GRANDPARENTS: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Mission Statement

The Catholic Grandparent Ministry invites grandparents to grow deeper in prayer for their children and grandchildren and to be authentic witnesses of Jesus. God’s plan for grandparents calls them to help their families become disciples of Jesus Christ. The Catholic Grandparent Ministry strives to build a community of support and healing for grandparents, to encourage them to live holy lives and to equip them with the tools to build up their families and parishes in Christ.

Grandparent Prayer

Heavenly Father, through the intercession of the Holy Family, grant to this local Church the many graces needed to foster, strengthen, and support faith-filled holy families.

We thank you for the mission of grandparenting. Help us live holy lives and equip us with the tools to build up our families and parishes. Grant us the wisdom, courage and love to be for each other a community of healing and support.

Through the intercession of Saints Joachim and Anne, Jesus’ grandparents, send us the graces we need to be authentic witnesses as disciples of Jesus so our children and grandchildren will come to know, love and serve you, Lord.

We ask this in Jesus’ name.

Amen

You will find updated information on the Events page of our website: www.catholicgrandparenting.org
This study guide is intended to accompany the EWTN grandparent DVD series that can be purchased at https://www.ewtnreligiouscatalogue.com or by calling 1-800-854-6316.

Saint Photo References:

St. Phillip Howard; Blessed William Howard, St. Vladimir the Great, St. Olga of Kiev, Sts. Joachim and Anne; St. Melania the Younger, St. Macrina the Elder, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Peter of Sebaste, St. Macrina the Younger, St. Timothy, St. Felix II, St. Gregory the Great: http://www.catholic.org/saints/

St. Gregory of Utrecht: http://heiligen.net/

St. Clotilde: http://iceworld.blogspot.com/2015/06/saint-june-3-st-clotilde-patron-of.html

Saint Clodoald: http://stcdio.org/about/our-history/


St. Melania the Younger: http://chapel.upperroom.org/the-chapel/saints/67

St. Ludmila: http://www.conventofsaaintelizabeth.org/byzicons/print/prints-l.html

St. Wenceslaus: http://www.liturgies.net/saints/wenceslaus/wenceslaus.htm

“Seven Virtues” painting by Francesco Pesselino Workshop, Florence, 1400’s: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seven_Virtues_by_Francesco_Pesellino.jpg

“Communion of Saints / Church Triumphant” by Fra Angelico: http://parishes.wwu.org/resources/article/re_the_saints_inspire_us/
Small Group Guidelines

Small groups are an opportunity to create deep and lasting faith-filled relationships, with people who will share times of joy in your life, and encourage and help you in times of difficulty.

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” (1 Thess. 5:11)

To that end, we provide the following small group guidelines:

1. Please arrive on time, and come prepared
   - Begin your homework with prayer, asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit
   - Spread out your homework over the week; you will get more out of it and enjoy it more.
   - If you cannot attend a class, please call, e-mail or text me.

2. Actively take part in the discussion with charity
   - Everyone’s insights are valuable to others and vital for the group’s growth
   - Please participate each week
   - If you like to share, think ahead to the 2 or 3 times you would like to comment, so as not to dominate the discussion. Allow quiet time for others to speak before adding comments.
   - If you find it hard to share, think ahead to the 1 or 2 times you would like to comment, so you are comfortable participating

3. Be a good listener and respectful of others
   - Please give your full attention to the person speaking, and do not interrupt others
   - Please avoid side conversations in the small group discussions and lecture

4. Stick to the assigned study material; do not bring other materials to the small group
   - In order to gain the most out of this study, please stay focused on insights gleaned from your assigned homework
   - Please do not get sidetracked on other matters- such as former churches or bible studies, movies you have seen, or books you have read
   - Bring only your homework, Bible and Catechism to class
   - Please do not bring materials to share with the group- such as other bible study materials, articles, books, tapes or other handouts

5. Small group discussions are confidential
   - Please do not discuss them outside the small group

6. Pray for your small group members
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Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 1, Disc #1, Talk #1 by Kelly-Ann Keays

Host: Fr. Mallon - Pastor St. Benedict’s parish - Halifax Nova Scotia
Nicole Snook – Journalist/producer
Deacon Larry Worthen - Deacon/grandfather

“You will know them by their fruits”
(Matthew 7:16)

Discussion Questions:

1. What are your hobbies and interests? Can you trace them back to your grandparents?
2. How have your grandparents influenced your faith journey?

Grandfather-Grandson Saints

Saint Philip Howard & Blessed William Howard

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,
I pray that my grandchildren will encounter your love and mercy.
I ask this in Jesus’ name,
Amen.
Saint Philip Howard

Feast Day: October 29th ~ Birth: 1557 ~ Death: 1595

*Martyr of England and Wales*
One of the forty martyrs of England and Wales, Philip was the earl of Arundel and Surrey and, although a Catholic, led a religiously apathetic life until his personal conversion, after which he was a zealous Catholic in the midst of Elizabethan England. Arrested by authorities, he was placed in the Tower of London in 1585 and condemned to death in 1589. The sentence was never carried out, and Philip languished in the Tower until his death at the age of thirty-eight. Beatified in 1929, he was included among the English martyrs canonized in 1970 by Pope Paul VI.

*Marriage & Family*
Born in the Strand, London, he was the only child of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk and Lady Mary FitzAlan, daughter of Henry, Earl of Arundel. He was baptized at Whitehall Palace with the Royal Family in attendance, and was named after his godfather, Philip II, King of Spain. Philip Howard was born during the upheaval of the Reformation. His home from the age of seven was a former Carthusian monastery. At the age of fourteen he was married to his stepsister, Anne Dacre. He graduated from St John’s College, Cambridge in 1574 and was about eighteen when he attended Queen Elizabeth I’s Court. His life had been a frivolous one, both at Cambridge and at Court where he was a favorite of the Queen.

Philip Howard’s father, the Duke of Norfolk, was arrested on October 1, 1569 for his intrigues against Queen Elizabeth. The Duke was attainted and executed in 1572, but Philip Howard succeeded to his mother’s inheritance upon the death of his grandfather, becoming Earl of Arundel in 1580. He was present at a debate held in 1581 in the Tower of London, between Father Edmund Campion, a Jesuit, Father Ralph Sherwin and a group of Protestant theologians. He was so impressed by the Catholics that he experienced a spiritual conversion. He renounced his previous, frivolous life and was reconciled with his wife.
**Imprisonment & Martyrdom**

Arundel, with much of his family, remained Catholic recusants during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They also attempted to leave England without permission. While some might have been able to do this unobserved, Arundel was a second cousin (once removed) of the Queen. He was betrayed by a servant and arrested not long after his ship set sail from Littlehampton. Howard was committed to the Tower of London on April 25, 1585. While charges of high treason were never proven, he spent ten years in the Tower, until his death of dysentery. Queen Elizabeth never signed the death warrant, but Howard was never told this. He was kept constantly in fear of execution, although comforted by the companionship of a dog, which served as a go-between by which Howard and other prisoners, most notably the priest Robert Southwell, could send messages to each other. Although these two men never met, Howard’s dog helped them to deepen their friendship and exchange encouragement in each other’s plight. Philip Howard loved his pet, who is remembered along with him in a statue at Arundel Cathedral.

One day Howard scratched into a wall of his cell these words: "*Quanto plus afflictiones pro Christo in hoc saeculo, tanto plus gloriae cum Christo in futuro*” – ‘the more affliction [we endure] for Christ in this world, the more glory [we shall obtain] with Christ in the next’ (cf. Rom 8).

He petitioned the Queen as he lay dying to allow him to see his wife and his son, who had been born after his imprisonment. The Queen responded that "*If he will but once attend the Protestant Service, he shall not only see his wife and children, but be restored to his honors and estates with every mark of my royal favor.*” To this, Howard is supposed to have replied: "Tell Her Majesty if my religion be the cause for which I suffer, sorry I am that I have but one life to lose.” He remained in the Tower, never seeing his wife or daughter again, and died alone on Sunday October 19, 1595. He was immediately acclaimed as a Catholic Martyr.

Howard was buried without ceremony beneath the floor of the church of St Peter ad Vincula, inside the walls of the Tower. Twenty-nine years later, his widow and son obtained permission from King James I of England to move the body to the Fitzalan Chapel located on the western grounds of Arundel Castle. Some of his bones are also found within his shrine at Arundel Cathedral.

Howard was attainted in 1589 for his mother’s title, but his son Thomas eventually was restored in blood and succeeded as Earl of Arundel, and to the lesser titles of his grandfather.
Blessed William Howard

Feast Day: December 29 ~ Birth: 1614 ~ Death 1680

Martyr of England
He was born the son of Thomas, earl of Arundel, in 1616 and raised a Catholic. The grandson of Blessed Philip Howard and a member of the noble family of the Howards, William held the title of Viscount Stafford. He was made a Knight of the Bath by King Charles I (r.1624-1649), and married Mary Stafford in 1637. In 1640, William was named Baron Stafford. A county in Virginia in the United States bears his name. He was arrested on the false accusation of complicity in the so-called Popish Plot and imprisoned for two years before finally being beheaded on Tower Hill on December 29. He was beatified in 1929.

