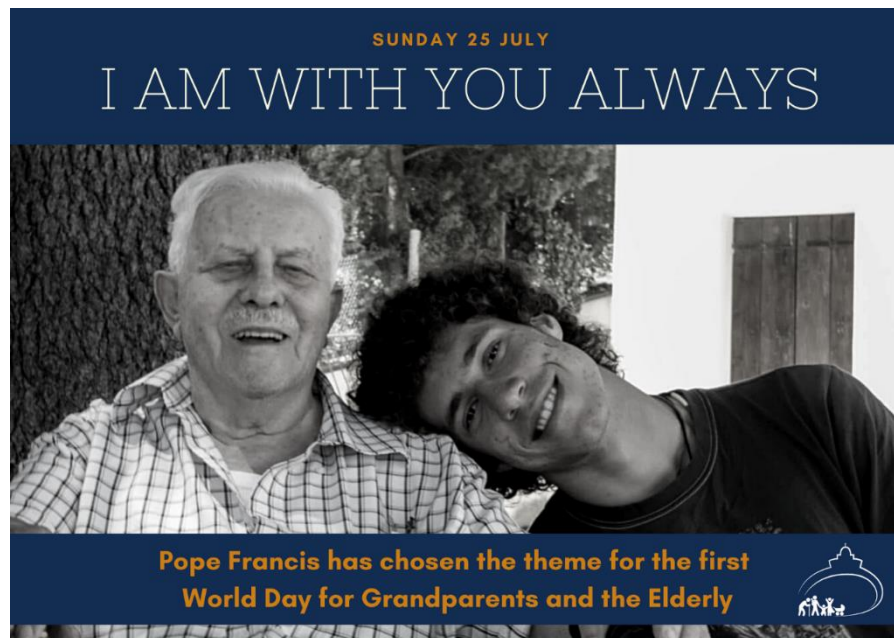
Office of Human Life, Family and Bioethics



June 2021

Highlights of this newsletter:

- ❖ Fruits of the Family Tree
- ❖ World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly
- ❖ News from our Office



Dear Friends for Life,

FRUITS OF THE FAMILY TREE

“Remember, of these parents you were born; what can you give them for all they gave you?” (Eccl 7: 28)

In May, we celebrate Mother’s Day to honor and pray for our mothers and the beautiful gift of life which God has entrusted to them in the vocation of motherhood. In a special way, we honor Our Blessed Mother who is the quintessential model of motherhood. Likewise, on Father’s Day in June, we give tribute to our fathers as protectors and defenders of the family, the “sanctuary of life,” and here we have the holy patriarch, St. Joseph, as the ultimate example of fatherhood for all men. **We honor our parents in this way because it is through the family that we first learn about God, moral values, and our responsibilities in society:** “...you must instruct your children to do what is right and to give alms, to be mindful of God and at all times to bless his name sincerely and with all their strength.” (Tob 14: 8-9)

Family is also the link between generations, and for many, the parents of our parents share a great role in this most intimate community. “Children’s children are the crown of the elderly, and the glory of children is their parentage.” (Prov. 17:6) **Grandparents pass on history and traditions within a family and the culture at large, but the treasures of age (e.g. wisdom, memory, unbounded sacrifice) extend to all our elders—and should not be forgotten.** Indeed, in an expanding cultural mindset that disparages advanced age for its imperfect physicality and actively extinguishes frailty through various forms of euthanasia, we must resist this hopeless perspective, and instead, respond with a fearless validation of the invaluable gifts that come with advanced age and even with infirmity.

WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY

In this, Pope Francis has formally established **World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly** to be celebrated annually throughout the Church on the fourth Sunday in July—close to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne who, as the grandparents of Jesus, are the paragons for all grandparents. The purpose of this celebration is to remind us that advanced age is a blessing—a gift that should be both cherished and freely shared, most especially in passing on the Faith.

For this year, the theme is “*I am with you always*” to emphasize not only the Lord’s closeness with the aged, but also the intergenerational bonds shared between young and old, and most especially characterized by the passing on of the Faith. In the Diocese of Rockville Centre, we invite you to join our efforts to recognize grandparents and the elderly for the treasure they are in all our lives:

- **Cherishing our Seniors** Young people (and all ages!) can honor and appreciate older persons in the community through the simple gesture of preparing a gift bag or writing an uplifting note to let this person know he or she is loved and valued—never forgotten. See the microsite below for more details.
- **Passing on the Faith** Grandparents (and all ages!) can find simple suggestions on our the microsite to help pass on the priceless gift of Faith. **In particular, the life story of the contemporary Blessed Carlo Acutis and his passion for the Most Holy Eucharist is a wonderful starting point to engage with grandchildren in a faith-based activity.** From there, we offer ideas to help you on this journey, no matter your starting point.

Please visit the Office of Human Life, Family and Bioethics’ microsite dedicated to World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly at www.catholicgenerations.com (anticipated to be available in early July) or visit our office website at www.DRVClife.org. Since this is a completely new initiative, the website is still in a robust phase of development, so please check back frequently for updates. We hope this will be an inspiring and effective tool for building family bonds, transmitting the Faith, and honoring the blessing of old age.

“Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” (Ex 20:12)

NEWS FROM OUR OFFICE

As the legislative session in Albany has closed, the New York State Catholic Conference has prepared the “2021 End-of-Session Round-Up” that summarizes the status of bills proposed this past session, including those that have been signed into law. (See the link further down in the Newsletter.) While there is a brief respite on some fronts, this is a time to continue education and advocacy efforts to defend life. In addition, despite the disappointing statewide legalization of adult marijuana use and possession, local municipalities can

pass a local law (before December 31) that limits retail dispensaries and on-site consumption licenses in their communities and we encourage efforts towards this. Please let us know if we can help you.

Finally, God is all good and the Source of all goodness around us. **“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thess:16-18)** **And let us never stop defending the sacredness of all human life.** God bless you always!

Sincerely in Christ,

Lisa A. Honkanen, M.D.