

PASTORAL MESSAGE
Fifth World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This year, we will celebrate the **World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly on Sunday, 27th July, 2025**. The late Pope Francis established the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly in 2021 to be celebrated annually on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. I greet you all with a heart full of affection, especially those who are in the golden years of life. The fourth Sunday of July is set aside not only to honour you, but to truly listen to your stories, to learn from your wisdom, and to thank you for the love and faith you continue to pass on.

The theme for this year's celebration, *"Blessed are those who have not lost hope"* (cf. Sir 14:2) invites us to reflect on the enduring strength of hope. Even amid life's trials; illness, loneliness, or the quiet pain of feeling forgotten, Grandparents and the Elderly are a living witness to the power of hope. Their steadfast faith in God, serves as a guiding example for the younger generations, reminding us that God's promises never grow old. As Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, beautifully reminded us: *"Hope is a constant source of joy, whatever our age."* Indeed, hope is not just for the young; it is the vocation of every Christian. Grandparents and the Elderly are truly living signs of this hope.

In this Jubilee Year, we are especially called to journey together with our brothers and sisters, to liberate those in need from the pains of isolation, neglect, and invisibility (cf. Message of Pope Leo XIV). Therefore, I urge every parish, every Catholic organisation and family, to respond to the call of this Jubilee Year by visiting the elderly, inviting them to pray with you, calling and listening to them, and restoring their hope that they are needed, loved and cared for. Let us be a Church that knocks on the doors of our elderly brothers and sisters, bearing the hands and heart of Christ.

To grandparents and elderly friends: Thank you for the countless ways you have served quietly, faithfully and generously. Thank you for raising families, building parishes and communities, passing on the faith, and continuing to pray for the Church and the world.

Let us all walk together in hope. And may our communities be renewed by the grace that flows from generations united in love and faith.

With every blessing in Christ Jesus,

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+Dr. Linus Neli, JCD
Archbishop of Imphal