Early life
William grew up in a nominally Anglican household, his father having converted to the Church of England in 1616. William was undoubtedly exposed to Roman Catholic influences, as almost all of the Howard family remained loyal to that faith even when they conformed outwardly to the Established Church.

His grandfather, Philip Howard, 20th Earl of Arundel had been imprisoned by Elizabeth I in the Tower of London for being a Catholic and had died there in 1595 after 10 years’ imprisonment. In 1620, William was placed in the household of Samuel Harsnett, Bishop of Norwich for an education, then attended St John's College, Cambridge, at age 11 in 1624, but did not receive a degree. He was still regarded as a member of the Church of England in 1633, when he was listed as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner.

Marriage and children
He married Mary, daughter of Edward Stafford (died 1621) and Ann Wilford, and sister of Henry Stafford, 5th Baron Stafford (died 1637) by a license granted 11 October 1637. The Staffords were Catholics and the marriage was conducted by a Catholic, not an Anglican, priest, to the reported embarrassment of the groom’s father. Following Henry Stafford’s death, and the forced (and probably illegal) surrender of the barony, on the ground of his poverty, by the next heir, Mary’s distant cousin Roger Stafford, 6th Baron Stafford in 1637, the Howard family secured the title for William, he and Mary being created Baron and Baroness Stafford on 12 September 1640. Two months later, William was created Viscount Stafford. The couple had 3 sons and 6 daughters.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 2, Disc #1, Talk #2 by Dennis Barry

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be your authentic self?
2. How do you nourish your grandchildren in their faith?
3. What are the obstacles keeping your grandchildren from faith? How can you take these obstacles out of your grandchildren’s paths?

Grandson Saints

What virtue stands out in this saint’s life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Father God,
You have created the vocation of grandparenting.
Help me to never underestimate the impact that I can have on my grandchildren’s faith.
Shower me with the graces I need to be an authentic witness of your divine mercy and love.
I ask this in Jesus’ name,
Amen.
Saint Gregory of Utrecht

Feast Day: November 14th ~ Birth: 707 or 708 ~ Death: 775 or 780

Early Life
Gregory was born of a noble family at Trier. His father Alberic was the son of Addula, who, as widow, was Abbess of Pfalzel (Palatiolum) near Trier. On account of the similarity of names, and in consequence of a forged last will, Addula has been frequently confounded with Adala (Adela), daughter of Dagobert II of Austrasia—thus falsely making Gregory a scion of the royal house of the Merovingians. He received his early education at Pfalzel. When, in 722, St. Boniface passed through Trier on his way from Frisia to Hessia and Thuringia, he rested at this convent. Gregory was called upon to read the Sacred Scriptures at the meals. St. Boniface gave an explanation and dwelt upon the merits of an apostolic life, in such warm and convincing terms that the heart of Gregory was filled with enthusiasm. He announced his intention of going with St. Boniface and nothing could move him from his resolution. He now became the disciple and in time the helper of the great Apostle of Germany, sharing his hardships and labors, accompanying him in all his missionary tours, and learning from the saint the secret of sanctity. In 738 St. Boniface made his third journey to Rome; Gregory went with him and brought back many valuable additions for his library.

Successor
About 750 Gregory was made Abbot of St. Martin’s, in Utrecht. In 744 St. Willibrord, the first Bishop of Utrecht, had died but had received no successor. St. Boniface had taken charge and had appointed an administrator. In 754 he started on his last missionary trip and took with him the administrator, St. Eoban, who was to share his crown of martyrdom. After this, Pope Stephen II (III) and Pepin ordered Gregory to look after the diocese. For this reason some (even the Mart. Rom.) call him bishop, though he never received episcopal consecration. The school of his abbey, a kind of missionary seminary, was now a center of piety and learning. Students flocked to it from all sides: Franks, Frisians, Saxons, even Bavarians and Swabians. England, though it had splendid schools of its own, sent scholars. Among his disciples St. Liudger is best known. He became the first Bishop of Munster later, and wrote the life of Gregory. In it (Acta SS., Aug., V, 240) he extols the virtues of Gregory, his contempt of riches, his sobriety, his forgiving spirit and his alms deeds. Some three years before Gregory’s death, a lameness attacked his left side and gradually spread over his entire body. At the approach of death he had
himself carried into church and there breathed his last. His relics were religiously kept at Utrecht, and in 1421 and 1597 were examined at episcopal visitations. A large portion of his head is in the church of St. Amelberga at Sustern, where an official recognition took place Sept. 25, 1885, by the Bishop of Roermond (Anal. Boll., V, 162). A letter written by St. Lullus, Bishop of Mainz, to St. Gregory is still extant (P.L., XCVI, 821).
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 3, Disc #1, Talk #3 by Katie Royal

Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways can you be a building block to your grandchildren’s faith?
2. What seeds do you plant in the life of your grandchildren to help them live a faith filled life?

Grandmother-Grandson Saints

Saint Olga of Kiev & Saint Vladimir the Great

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Come Holy Spirit,
Give me the grace I need to know when to speak and when to listen in my relationship with my grandchildren.
I ask this in Jesus’ name,
Amen.
Saint Olga of Kievan

Feast Day: July 11th ~ Birth: 879 ~ Death: 969

**Early Life**
St. Olga married in 903 to Prince Igor I of Kievan, Rus’. She was a cruel and barbarous woman (she scalded her husband’s murderers to death in 945 and murdered hundreds of their followers) until she was baptized at Constantinople in 957. She then requested Emperor Otto I to send missionaries to Kiev. Although St. Adalbert of Magdeburg was sent and the queen exerted great efforts the mission proved a failure as did her attempts to convert her son, Svyatoslav. Christianity was introduced however by her grandson St. Vladimir.

**Conversion to Christianity**
Olga was the first ruler of Rus’ to convert to Christianity, in either 945 or 957. The ceremonies of her formal reception in Constantinople were minutely described by Emperor Constantine VII in his book De Ceremoniis. Following her baptism, Olga took the Christian name Yelena, after the reigning Empress Helena Lekapena. The Slavonic chronicles add apocryphal details to the account of her baptism, such as the story of how she charmed and "outwitted" Constantine and spurned his proposals of marriage. In actuality, at the time of her baptism, Olga was an old woman, while Constantine already had a wife.

Olga was one of the first people of Rus’ to be canonized, proclaimed a saint for her efforts to spread Christianity throughout the country. Because of her proselytizing influence, the Orthodox Church, Byzantine Catholic Church, and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church call Saint Olga by the honorific Isapóstolos, "Equal to the Apostles.” However, she failed to convert Svyatoslav, and it was left to her grandson and pupil, Vladimir I, to make Christianity the lasting state religion. During her son's prolonged military campaigns, she remained in charge of Kiev, residing in the castle of Vyshgorod together with her grandsons. She died soon after the Pechenegs' siege of the city, in 969. She is regarded as a saint.
Saint Vladimir I

Feast Day: July 15th ~ Birth: 958 ~ Death: 1015

Ruler of Russia
St. Vladimir I was the grandson of St. Olga and illegitimate son of Sviatoslav and Grand Duke of Kiev. He and his mistress, Malushka, were given Novgorod to rule by his father. When civil war broke out between his half-brothers Yaropolk and Oleg; Yaropolk made himself ruler by defeating and killing Oleg. When Yaropolk captured Novgorod, Vladimir was forced to flee to Scandinavia in 977. Vladimir returned with an army and captured Novgorod and defeated and slew Yaropolk at Rodno in 980. Vladimir was now sole ruler of Russia, notorious for his barbarism and immorality. After his conquest of Kherson in the Crimea in 988, he became impressed by the progress of Christianity and approached Eastern Emperor Basil II about marrying the emperor’s daughter Ann. He was converted, reformed his life and married Anne. On his return to Kiev, he invited Greek missionaries to Russia and lead his people to Christianity, borrowing canonical features from the West and built schools and churches. His later years were troubled by rebellions led by the sons of his first marriages, although two sons by Anne, SS Romanus and David became martyrs. In 1014 he was obliged to march against his rebellious son Yaroslav in Novgorod, fell ill on the way and died at Beresy, Russia. He is patron of the Russian Catholics.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 4, Disc #2, Talk #1 by Fr. Rob Arsenault

Discussion Questions:

1. What memories do you have of your grandparents making you feel loved and welcome?
2. What are some ways you can show love and caring to your grandchildren from a distance?

Action Step:
Write a prayer asking for your grandchildren to follow the vocation that God has planned for them.

Mother-Son Saints

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,
Author of all relationships, I desire to grow in my relationship with you. Open my heart to receive Your love and open my eyes to new ways I can grow in my relationship with my grandchildren and pass on Your perfect love to them. I ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.
Saint Clotide

Feast Day: June 4th ~ Birth: 474 ~ Death: 545

Dynasty
St. Clotilde (c. 474-545) and her husband King Clovis (c. 466-511) founded the Merovingian dynasty, which ruled the Franks for over 200 years. They were married in 492 or 493, and she converted him to Christianity in 496. When Clovis died, Clotilde retired to Tours. Her sons’ quarrels caused her great sorrow. She died at the tomb of St. Martin of Tours and was buried in Sainte-Genevieve in Paris, a church that she and Clovis founded. St. Clotilde at prayer was a popular theme in medieval art.

