

# SUNDAY *Plus*

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time **Divine Office Week I** Year A

**World Day of Prayer for  
Grandparents & the Elderly**

## God is thrillingly present



Most of us could draw up a list of experiences which have led us to believe vividly in the presence of God. Everyone would have his own personal testimony, though it is well to remember that in the last analysis these experiences are incommunicable. My own list would consist in grand experiences like the sight of the Alps one winter's morning from an aeroplane, 20,000 feet up – silent and fast, majestically independent of humanity; but also in the sight of tiny delicate things like a newborn baby's fingernails. Both the huge, panoramic exposure and the immensely delicate "workmanship" of the fingernail thrill me with God's presence.

God is even more thrillingly present in human relationships, and, like most people, my list of positive experiences of God would chiefly consist in the experiences I have been given of human trust and friendship. Inevitably we take love's existence for granted, but it is, in fact, an almost miraculous experience. This ability to enter into someone else's life and become an accepted partner there, coupled with the ability to let the other person enter into our life and share our inner life with us – all this seems to be something divine, because it seems to come from a different centre from the rest of life on this planet. Love can totally transform a life from the inside while the external circumstances remain the same. There is a presence of God in that, one which it is not difficult to recognise and adore.

John Dalrymple, *Costing Not Less Than Everything*: notes on holiness today

Our affection for our loved ones – for the wife or husband with whom we have spent so much of our lives, for our children, for our grandchildren who brighten our days – does not fade when our strength wanes.

Pope Leo XIV

## Becoming a grandmother

What was your first response [to the birth of your first grandchild] and how did you feel at that first meeting? You probably, like so many grandmothers, felt a renewed sense of wonder and overwhelming love and peace at the reality of the birth. That moment marks a deep change in you, as well as your newborn grandchild. There are now three generations instead of two, and you have shifted to a new

place in the family tree. As your status changes from mother to grandmotherhood, you are presented with a whole new set of challenges, unique to your individual circumstances... Therefore, go easy on yourself. Recognise the enormity of what has happened and its impact on you, then give this new experience time to settle into your heart, your daily life and your faith life. Above all, pray – and keep praying – for God's guidance over the coming days, weeks, months and years.

Catherine Wiley,  
*Being a Catholic Grandmother*



### Feast of the week Sunday 26 July

## Ss Joachim and Anne

Ss Joachim and Anne are honoured as the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the grandparents of Jesus Christ. Though not mentioned in the Bible, their story is rooted in ancient Christian tradition and apocryphal writings, particularly the *Protoevangelium of James*. According to tradition, Joachim and Anne were a devout, elderly couple who longed for a child. After years of prayer and faith, they were blessed with Mary, whom they dedicated to God from an early age. Their role in salvation history is significant, as they nurtured and raised Mary in a household rooted in faith, preparing her for her unique vocation as the Mother of God. Ss Joachim and Anne are revered for their example of piety, perseverance, and trust in God's plan. Together, they embody the quiet strength and love of grandparents and the importance of family in the life of the Church.

### READINGS

Today:  
1 Kings 3:5, 7-12  
Romans 8:28-30  
Matthew 13:44-52

Monday:  
Jeremiah 13:1-11  
Matthew 13:31-35

Tuesday:  
Jeremiah 14:17-22  
Matthew 13:36-43

Wednesday:  
Jeremiah 15:10, 16-21  
John 11:19-27  
or Luke 10:38-42

Thursday:  
Jeremiah 18:1-6  
Matthew 13:47-53

Friday:  
Jeremiah 26:1-9  
Matthew 13:54-58

Saturday:  
Jeremiah 26:11-16, 24  
Matthew 14:1-12

Next Sunday:  
Isaiah 55:1-3  
Romans 8:35, 37-39  
Matthew 14:13-21

Lord of hidden treasure, bless our elders, the keepers of wisdom and faith. May we cherish our grandparents and the lasting richness they have brought into our lives.  Amen.