



Wednesday: Grandparents' Day – We are Called to Share with Joy

Each year, the Wednesday of Catholic Schools Week is designated as the day when the school community celebrates and pays tribute to grandparents and the role they play in handing on the faith to their grandchildren and in supporting the community of faith at home and in the parish. They bring joy to the lives of their grandchildren and in turn grandchildren can bring real joy to them.

Write a Poem, Prayer or Story

There are many activities which the pupils and the school community can engage with on this special day as part of **Catholic Schools Week 2015**. National Grandparents' Day in Ireland is celebrated in September every year. More details can be found at www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org. The people who organise this event would very much like to receive prayers/poems about grandparents to include in their celebration. You might like to spend some time today inviting the children to write a story/poem/prayer about their grandparents. These will be brought to the altar during Mass in Knock Shrine at the Grandparents' Day celebration next September. *Prayers and poems can be posted to: Catholic Grandparents' Association, Castlebar Street, Westport, Co. Mayo (Tel: 098-24877). These could also be displayed in the school or classroom and shared with grandparents.*

Thank You Card

Encourage the children to make a thank you card for their grandparents using the template on page 21 of the resource book or invent their own with a focus on the joy that our grandparents bring to our lives. Give the card to grandparents or if they live far away why not post it?

A Special Memory

Encourage the children to think of a time when their grandparents shared something special with them. Invite them to write the memory down so that they can share it with their grandparents.

Prayer Service to Celebrate Grandparents' Day

This short prayer service can be adapted to suit the needs of your class/school community. It can also be adapted to be prayed even if you are not inviting the grandparents in on the day. You may like to involve as many of the grandparents as you can by inviting them to read various parts.

Leader We begin our time of prayer together by marking ourselves with the sign of our faith:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

As we light our candle this morning we remind ourselves that Jesus is always with us in everything we do.

This morning we give thanks for our grandparents, for all that they do for us and with us, for all that they teach us, for the love we share with them and the joy they bring to our lives. We begin by welcoming them in song.

✠ 'This is the Day', *Alive-O 4*, page 32



Leader This morning we want to welcome all the grandparents who have travelled to be with us this morning. Whether you have had a long journey or you've just come across the road, whether it's your first time in our school or you are here every day, *tá céad míle fáilte romhaibh go léir*. We also take a moment to remember the grandparents who cannot be with us – those who could not travel, those who live far away, those who are sick either at home or in hospital, and those who are with God in heaven. They are all in our thoughts wherever they are this morning.

This year, the theme for Catholic Schools Week is **Catholic Schools: Called to Serve** and today we are focusing on how we are called to serve God with joy. Joy is extremely important as when we are filled with joy we can share that joy with others and Jesus will rejoice with us. Now we are going to listen to a story where great joy was found.

Reader **Adapted from Luke 15:10**

Jesus told a story of a woman who had ten silver coins. When the woman lost one of the ten coins she was upset and worried and so she lit a lamp, swept the entire house and searched and searched until she found the lost coin. Upon finding it, she called all her friends and neighbours together to celebrate with her, for the coin she thought she had lost was found. Jesus said, 'In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing and joy with the angels of God over one person who comes back to God.'

Leader The story we have just heard is one of the many parables that Jesus told people who came to listen to him. A parable is a story that Jesus used to teach his friends about God or sometimes to tell them about the way God wants us to act towards others. This parable is a good story for us because during this Catholic Schools Week we are thinking about and talking about how we are called to serve God. In this parable Jesus tells us that we are serving God when we are full of joy. The woman in the story was full of sadness when she lost one of her coins but when she found it she also found joy again. Sometimes we can feel lost if we don't make room for Jesus in our lives and hearts, but when we make room for Jesus, we become more joyful. In Jesus we can find joy, we can find joy and share it with others and we are then serving God.

Our grandparents are a great example to us. They show us how to be full of the joy of Jesus and how to share that joy with others. Our grandparents share their joy with us and show us how to be in the world. They give us good advice. They help us to be the kind of people Jesus would want us to be. They share with us the joy to be found in Jesus Christ when they pass on their faith to us, so let us say thank you for them and let us give thanks to God for the joyful gift they are in our homes and our communities. We could show our appreciation with a big clap ...

Leader We thank our very special guests for sharing their time and their presence with us today.

Now let us take the time to bring our prayers to God.



Response Lord Graciously Hear Us

We pray for all those who are gathered here, our teachers, the school staff and members of our family. We give thanks for all that they have shared with us ... Lord Hear Us. **Response**

We pray for our parents and grandparents who love us, care for us and teach us by their words and deeds how to be like Jesus. We ask you to care for and protect them for us ... Lord Hear Us. **Response**

Bless all children everywhere, those here in our school, in our families and across the world. Today, we also remember children less fortunate than us who have no school at all to attend, who are hungry or in need of shelter and protection. Grant that we may do all we can to share what we have with them ... Lord Hear Us. **Response**

We remember those of our grandparents who are no longer with us. We ask Jesus to bless them, as they live forever with the saints in your heavenly kingdom ... Lord Hear Us. **Response**

Leader Today, on Grandparents' Day, we think of the faith and love that our grandparents share with us. They share their lives and gifts and play a special part in how we learn and live our faith. Lord, help us to share all that we have and all that we are. Help us to know the joy of sharing and giving to those around us. Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father/Ár nAthair

Final Blessing

Leader As we come to the end of our celebration this morning we will pray our final blessing together. Invite the children to extend their hands over their grandparents and say:

Loving God,
Bless all our grandparents, those with us here today, those who cannot be with us and those who have gone to be with you.
May they heed your call to share their wisdom
and faith with us.
May they have courage and confidence
to hand on your gifts
of experience and knowledge
of stories, songs and memories.
May they continue to learn and grow with us day by day.
Bless them and all of us gathered here today with length of days and joy at the last.
We make this prayer
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Suggested closing hymn:

♩ 'Connected', *Alive-O 4*, page 14