Family Retaliation
In 523, Clotilde's sons went to war against her cousin, King Sigismund of Burgundy, the son of Gundobad, which led to Sigismund’s deposition and imprisonment. Sigismund was assassinated the following year and his body thrown down a well in symbolic retaliation for the deaths of Clotilde’s parents. Gregory of Tours claimed - and many others have followed - that Clotilde incited her sons to war as a means to revenge the supposed murder of her parents by Gundobad while others, such as Godefroid Kurth, find this unconvincing and apocryphal. Subsequently, her eldest son Chlodomer was killed during the following Burgundian campaign under Sigismund’s successor King Godomar at the Battle of Vézeronce. Her daughter, also named Clotilde, also died about this time. Clotilde tried in vain to protect the rights of her three grandsons, the children of Chlodomer, against the claims of her surviving sons Childebert and Chlothar. Chlothar had two of them killed, while only Clodoald (Cloud) managed to escape and later chose an ecclesiastical career. She was equally unsuccessful in her efforts to prevent the civil discords between her children.

After these failures, Clotilde appeared to dedicate herself to a saintly life. She occupied herself with the building of churches and monasteries, preferring to distance herself from the power struggles of the court. Churches associated with her are located at Laon, and Rouen.

Clotilde died in 544 or 545 at Tours, of natural causes; she was buried at her husband’s side, in the Church of the Holy Apostles (now the Abbey of St Genevieve).
Saint Clodoald (Saint Cloud)

Feast Day: September 7th ~ Birth: 522 ~ Death: 560

**Early Life**
A grandson of King Clovis of the Franks and the youngest son of King Clodomir of Orleans, Clodoald was born in 524.

Clodoald was raised in Paris by his grandmother, Saint Clotilde. He was one of three brothers, all of whom were targeted for assassination by their uncle, Clotaire I. Clodoald's brothers, Theodoald and Gunther, were killed by Clotaire when they were ten and nine respectively, but Clodoald survived by escaping to Provence.

Clodoald renounced all claims to the throne, and lived as a studious hermit and disciple of Saint Severinus of Noricum.

**Faith & Service**
Visited by many for counsel and healing, Clodoald in effect gained nothing by keeping himself remote from society. He therefore returned to Paris, where he was received with joy. At the people's request, he was ordained a priest by Bishop Eusebius of Paris in 551, and served the church for some time.

Clodoald established an abbey at a hamlet named Novigentum—on the Seine near Versailles—that is now a collegiate church of canons regular called Saint Cloud wherein his relics are kept. The hamlet hosting his tomb was renamed Saint-Cloud accordingly.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 5, Disc #2, Talk #2 by Maria VanZitphen

Host: Fr. Mallon- Pastor St. Benedict’s parish - Halifax Nova Scotia
Nicole Snook – Journalist/producer
Deacon Larry Worthen- Deacon/grandfather

As a child every Good Friday my grandmother took us to the Procession of Candles and at the end of the procession came the recumbent Christ and my grandmother told us children, ‘look he is dead, but tomorrow he will be risen!” That is how the faith entered! Faith in Christ crucified and Risen.”
(Pope Francis)

Discussion Questions:

1. How can you cultivate relationship with your grandchildren?
2. What traditions and rituals do you have in your family that help to pass on the faith to your grandchildren?

Grandparent Saints – Grandparents of Jesus

Saint Joachim & Saint Anne

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Dear Father of faith and life,
Hearing that by answering Yes to you today, doors can open that impact other people in the future, frightens me. Send your Holy Spirit to fill me with courage so I can continue to answer YES to your will for my life. Help me to really live my faith so others will come to know, love and serve you Lord. I ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.
Saints Joachim and Anne

Feast Day: July 26th ~ Patron Saints of Grandparents

Parents of Mary
Saints Joaquin (sometimes spelled "Joachim," pronounced "wal-keem") and Anne, are the parents of the Virgin Mary. There are no mentions of them in the Bible or Gospels, what we know comes from Catholic legend and the Gospel of James, which is an unsanctioned, apocryphal writing form the second century AD. We do know from scholarship that the Gospel of James was not written by James, the Brother of Jesus, despite its claim to be so authored.

Even the early Church fathers expressed skepticism about the Gospel of James in their writings. There are about 150 copies of the ancient manuscript which often have different titles, but tell the same story — that Mary was promised to Joaquin and Anne by an angel, was consecrated to God, and she remained a virgin all her life.

Naturally, there is plenty of room for scholarly debate about these saints. We have no true primary sources that prove they even existed, but certainly we can agree that Mary had parents.

Likewise, we can agree that Mary had good, faithful parents who raised her with a love and devotion to God like none other except Jesus Christ Himself.

Joachim and Anne serve as role models for parents and both deserve to be honored and emulated for their devotion to God and Our Lady Mary, the Mother of God.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity  
Week 6, Disc #2, Talk #3 by Simon Gomez

**Host:** Fr. Mallon - Pastor St. Benedict’s parish  
Halifax Nova Scotia  
Kate Robinson - Director of Communication,  
St. Benedict’s parish  
Deacon Larry Worthen - Deacon/grandfather

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**“Let us all remember this:**  
One cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the tangible witness of one’s life.”  
*Pope Francis*

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**Discussion Questions:**

1. What does holiness mean to you?
2. What little things that you witnessed in your grandparent’s lives do you think impacted your faith life?

**Grandfather-Grandson Saints**

![Image of Blessed Leonard Kimura and Saint Xavier]

Photo Credit: The Jesuit Curia in Rome  
Photo Credit: St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

Blessed Leonard Kimura  
Saint Xavier

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?  
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

**Closing Prayer**

Loving Father,  
Help me to model Your call to love and service, always keeping God at the center of all that I do.  
I pray that my grandchildren will come to know, love, and serve you Father.  
I ask this in Jesus’ name,  
Amen.
Saint Leonard Kimura

Feast Day: November 18th ~ Birth: 1575 ~ Death 1619

Early Life
Leonard Kimura belonged to the distinguished Kimura family. His grandfather was the first Japanese to receive the waters of baptism from St Francis Xavier when the latter visited the island of Hirado off Japan’s western shore in Oct 1550 and was also the man who offered hospitality to the saint. Leonard’s parents later moved to Nagasaki as it was becoming a Christian centre. It was there that Leonard was born in 1575. He attended the Jesuit school and served as a lay catechist for fourteen years, traveling with the Jesuit priests on their missionary trips. He became a Jesuit brother in Nov 1602 when he was twenty-seven, initially as a cook, tailor and painter before taking up his catechetical career and joined the missionaries on their apostolic journeys.

Arrest & Imprisonment
When the 1614 decree was promulgated banishing all missionaries from Japan, many Jesuits were forced to leave the country but Bro Kimura decided to remain and for the next two years he worked alone and lived the life of a fugitive to avoid being arrested. In Dec. 1616 while he was in Nagasaki, he was arrested with a small group of Christians, but because he was dressed as a Japanese gentleman, his captors did not know they had caught a Jesuit. At the trial the judge offered him the usual 200 pieces of silver if he could reveal the whereabouts of a Jesuit priest, but Bro Kimura honestly replied: “I know one Jesuit; he is a brother and not a priest.” And when offered 100 silver pieces for information on this brother, Bro Kimura calmly replied: “I am the brother.” whereupon he was sent to prison for his admission.

In prison, Bro Kimura found four companions, all laymen who were arrested for harboring priests. One of them his own brother-in-law, Andrew Tokuan. Another was a Portuguese who gave hospitality to Fr Spinola and two other Koreans. The five of them were imprisoned for almost three years and during that time, Bro Kimura instructed the jailers and the non-Christian prisoners in the fundamentals of the Catholic faith, converting ninety-six and transformed the prison into a Christian community, with fixed times for prayer and meditation. When the five were finally brought before Governor Gonroku, he asked Bro Kimura why he remained in Japan after the Emperor had outlawed Christianity. He answered: “I remained so that I could teach you about the true God
and preach His law, and as long as I live I will never stop doing it.” For this Bro Kimura was given the “death by slow fire” sentence by the governor.

**Martyrdom**

On the morning of Nov 18, 1619, as the five prisoners were led to the hill of execution near Nagasaki, Bro Kimura was praying for himself and his four companions, asking our Lord and Our Lady to come to their assistance in their final moments. As they stood fastened to the stakes and the flames engulfing them, Bro Kimura’s voice filled the air preaching the glory of the Catholic faith, for which he and his companions were offering themselves as burnt sacrifices. A contemporary present at the execution recorded that about 20,000 people were present to witness the event. The Christians present to see their brethren go to heaven never did see five men die so joyfully. Eleven days after their martyrdom, Bro Kimura’s blood-brother Anthony, a layman, was also martyred on the hill. Later on Sep 10, 1622, his sister Mary, whose husband had died with Bro Kimura and his Jesuit cousin Sebastian Kimura were also martyred there. The Kimura family boasts five members in the ranks of the Blessed.

Bro Kimura was one of the thirty-four Jesuits who died during the Great Persecution and who were beatified by Pope Pius IX on May 7, 1867.
Saint Xavier

Feast Day: December 3rd ~ Birth: 1506 ~ Death: 1552

**Early Life**
St. Francis Xavier was a Navarrese-Basque Roman Catholic missionary born in the Kingdom of Navarre on April 7, 1506. His father was a privy counselor and finance minister to King John III of Navarre. He was the youngest in his family and resided in a castle which still partially stands today and is in the possession of the Jesuit order. As the young Francis grew, he was surrounded by war. Navarre was the target of a campaign by King Ferdinand of Aragon and Castile, and the kingdom was eventually conquered.

When the war stopped and Francis came of age, he was sent to study at the University of Paris. While there he roomed with his friend, Peter Favre. The pair met and were heavily influenced by Ignatius of Loyola, who encouraged Francis to become a priest. In 1530, Francis Xavier earned his master’s degree, and went on to teach philosophy at the University of Paris.

**Formation of the Jesuits**
On August 15, 1534, Francis Xavier along with Peter Favre, and several other friends, made vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The men planned to travel to the Holy Land to convert non-believers. Francis Xavier started his study of theology that same year and was ordained on June 24, 1537.

Pope Paul III approved the formation of their order in 1540, which became The Society of Jesus. The order is more popularly became known as the Jesuits.

While Francis Xavier was becoming a priest, Portugal was colonizing India. The Portuguese settlers in India and elsewhere were losing their faith and Christian values. To restore these values, the King of Portugal asked the Pope to send missionaries to the region.

Pope Paul III asked the new order to take the mission, particularly since they could not undertake their preferred mission to the Holy Land due to warfare there. Ignatius ultimately decided to send Francis.

Francis Xavier left for India in 1541, on his thirty-fifth birthday. As he departed he was
informed that the pope appointed him to be the Papal Nuncio in the East. A Papal Nuncio is a diplomat who takes up permanent residence in another country to formally represent the Church there. He arrived in the region and colony of Goa, India on May 6, 1542.

Although Goa had churches and even a bishop in the Portuguese colony, there were few people to preach and minister to the Portuguese, especially outside the walls of the city. A major problem Francis quickly recognized was the nature of the people and their intentions. Many sailors and settlers were former prisoners who had been recruited from Portuguese jails or were fleeing mistakes they made back home. None of them came to spread or live virtuous lives. Instead they came to escape Portugal, find adventure, or to make fortunes. Still, they settled and made families. Xavier ministered first to the sick and the children. Then he learned about the native people of the Pearl Fishery Coast, which had been baptized a decade earlier, but were never taught their faith. Xavier began ministering to them. He spent three years among them, but was often embarrassed by the conduct of his Portuguese countrymen who were already Catholic, but frequently misbehaved.

**Mission & Death**

Xavier built 40 churches for the people of the Pearl Fishery Coast. Xavier encountered difficulty in his mission because he usually worked to convert the people first, instead of their leaders.

Xavier eventually decided to travel to Malacca and the Maluku Islands to evangelize the people there. He spent about two years in the region, and while in Malacca, a Japanese man named Anjiro caught up with him. Anjiro was accused of murder in Japan but had managed to flee. Learning about Xavier, he decided to find Xavier and tell him about Japan, which he did. Xavier converted Anjiro to Christianity; making him the first Japanese convert to Christianity.

Xavier returned to Goa for about a year to attend to his official responsibilities, but he was very interested in visiting Japan. In 1549, he finally departed for the country, arriving in July of that year.

The local daimyo warmly received Xavier, but forbade his subjects from converting to Christianity. In addition to the legal obstacle, Xavier found language to be a barrier. The Japanese language was different than any other he had previously encountered. Xavier was surprised to find that his poverty was a barrier to his communication. Poverty was not respected in feudal Japan as it was in Europe, so Xavier was compelled to change his strategy. On one occasion, when meeting with a local prince, Xavier arranged to be finely dressed and for his fellow missionaries to wait on him. He had gifts from India delivered to him. The charade had the desired effect and improved his
Despite his efforts, the Japanese were not easily converted. Most held fast to their traditional Buddhist or Shinto beliefs. The Japanese also found the concept of hell as a place of eternal torment to be difficult to accept.

Some traditionalists, including priests from the native religions, grew hostile toward Xavier and Christianity. Xavier established a few congregations, but the religion was suppressed from spreading by the nobility, who grew to mistrust the outsiders and their faith. Eventually, Christianity became the subject of great persecution, forcing many to go underground with their belief.

Xavier finished his work in Japan for the time and decided to return to India with a stop in Goa. During his voyage, he was petitioned to meet with the Chinese emperor and argue for the release of several Portuguese prisoners as a representative of their government. Xavier decided to make the trip to China, but first felt the need to return to his headquarters in Goa.

He departed India for the last time in April, 1552 and stopped in Malacca to obtain official documents attesting to his status as a representative of the Portuguese king. However, the harbor in Malacca was now controlled by Alvaro da Gama, the Captain of Malacca and the son of Vasco da Gama.

Da Gama was not friendly to Xavier who refused to recognize his official status as Papal Nuncio. He confiscated the gifts Xavier intended for the Chinese emperor and staffed his ship with a new crew, loyal to himself.

Xavier's ship reached China in August, stopping at an island off the Chinese coast. From there, Xavier was on his own. He managed to find a man to agree to take him to China for a large fee, but while he was waiting for his boat to arrive became ill with a fever. Xavier died on December 3, 1552.

Xavier was buried on the island until February 1553 when his body was removed and taken to Malacca where it was buried at a church for a month. Then one of Xavier’s companions moved his body to his own residence for the rest of the year. In December, his body was moved to Goa. Xavier remains buried in a silver casket enclosed in a glass case. Several of his bones have been removed. His right arm, used to bless converts, is on display in Rome. Another arm bone is kept on Coloane Island, in Macau, which today is part of China.

Xavier was beatified by Pope Paul V on Oct. 25, 1619, and canonized by Gregory XV on March 12, 1622 at the same ceremony as Ignatius of Loyola. He is the patron of Catholic missions.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 7, Disc #3, Talk #1 by Anne Marie Sime

Discussion Questions:

1. How can I strive to be open to the Holy Spirit and Christ to work in and through me? How can I radiate that back out to the world?

2. Share qualities that your grandparents had. Which of these qualities do you see in yourself?

Grandmother-Granddaughter Saints

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Creator God,
giver of all life, increase my ability to live out my faith so I can experience the joy of the Lord in my heart and radiate it back out to the world.
I ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.
Saint Melania the Elder or Major

Feast Day: December 31st ~ Birth: 325 ~ Death: 417

Early Life
Saint Melania the Elder or Maior (325–417) was a Desert Mother who was an influential figure in the Christian ascetic movement (the Desert Fathers and Mothers) that sprang up in the generation after the Emperor Constantine made Christianity a legal religion of the Roman Empire. She was a contemporary of, and well known to, Abba Macarius and other Desert Fathers in Egypt, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine of Hippo, Saint Paulinus of Nola (her cousin or cousin-in-law; he gives a colorful description of her visit to Nola in his Letters), and Evagrius of Pontus, and she founded a religious community on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

Mission
Melania the Elder (325-410), one of the wealthiest citizens of the empire, was born in Spain, and was related to Paulinus of Nola. Her father, Marcellinus, was of consular rank. She married at fourteen, and moved with her husband, Valerius Maximus Basilius Proconsul of Achaea and a Praefectus Urbi, to the suburbs of Rome. Her husband and two out of three sons had died by the time she was twenty-two. She became a Christian in Rome and, leaving her son, Valerius Publicola, with a guardian, set off to Alexandria, accompanied by her servants, to join other Christian ascetics to visit the monks at Nitria.

She stayed with the monks in the desert near Alexandria, Egypt (today the area is known as Wadi Natroun) for about six months. When persecution broke out after the death of Bishop Athanasius in 373 and many of the monks were exiled to Diocaesarea in Palestine, Melania followed and supported them financially. The governor had her briefly imprisoned, but released her when he realized her social status. She built a convent in Jerusalem, and a monastery on the Mount of Olives for the monk and theologian Rufinus of Aquileia.

Because of her involvement as a pro-Origenist in the controversy over Origen in the 390s, Jerome was especially vitriolic about her, punning on her name and calling her "black in name and black in nature." (He tried to expunge his earlier lavish praises of her
from his writings.) Palladius of Galatia described her as "a very learned lady who loved the world".

Around the year 400 she left for Rome to see her son, who had married Caeonia Albina, daughter of Caeonius Rufius Albinus. Due to her influence, her grand-daughter, known as Melania the Younger would later take up the religious life. She also visited Paulinus of Nola and brought him a relic of the True Cross. Augustine of Hippo wrote Paulinus that his kinswoman was in North Africa when her son, Valerius, died in 406. When the Visigoths marched on Rome in 410, Melania, her daughter-in law, Albina, and granddaughter Melania and her husband fled to Sicily. From there they went to the family estate at Thagaste in North Africa, where they remained for seven years. They then went to Jerusalem, where Melania died in 417.
Saint Melania the Younger

Feast Day: December 31st ~ Birth: 383 ~ Death: 439

Marriage & Family Life
St. Melania was born to wealthy Christians, Publicola, a Roman senator, and Albina. At fourteen, she was given in marriage to Valerius Pinianus. When two of her children died soon after childbirth, her husband agreed to lead a life of continency and religious dedication.

Inheriting her father's vast wealth, Melania endowed monasteries in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine and aided churches and monasteries in Europe. To escape the barbarian invasions, she fled with her mother and husband to Tagaste in Numidia in the year 410.

In 417, all three made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and settled at Jerusalem, where Melania became a friend of St. Jerome. After the death of her mother in 431 and her husband in 432, Melania attracted disciples to her solitary way of life and built a convent, for which she was Abbess until her death on December 31, 439. The life of St. Melania reminds us of the fleeting character of earthly wealth. We should strive to emulate her use of wealth as well as talents to further the cause of Christ.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 8, Disc #3, Talk #2 by Craig Sampson

**Host:** Fr. Mallon - Pastor St. Benedict’s parish - Halifax Nova Scotia
Nicole Snook – Journalist/producer
Deacon Larry Worthen- Deacon/grandfather

“In how many families are grandchildren taught the rudiments of the faith by their grandparents...The Spirit acts as and where he wills, and quite frequently he employs human means which seem of little Account in the eyes of the world.”
(St. Pope John Paul II
Letter to the Elderly, 13)

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How do you model aspects of your faith?

   **Myth:** The generations don’t mix. They need to be segregated.

2. How do you see this myth being played out in our county and in the world?

**Grandmother-Grandson Saints**

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

**Closing Prayer**

*Father God,*
*Shower me with the graces I need to model love, generosity, kindness and unconditional forgiveness to others. May my witness bring my grandchildren into closer relationship with me and with You. I ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.*
Saint Ludmila

Feast Day: September 16th ~ Birth: 860 ~ Death: 921

Patroness of Bohemia

St. Ludmila was the daughter of a Slavic prince. Ludmila was married to Bořivoj I of Bohemia, who was the first Christian Duke of Bohemia. The couple was converted to Christianity around 871, probably through the efforts of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

Their efforts to convert Bohemia to Christianity were initially not well received, and they were driven from their country for a time by the pagans. Eventually the couple returned, and ruled for several years before retiring to Tetín, near Beroun.

The couple was succeeded by their son Spytihněv, who ruled for two years before he died. Spytihněv was succeeded by his brother Vratislav. When Vratislav died in 921, his son Wenceslas became the next ruler of Bohemia. It had been mainly Ludmila who raised her grandson and she now acted as regent for him.

Wenceslaus' mother Drahomíra became jealous of Ludmila's influence over Wenceslaus. She had two noblemen murder Ludmila at Tetín, and part of Ludmila's story says that she was strangled with her veil. Initially Saint Ludmila was buried at St. Michael's at Tetín. Sometime before the year 1100 her remains were removed to the St. George's Basilica, Prague.

Saint Ludmila is venerated as a patroness of Bohemia. Her feast day is celebrated on September 16. She is considered to be a patron saint of Bohemia, converts, Czech Republic, duchesses, problems with in-laws, and widows. She was canonized shortly after her death.

Antonín Dvořák composed his oratorio Svatá Ludmila (Saint Ludmila) between September 1885 and May 1886. The work was commissioned by the publisher Littleton for the Leeds Festival.
Saint Wenceslaus

Feast Day: September 28th ~ Birth: 907 ~ Death: 935

Early Life
St. Wenceslaus, also known by Vaclav, was born near Prague, and was the son of Duke Wratislaw. He was taught Christianity by his grandmother, St. Ludmila. The Magyars, along with Drahomira, an anti-Christian faction murdered the Duke and St. Ludmila, and took over the government. Wenceslaus was declared the new ruler after a coup in 922. He encouraged Christianity. Boleslaus, his brother, no longer successor to the throne, after Wenceslaus' son was born, joined a group of noble Czech dissenters. They invited Wenceslaus to a religious festival, trapped and killed him on the way to Mass. He is the patron saint of Bohemia.

Martyrdom
Wenceslas was considered a martyr and a saint immediately after his death, when a cult of Wenceslas grew up in Bohemia and in England. Within a few decades of Wenceslas' death, four biographies of him were in circulation. These hagiographies had a powerful influence on the High Middle Ages conceptualization of the rex justus, or "righteous king", that is, a monarch whose power stems mainly from his great piety, as well as from his princely vigor.

Referring approvingly to these hagiographies, the chronicler Cosmas of Prague, writing in about the year 1119, states:

But his deeds I think you know better than I could tell you; for, as is read in his Passion, no one doubts that, rising every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by every difficulty, so much so that he was considered, not a prince, but the father of all the wretched.

Several centuries later the legend was claimed as fact by Pope Pius II. Although Wenceslas was, during his lifetime, only a duke, Holy Roman Emperor Otto I posthumously "conferred on [Wenceslas] the regal dignity and title" and that is why, in the legend and song, he is referred to as a "king".

The hymn "Svatý Václave" (Saint Wenceslas) or "Saint Wenceslas Chorale" is one of the
oldest known Czech songs in history. Its roots can be found in the 12th century and it still belongs to the most popular religious songs to this day. In 1918, in the beginning of the Czechoslovak state, the song was discussed as one of the possible choices for the national anthem.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity  
Week 9, Disc #4, Talk #1 by the Yurchesyn Family

Host: Fr. Mallon - Pastor St. Benedict’s parish - Halifax Nova Scotia  
Katie Robinson – Director of Communication,  
St. Benedict’s Parish  
Deacon Larry Worthen - Deacon/grandfather

“...children...lead history forward, and the elderly...transmit the experience and wisdom of their lives. This relationship and this dialogue between generations is a treasure to be preserved and strengthened!”  
(Pope Francis)

Discussion Questions:

1. What would your grandchildren say is your one main thing?
2. What sacrifices do you make to be involved in the lives of your grandchildren?
3. Pope Francis said, “We need to have a revolution of tenderness.” How can I live out that revolution?

Grandmother and four-Grandchildren Saints

![St. Macrina the Elder](Photo Credit: Catholic Online for all)  
![St. Basil](St. Basil)  
![St. Gregory of Nyssa](St. Gregory of Nyssa)  
![St. Peter of Sebaste](St. Peter of Sebaste)  
![St. Macrina the Younger](St. Macrina the Younger)

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?  
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Creator God, You formed our families as a part of Your great plan.  
Thank you for the precious gift of grandchildren. Equip me with the tools I need to transmit the experience and wisdom of my life to them. This relationship and this dialogue between generations is a treasure. Help me to preserve and strengthen them.  
I ask this in Jesus name, Amen
Saint Macrina the Elder

Feast Day: January 14th ~ Birth: 270 ~ Death: 340

Summary
Macrina the Elder was the mother of Saint Basil the Elder, and the grandmother of Basil the Great, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Peter of Sebaste, and Saint Macrina the Younger. It was Macrina and her husband who founded the faith of the family and passed it on as a splendid treasure to her children and grandchildren. That faith was born of suffering and persecution.

Early Life
St. Macrina the elder was a native of Cappadocia, in what is now eastern Turkey. It was here that the great apostle of Cappadocia, St. Gregory the Wonderworker, established the faith around the year 250. When he arrived in the territory, it was said, there were only seventeen Christians in the town of Neo-Caesarea; when he died in 268, there were only seventeen pagans.

Persecution
Macrina was born about the time of Gregory’s death, and it was the faith of this ardent apostle that became the way of life for her family. Early in the next century, during the persecution of the Emperor Galerius, Macrina and her husband were forced to leave their home and to live in the wooded hills of Pontus for seven years, during which they suffered much. They were often without food. Later, during another persecution, their property was seized by agents of the emperor, and they lived in almost total destitution. When the persecution ended, they were honored as confessors of the faith, a much revered title among the Christians of that time.

It was at his grandmother’s knee that Basil received his first instructions in the Christian faith, and it was from her that he and his family were nourished in that Christian discipline that made them saints. Macrina was known to have treasured and read the writings of Gregory the Wonderworker, and it was the fire and zeal of his writings that was passed on to Basil and his brother.

She was widowed and is the patron of widows and the patron against poverty.
Saint Basil the Great

Feast Day: January 2nd ~ Birth: 330 ~ Death: 379

Early Life
St. Basil the Great was born at Caesarea of Cappadocia in 330. He was one of ten children of St. Basil the Elder and St. Emmelia. Several of his brothers and sisters are honored among the saints. He attended school in Caesarea, as well as Constantinople and Athens, where he became acquainted with St. Gregory Nazianzen in 352. A little later, he opened a school of oratory in Caesarea and practiced law. Eventually he decided to become a monk and found a monastery in Pontus which he directed for five years. He wrote a famous monastic rule which has proved the most lasting of those in the East.

Bishop of Caesaria
After founding several other monasteries, he was ordained and, in 370, made bishop of Caesaria. In this post until his death in 379, he continued to be a man of vast learning and constant activity, genuine eloquence and immense charity. This earned for him the title of "Great" during his life and Doctor of the Church after his death. Basil was one of the giants of the early Church. He was responsible for the victory of Nicene orthodoxy over Arianism in the Byzantine East, and the denunciation of Arianism at the Council of Constantinople in 381-82 was in large measure due to his efforts. Basil fought simony, aided the victims of drought and famine, strove for a better clergy, insisted on a rigid clerical discipline, fearlessly denounced evil wherever he detected it, and excommunicated those involved in the widespread prostitution traffic in Cappadocia. He was learned, accomplished in statesmanship, a man of great personal holiness, and one of the great orators of Christianity. His feast day is January 2.
Saint Gregory of Nyssa

Feast Day: January 10th ~ Birth: 335 ~ Death: 394?

Early Life
St. Gregory was born around 335, probably in or near the city of Neocaesarea, Pontus. His family was aristocratic and Christian - according to Gregory of Nazianzus, his mother was Emmelia of Caesarea, and his father, a rhetorician, has been identified either as Basil the Elder or as a Gregory. Among his eight siblings were St. Macrina the Younger, St. Naucratius, St. Peter of Sebaste and St. Basil of Caesarea. The precise number of children in the family was historically contentious: the commentary on 30 May in the Acta Sanctorum, for example, initially states that they were nine, before describing Peter as the tenth child. It has been established that this confusion occurred due to the death of one son in infancy, leading to ambiguities in Gregory’s own writings. Gregory’s parents had suffered persecution for their faith: he writes that they “had their goods confiscated for confessing Christ.”

Gregory’s maternal grandmother, Macrina the Elder is also revered as a saint and his maternal grandfather was a martyr as Gregory put it ”killed by Imperial wrath” under the persecution of the Roman Emperor Maximinus II.

Between the 320’s to the early 340’s the family rebuilt its fortunes, with Gregory’s father working in the city of Neocaesarea as an advocate and rhetorician. Gregory’s temperament is said to be quiet and meek, in contrast to his brother Basil who was known to be much more outspoken.

Studies
Gregory was first educated at home, by his mother Emmelia and sister Macrina. Little is known of what further education he received. Apocryphal hagiographies depict him studying at Athens, but this is speculation probably based on the life of his brother Basil. It seems more likely that he continued his studies in Caesarea, where he read classical literature, philosophy and perhaps medicine.[ Gregory himself claimed that his only teachers were Basil, “Paul, John and the rest of the Apostles and prophets”.

While his brothers Basil and Naucratius lived as hermits from c. 355, Gregory initially pursued a non-ecclesiastical career as a rhetorician. He did however, act as a lector. He is known to have married a woman named Theosebia during this period, who is
sometimes identified with Theosebia the Deaconess, venerated as a saint by Orthodox Christianity. This is controversial, however, and other commentators suggest that Theosebia the Deaconess was one of Gregory’s sisters.

Episcopate
In 371, the Emperor Valens split Cappadocia into two new provinces, Cappadocia Prima and Cappadocia Secunda. This resulted in complex changes in ecclesiastical boundaries, during which several new bishoprics were created. Gregory was elected bishop of the new see of Nyssa in 372, presumably with the support of his brother Basil, who was metropolitan of Caesarea.

Gregory’s early policies as bishop often went against those of Basil: for instance, while his brother condemned the Sabellianist followers of Marcellus of Ancyra as heretics, Gregory may have tried to reconcile them with the church. Gregory faced opposition to his reign in Nyssa, and, in 373 Amphiloctius, bishop of Iconium had to visit the city to quell discontent. In 375 Desmonethes of Pontus convened a synod at Ancyra to try Gregory on charges of embezzlement of church funds and irregular ordination of bishops. He was arrested by imperial troops in the winter of the same year, but escaped to an unknown location. The synod of Nyssa, which was convened in the spring of 376, deposed him. However, Gregory regained his see in 378, perhaps due to an amnesty promulgated by the new emperor Gratian. In the same year Basil died, and despite the relative unimportance of Nyssa, Gregory took over many of his brother’s former responsibilities in Pontus.

The First Council of Constantinople, as depicted in a fresco in the Stavropoleos Monastery, Bucharest, Romania. He was present at the Synod of Antioch in April 379, where he unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile the followers of Meletius of Antioch with those of Paulinus. After visiting the village of Annisa to see his dying sister Macrina, he returned to Nyssa in August. In 380 he travelled to Sebaste, in the province of Armenia Prima, to support a pro-Nicene candidate for the election to the bishopric. To his surprise, he himself was elected to the seat, perhaps due to the population’s association of him with his brother. However, Gregory deeply disliked the relatively unhellenized society of Armenia, and he was confronted by an investigation into his orthodoxy by local opponents of the Nicene theology.

After a stay of several months, a substitute was found - possibly Gregory’s brother Peter, who was bishop of Sebaste from 381 - and Gregory returned home to Nyssa to write books I and II of Against Eunomius.

Gregory participated in the First Council of Constantinople (381), and perhaps gave there his famous sermon In suam ordinationem. He was chosen to eulogise at the funeral of Melitus, which occurred during the council. The council sent Gregory on a mission to Arabia, perhaps to ameliorate the situation in Bostra, where two men,
Agapius and Badagius, claimed to be bishop. If this is the case, Gregory was unsuccessful, as the see was still contested in 394. He then travelled to Jerusalem, where Cyril of Jerusalem faced opposition from local clergy due to the fact that he had been ordained by Acacius of Caesarea, an Arian heretic. Gregory's attempted mediation of the dispute was unsuccessful, and he himself was accused of holding unorthodox views on the nature of Christ. His later reign in Nyssa was marked by conflict with his Metropolitan, Helladius. Gregory was present at a 394 synod convened at Constantinople to discuss the continued problems in Bostra. The year of his death is unknown.
Saint Peter of Sebaste

Feast Day: January 9th ~ Birth: 340 ~ Death: 391

Peter of Sebasteia

St. Peter of Sebaste was a bishop, taking his usual name from the city of his bishopric, Sebaste in Lesser Armenia. He was the younger brother of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Macrina the Younger. He is also known as Peter of Sebasteia.

His parents were Basil and Emmelia of Caesarea-in-Cappadocia, who were banished for their faith in the reign of the Emperor Galerius Maximian, and fled into the deserts of Pontus. His grandmother was Macrina the Elder, who was instructed by Gregory Thaumaturgus. The youngest of ten, he was brother to St. Macrina the Younger and the two Cappadocian doctors, St. Basil of Caesarea and St. Gregory of Nyssa. Macrina, his eldest sister, exercised a great influence over his religious training, acting as his instructor and directing him toward the spiritual and ascetic life.

Renouncing the study of the profane sciences, he devoted himself to meditation on Holy Writ and the cultivation of the religious life. Shortly after his brother's elevation to the episcopal See of Caesarea, Peter received from him priestly ordination, but subsequently, withdrawing from active affairs, resumed the life of a solitary ascetic. He assisted his sister toward the attainment of her life's object, and aided her and her mother in their monastic establishment after his father's death. Peter became involved in the gradual transformation of his mother's household from a community of virgins to a cenobitic community of both women and men. He headed the male monastery while Macrina was responsible for the female community. When the provinces of Pontus and Cappadocia were visited by a severe famine, he gave a remarkable proof of his charity, liberally disposing of all that belonged to his monastery, and whatever he could raise, to supply with necessaries the numerous crowds that daily resorted to him, in that time of distress.

See of Sebaste

About 380 he was elevated to the See of Sebaste in Armenia and, without displaying any literary activity, took his stand beside his brothers Basil and Gregory in their fight against the Arian heresy. In his life and episcopal administration he displayed the same characteristics as Basil. Linked together in the closest manner with his brothers, he followed their writings with the greatest interest. At his advice Gregory of Nyssa wrote
his great work, *Against Eunomius*, in defense of Basil’s similarly named book answering the polemical work of Eunomius. It was also at his desire that Gregory wrote the *Treatise on the Work of the Six Days*, to defend Basil’s similar treatise against false interpretations and to complete it. Another work of Gregory’s, *On the Endowment of Man*, was also written at Peter’s suggestion and sent to the latter with an appropriate preface as an Easter gift in 397. We have no detailed information concerning his activity as a bishop, except that he was present at the Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in 381. After his death in 391 he was venerated as a saint.
Saint Macrina the Younger

Feast Day: July 19th ~ Birth: 330 ~ Death: 379

Early Life
Macrina was born at Caesarea, Cappadocia. Her parents were Basil the Elder and Emmelia, and her grandmother was Saint Macrina the Elder. Among her nine siblings were two of the three Cappadocian Fathers, her younger brothers Basil the Great and Saint Gregory of Nyssa, as well as Peter of Sebaste. Her father arranged for her to marry but her fiancé died before the wedding. After having been betrothed to her fiancé, Macrina did not believe it was appropriate to marry another man, but saw Christ as her eternal bridegroom. Instead, she devoted herself to her religion, becoming a nun.

Devotion
Macrina had a profound influence upon her brothers and her mother with her adherence to an ascetic ideal. Her brother Gregory of Nyssa wrote a work entitled Life of Macrina in which he describes her sanctity throughout her life. Macrina lived a chaste and humble life, devoting her time to prayer and the spiritual education of her younger brother, Peter. Gregory presents her as one who consciously rejected all Classical education, choosing instead devoted study of Scripture and other sacred writings.

In 379, Macrina died at her family’s estate in Pontus, which with the help of her younger brother Peter she had turned into a monastery and convent. Gregory of Nyssa composed a "Dialogue on the Soul and Resurrection" (peri psyches kai anastaseos), entitled ta Makrinia (P.G. XLVI, 12 sq.), to commemorate Macrina, in which Gregory purports to describe the conversation he had with Macrina on her deathbed, in a literary form modeled on Plato's Phaedo. Even on her deathbed, Macrina continued to live a life of sanctity, as she refused a bed, and instead chose to lie on the ground. Her feast day is the 19 July.

Saint Macrina is significant in that her brother, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, was able to set standards for being a holy Early Christian woman. He believed that virginity reflected the “radiant purity of God.”
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 10, Disc #4, Talk #1 by Maria Maladonado

Host: Fr. Mallon - Pastor St. Benedict’s parish - Halifax Nova Scotia
Nicole Snook – Journalist/producer
Deacon Larry Worthen- Deacon/grandfather

Discussion Questions:
1. Grandparents are the keepers of the legacy of the family. How can I pass on this legacy to my grandchildren?
2. Common interests open the door to easy conversation with our grandchildren. What are some common interests you share with your grandchildren?
3. How can you create new opportunities for conversation with your grandchildren?

Grandson Saint

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?
How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

Closing Prayer

Loving Father,
You have placed these special grandchildren in my life. Send the Holy Spirit to teach me to pray for their spiritual health. Grant me the graces I need to live a virtuous life and create a peaceful loving environment for my grandchildren to come home to. I ask this in Jesus’s name, Amen.

“You have taught me, O God, from my youth, And till the present
I proclaim your wondrous deeds and now that I am old and grey,
O God, forsake me not, Till I proclaim your strength to Every generation that is to come.”
(Psalm 71:17-18)
Saint Timothy

Feast Day: January 26th ~ Birth: 17 ~ Death: 97?

Early Life
Timothy was a native of Lystra in Lycaonia (Anatolia). When Paul and Barnabas first visited Lystra, Paul healed one crippled from birth, leading many of the inhabitants to accept his teaching. When he returned a few years later with Silas, Timothy was already a respected member of the Christian congregation, as were his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, both Jews. In 2 Timothy 1:5, his mother and grandmother are noted as eminent for their piety and faith. Timothy is said to have been acquainted with the Scriptures since childhood. In 1 Corinthians 16:10 there is a suggestion that he was by nature reserved and timid. ("When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord...")

Timothy’s father was Greek; that is, not a Jew. Thus, Timothy had not been circumcised, and Paul now ensured that this was done, according to the text, to ensure Timothy’s acceptability to the Jews whom they would be evangelizing. According to McGarvey: "Yet we see him in the case before us, circumcising Timothy with his own hand, and this “on account of certain Jews who were in those quarters”. However, Acts 16:4 makes clear that this action did not compromise the decision made at the Council of Jerusalem, that gentile believers were not required to be circumcised.

Discipleship
Timothy became St Paul’s disciple, and later his constant companion and co-worker in preaching. In the year 52, Paul and Silas took Timothy along with them on their journey to Macedonia. Augustine extols his zeal and disinterestedness in immediately forsaking his country, his house, and his parents, to follow the apostle, to share in his poverty and sufferings. Timothy may have been subject to ill health or "frequent ailments", and Paul encouraged him to "use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake". 1 Timothy 5:23

When Paul went on to Athens, Silas and Timothy stayed for some time at Beroea and Thessalonica before joining Paul at Corinth. Timothy next appears in Acts during Paul’s stay in Ephesus (54-57), and in late 56 or early 57 Paul sent him forth to Macedonia with the aim that he would eventually arrive at Corinth. Timothy arrived at Corinth just after 1 Corinthians reached that city. The letter was not well received, and Timothy quickly returned to Ephesus to report this to Paul.
Timothy was with Paul in Corinth during the winter of 57-58 when Paul dispatched his Letter to the Romans. *(Romans 16:21)* According to *Acts 20:3-6*, Timothy was with Paul in Macedonia just before Passover 58; he left the city before Paul, going ahead of him to await Paul in Troas. *(Acts 20:4-5)* "That is the last mention of Timothy in Acts," Raymond Brown notes. In the year 64, Paul left St. Timothy at Ephesus, to govern that church.

His relationship with Paul was close. Paul entrusted him with missions of great importance. Timothy's name appears as the co-author on 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. Paul wrote to the Philippians about Timothy, "*I have no one like him.*" *(Philippians 2:19-23)* When Paul was in prison and awaiting martyrdom, he summoned his faithful friend, Timothy, for a last farewell.

That Timothy was jailed at least once during the period of the writing of the New Testament is implied by the writer of Hebrews mentioning Timothy's release at the end of the epistle.

The apocryphal Acts of Timothy states that in the year 97, the 80-year-old bishop tried to halt a procession in honor of the goddess Diana by preaching the gospel. The angry pagans beat him, dragged him through the streets, and stoned him to death.
Grandparents: Living the Faith on our Journey to Eternity
Week 11, Disc #4, Talk #2 by Clare Beckers

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **How do I feel hearing that my witness can make a difference?** What action steps can I take to be a stronger witness for Christ?

2. **Jesus redefined family from biological family to a family of faith. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.** How can I continue to nurture my relationship with my faith family?

**Great-Great-Grandfather – Grandson Saints**

*Photo Credit: Catholic Online*

Saint Felix III

Saint Gregory the Great

What virtues stand out in these saints’ life?

How will I model this virtue for my grandchildren?

**Closing Prayer**

*Come Holy Spirit, Infuse me with new enthusiasm for my faith. Lead and guide me to live out my faith boldly. May my grandchildren come to know, love and serve God through my witness so we can be together forever in the kingdom of heaven. I ask this in Jesus name, Amen.*
Pope Saint Felix III

**Birth:** ? ~ **Death:** 492

**Summary**
Felix III Descendant of aristocrats and the son of a priest, St. Felix III was a widower with two children when he was elected to the papacy in 483. He was the first pope to announce his election to the emperor in Constantinople. The following year, he excommunicated Patriarch Acacius of Constantinople, who was a monothelite. A synod in 485 confirmed the pope’s decision and action. Felix addressed the issue of readmitting to the church those whom Arians had forcibly rebaptized: lay people were allowed back after penance, and clergy were allowed back only on their deathbed. Felix died in 492.

**Life**
Felix was born into a Roman senatorial family and was a great-great-grandfather of Pope Gregory I.

It is said that Felix appeared as an apparition to one of his descendants, his great-granddaughter Trasilla (an aunt of Pope Gregory I), and asked her to enter Heaven through death, and on the eve of Christmas Trasilla died, seeing Jesus Christ beckoning. His first act was to repudiate the Henoticon, a deed of union originating with Patriarch Acacius of Constantinople and published by Emperor Zeno with the view of allaying the strife between the Miaphysite Christians and Chalcedonian Christians. He also addressed a letter of remonstrance to Acacius. The latter proved refractory and sentence of deposition was passed against Acacius.

In his first synod, Felix excommunicated Peter the Fuller, who had assumed the See of Antioch against papal wishes. In 484, Felix also excommunicated Peter Mongus, who had taken the See of Alexandria, an act that brought about a schism between East and West that was not healed until 519.

Felix is often quoted as saying “Not to oppose error is to approve it; and not to defend truth is to suppress it, and, indeed, to neglect to confound evil men—when we can do it—is no less a sin than to encourage them.”
Saint Gregory the Great

Feast Day: September 3rd ~ Birth: 540 ~ Death: 604

Early Life
Pope Saint Gregory I, also known as the Great, was the Pope of the Catholic Church between 590 and 604 AD. Gregory was born around 540 in Rome. The exact date of his birth is unknown. Although the Western Roman Empire had collapsed long before his birth, many ancient Roman families still commanded great wealth and influence in the city. Gregory was born into one such family. His great-great-grandfather was Pope Felix III who reigned from 483 to 492. (Astute readers may suspect this to be a scandal, but this was at a time before the clergy took vows of celibacy.)

His father was named Gordianus, and he was a senator and a Prefect of Rome. Gordianus also held a position in the Church with the title of Regionarius, but there are no records from the time which describe the post. Gregory’s mother was Silvia, also from a noble family. Silvia’s sister (Gregory’s aunt), Pateria are both recognized as saints in the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Gregory had a brother, but nothing is recorded, neither his name or his fate.

Gregory’s family was very wealthy and owned estates on the island of Sicily which provided income. When Gregory was just two years old in 542, the Plague of Justinian swept through the region. This plague was caused by a now-extinct strain of Yersinia Pestis, more commonly known as the Black Death. The plague was the most severe outbreak of deadly disease the world had ever known and remained the worst such incident until the Black Death in the 14th century. About a third of the population in Italy was wiped out by the disease.

In addition to disease, the barbarian Ostrogoths sacked Rome in 546. The Franks attempted an invasion in 554. Both of these incursions were short lived. It is unclear how these massive events impacted Gregory’s development as a child, but it is thought his family retreated to Sicily during part of that time. Peace followed in Italy after these upheavals.

Prefect of Rome
Gregory was well educated and excelled in all his studies. He also became an expert in law. He excelled so much he became the Prefect of Rome, just as his father had been. Gregory was only 33 years old.

After Gregory’s father had died, Gregory had the family villa in Rome converted into a monastery. Today the monastery still stands as the San Gregorio Magno al Celio. This famous monastery fell into ruin in the following centuries but was restored during the 17th and 18th centuries.

As a monk, Gregory was hard and strict. When a monk on his deathbed confessed to stealing three pieces of gold, Gregory ordered he be left to die alone. After the poor monk had died, Gregory ordered his body thrown on a dung heap along with the three coins. Then, in a turn of heart, Gregory offered 30 Masses for the deceased monk.

Pope Pelagius II, who reigned from 579 to 590, chose Gregory to serve as an ambassador to the imperial court in Constantinople. The Pope had a problem with the Lombards invading from the west. Gregory was ordered to request military aid from the emperor. But the emperor felt there were greater threats to the east, and he refused Gregory’s request.

Papacy
In 590, Pope Pelagius II died, and Gregory was proclaimed pope by acclamation. This was not something Gregory wanted, but he accepted the burden nevertheless. Gregory made clear he preferred the monastic life in a series of writings praising it. He also referred to himself as a servant of God. The habit remains in practice to this day and many clergy still refer to themselves as servants.

Pope Gregory was famous for the emphasis he put on missionary work. He sent many people out to bring many to Jesus and into the Church. Anglo-Saxon Britain was, at that time, still on the frontier of Christendom. It was Pope Gregory who dispatched St. Augustine (of Canterbury) to Kent in 597 (not to be confused with St. Augustine of Hippo).

Pope Gregory made many changes to the Mass, some of which remain today, the position of the Our Father in the Mass remains where Pope Gregory placed it. He emphasized the aspect of service to the poor for deacons. The number of deacons was increasing in number and they were seen as less essential as extensions of the Bishop than they were in the early Church. Deacons were often tasked with giving alms to the poor, and at least one was assigned to each church and ordained for this purpose. Pope Gregory may have also established "cantus planus," known in English as plainchant. Most today know this style of singing as Gregorian Chant. The melodious, monophonic music is known throughout the Church and closely associated with medieval monasteries. Gregorian chant gives us the oldest music we still have in the
original form, some dating to the centuries just after the death of Gregory. It remains a matter of some dispute just how involved Pope Gregory was in the development of the style. Some music historians argue the credit is a misattribution that rightly belongs to his less famous successor of a century later, Gregory II.

Pope Gregory was well known for his alms to the poor, and he gave quite generously of the riches donated to the Church by the wealthy people of Rome. Everything from money to land was given to the poor in some fashion. He made clear to his subordinates that their duty was to relieve the distress faced by the poor.

He ordered his clergy to go out into the streets to find and care for the poor in person. Any clergy who were unwilling to go into the streets and help the poor were replaced. Assets of the Church were liquidated to provide income for alms.

Clergy doing this work were paid four times a year and given a gold coin as a sort of bonus. When a famine struck Rome in the 590s, Pope Gregory ordered the Church to use its assets to feed the poor. At that time, the Church controlled nearly two thousand square miles of land, overseen by the clergy and used to generate income. Now, instead of selling the produce of the land, Pope Gregory ordered it shipped to Rome and given away for free. In this way, he saved thousands of people from certain death. Pope Gregory himself refused to eat until his monks returned from their work of handing out food.

He also made certain to dine with a dozen poor people at each meal. Gregory is widely considered the be the first medieval pope, and he was a prolific writer.

Because of his great respect for the poor, it was Pope Gregory and the Church that became the most respected --and obeyed force in Rome and across Italy. From the time of Gregory onwards, the people looked to the Church for government rather than the distant and indifferent emperors in Constantinople. Pope Gregory suffered from arthritis in his last years. He died on March 12, 604 AD. He was immediately proclaimed a saint by means of popular acclaim. Saint Gregory’s relics remain in St. Peter's Basilica to this day.

**Sainthood**

In 1969, the Second Vatican Council moved Saint Gregory’s feast day from March 12 to September 3 so it would not fall during Lent. During Lent, there are no obligatory memorials. The Eastern Orthodox Church also venerates Saint Gregory, honoring him on March 12. Both Anglican and Lutheran Christians also venerate Pope Saint Gregory. He is the patron saint of musicians, singers, students, and teachers.
The Seven Virtues

(Also called the Seven Contrary Virtues or Seven Heavenly Virtues)

The concept of the seven capital virtues has been an aspect of Catholic Faith for several centuries, having gained recognition and popularity in the middle ages. This list of seven virtues is a set of virtues which are to counter the temptation to succumb to the seven capital sins. For this reason, they are sometimes also called the seven contrary virtues; they represent the opposite of the seven sins.

The list of seven capital virtues stems from the subject matter of an epic poem written by an early Christian poet, Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, at the end of the 4th century. The poem, Psychomachia (meaning Battle of Souls), is an allegory which describes seven virtues defeating seven vices.

The seven contrary or capital virtues are as follows:

**Humility** - is the virtue that counters pride. As pride leads to other sin, true humility clears a path for holiness. Pride is a sin based on undue and inappropriate appreciation of one’s self worth. Conversely, the virtue of humility is about modest behavior, selflessness and the giving of respect.

**Liberality** – Liberality, or generosity, is the virtue that is counter to greed – the sin of immoderate desire for earthly things. The virtue of liberality is focused not merely on the appropriate concern regarding one’s earthly things, but furthermore on generosity and a willingness to give, freely and without request for commendation.

**Chastity** – Chastity is the counter-virtue to the sin of lust. Chastity embraces moral wholesomeness and purity, and in both thought and action treats God’s gift of sexuality with due reverence and respect.
Meekness – Meekness, or patience, is the virtue that counters the sin of unjust anger, also called wrath or rage. Where the sin of wrath is about quick temper and unnecessary vengeance, the virtue of meekness focuses on patiently seeking appropriate resolution to conflicts, and on the ability to forgive and show mercy.

Temperance – The virtue of temperance or abstinence counters the sin of gluttony. To be gluttonous is to over-indulge. On the opposite hand, the virtue of temperance is centered on self-control and moderation.

Kindness – Kindness, or brotherly love or love for one’s neighbor, is the virtue which counters the sin of envy. Envy, in contradiction to God’s law of love, is manifest in a person’s sorrow and distress over the good fortune of another person. Conversely, kindness and brotherly love is manifest in the unprejudiced, compassionate and charitable concern for others.

Diligence – Diligence, or persistence, is the virtue which acts as a counter to the sin of sloth. Sloth, as a capital sin, refers to laziness in matters of Faith. Diligence in matters of the spiritual combat laziness and this virtue is manifest in appropriately zealous attitudes toward living and sharing the Faith.
Intercession of Saints and Angels

Fundamentalists often challenge the Catholic practice of asking saints and angels to pray on our behalf. But the Bible directs us to invoke those in heaven and ask them to pray with us.

Thus, in Psalm 103 we pray, "Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word! Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will!" (Ps. 103:20–21). And in the opening verses of Psalms 148 we pray, "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!"

Not only do those in heaven pray with us, they also pray for us. In the book of Revelation, John sees that "the twenty-four elders [the leaders of the people of God in heaven] fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev. 5:8). Thus the saints in heaven offer to God the prayers of the saints on earth.

Angels do the same thing: "[An] angel came and stood at the altar [in heaven] with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God" (Rev. 8:3–4).

Jesus himself warned us not to offend small children, because their guardian angels have guaranteed intercessory access to the Father: "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10).
Because he is the only God-man and the Mediator of the New Covenant, Jesus is the only mediator between man and God (1 Tim. 2:5), but this in no way means we cannot or should not ask our fellow Christians to pray with us and for us (1 Tim. 2:1–4). In particular, we should ask the intercession of those Christians in heaven, who have already had their sanctification completed, for "the prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects" (Jas. 5:16).

As the following passages show, the early Church Fathers not only clearly recognized the biblical teaching that those in heaven can and do intercede for us, but they also applied this teaching in their own daily prayer life.
“Grandparents are a treasure…”

~Pope Francis