

# Catholic Grandparents Association Newsletter - December 2021

*I bring you news of great joy.  
This night a child is born for us,  
a son is given to us.*



Welcome to the December issue of our newsletter. I am delighted to be writing to you as we prepare to celebrate Christmas.

As people of faith we aspire to prepare for Christmas with the attitudes of Elizabeth and Mary. Like Elizabeth we are open to receive Christ with wonder and joy. Like Mary we are ready to do the will of God as it is made clear to us. In these final days of Advent we wait in patient hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

As the CGA looks forward to the Feast of the Nativity and the New Year, we do so with great hope and in thanks for another wonderful year of our ministry to Grandparents. It has been a year that has seen us celebrate the first ever World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. It has also been a year that has seen extraordinary fruits grow from our Grandparents' Faith Café and our Grandparents' Pilgrimages.

We are very grateful to everyone who has played a part in bringing us through another year of the Covid-19 pandemic. I am very conscious this year that there will be many empty chairs at tables this Christmas Day. There are many families grieving the loss of a loved one. There are families who will have someone ill in hospital at Christmas and there will be Grandparents who once again are unable to see their grandchildren over Christmas. We are with all of you in spirit and will keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

As we celebrate Christmas and prepare to enter into a new year we do so with hope and with a certain sense of positivity. I take this opportunity to wish you a very happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful new year. May St Joachim and Anne, parents of Mary and Grandparents of Jesus, bless you all the days of your life.

Until next time keep well and God Bless.

**Catherine Wiley, Founder of the CGA**



# DECEMBER FAITH CAFÉ FOCUSES ON THE ROLE OF GRANDPARENTS AS CATECHISTS



The Grandparents' Faith Café met online on Tuesday 14 December to reflect on the theme of Grandparents as Catechists. Sister Anna Marie McGuan, a Religious Sister of Mercy of Alma, Michigan and Catechetical Advisor for the Archdiocese of Saint Andrews and Edinburgh was our guest speaker.

Sister Anne Marie spoke about the important role that all Grandparents play when it comes to passing on the faith. She said that Grandparents and all of us need to be formed in the faith in order to 'give it away' to others. She said that one of the key ways that we can pass on our faith is to simply 'create a space for others to meet God and then to step back'. She said this is most definitely true when it comes to children and the faith.



Sister Anna Marie then took the opportunity to share details of a Diploma in Catechetics that is available to study starting in January 2022. Offered by the Archdiocese of Saint Andrews and Edinburgh, the course can be taken for interest or for credits leading towards a diploma at the end of 2022. It is offered online via Zoom and classes are available to watch back each week should the live session not suit participants.

The CGA is offering one place on the 2022 Diploma to an interested Grandparent. We will sponsor the cost of the course for the duration of the year whether the recipient wants to do the course for interest or to attain the diploma. To apply to be considered for this sponsorship opportunity, email us and tell us why you wish to be sponsored - [info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.org](mailto:info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.org). We look forward to hearing from you. [The value of the scholarship is £200 sterling].

**A brilliant course which has illuminated my Faith.**  
JOHN SMITH, FALKIRK

**A weekly dive into exploring our Faith in a prayerful and encouraging way.**  
ALICE JONES, LINLITHGOW

**Thank you! The Diploma was exactly what I was looking for.**  
JO FOTHERINGHAM, HILSYTH

**I highly recommend the Diploma in Catechetics if you want to grow in the love and knowledge of the Catholic faith.**  
LUCY DRIEVER, ST ANDREWS

**Diploma in Catechetics**  
FAITH EXPLORED | DEVELOPED | UNDERSTOOD

- Live classes each Thursday from the comfort of your home.
- Regular one-to-one live online support with course leader.
- Q&A session at the end of each class.

**EACH THURSDAY 7:30PM ON ZOOM**  
BEGINS JANUARY 2022 | [COST HERE]

For further details and to register visit [EVENTBRITE LINK HERE]  
Questions? Contact Sr Anna Marie McGuan: [sianna.marie@standed.org.uk](mailto:sianna.marie@standed.org.uk)

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST ANDREWS & EDINBURGH | COMMISSION FOR CATECHESIS

**Save the date for the first Faith Café of 2022 on 11 January**



We are delighted to announce that the guest speaker for our first Grandparents' Faith Café of 2022 is Bishop Paul Dempsey, Bishop of Achonry Diocese in Ireland.

Self-registration for for the next Faith Café will open on 1 January on our website - [catholicgrandparentsassociation.org](http://catholicgrandparentsassociation.org). We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday 11 January.



## TRIBUTE TO ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL NEARY

CGA Founder Catherine Wiley has paid tribute to Archbishop Michael Neary following the announcement of his retirement as Archbishop of Tuam on 10 November.

Ms Wiley said, "As Patron of the CGA, Archbishop Neary has put the vocation of Grandparents to the fore. He has encouraged us in our important role in passing on the faith in our families and in our parishes. He has been instrumental in making sure that the voices of Grandparents and Elders are very much present and listened to in our Church.



"We will be forever grateful to Archbishop Neary in his support for our request to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI for a Universal Prayer for Grandparents and our request to Pope Francis for a Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly. Both of these requests came to be and have been the most tremendous gifts to us as Grandparents.

"Our prayers and good wishes go with him now as he retires. May he have good health to enjoy his retirement. "We offer our congratulations and prayerful good wishes to Archbishop-elect Francis Duffy as he takes on the role of shepherd of the Archdiocese of Tuam." May Saint Joachim and Saint Anne, Parents of Mary and Grandparents of Jesus, bless both archbishops all the days of their lives."

## BAMBINELLI SUNDAY BLESSING AND ADVENT JOY

Parishes across the world celebrated the tradition of blessing the Bambinelli (Baby Jesus) from nativity scenes on the Third Sunday of Advent also known as Gaudete Sunday. The Blessing of the Bambinelli is a tradition which began in Rome and now sees the Holy Father and priests across the world blessing the Bambinelli that children bring to Mass. We have been encouraging the observation of this tradition in parishes for a number of years and were delighted this year to hear that so many of our ministry groups took part in the blessing and other Advent celebration events this year - see some pics below.



## VISIT OUR ONLINE SHOP

Have you visited our online shop yet? We have lots of wonderful resources and gifts including our CGA medal. Why not stop by for a visit? You can access the shop on our website - [www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org/shop](http://www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org/shop)





## STORIES OF A GENERATION ON NETFLIX

Pope Francis has always been a champion of intergenerational dialogue and in 2018 commissioned a book which shares the insights of older people from around the globe with young people today. The award-winning *Sharing the Wisdom of Time* pools the wisdom of elders with the passion and energy of youth, empowering our younger generations to step into the world of tomorrow with wisdom and understanding.



Now Netflix has produced a new four-part documentary, *Stories of a Generation*, inspired by this beautifully-produced, heart-warming and wise book. It is set for Netflix global release on Christmas Day 2021. The series features profiles of 18 elders featured in the book, across five continents and is filmed and produced by talented young filmmakers under the age of 30. The filmmakers worked under the direction of Fernando Meirelles, who directed *The Two Popes*. The series also features special commentary from Pope Francis.

You can watch a trailer here: <https://youtu.be/MNfGamlwy3Y>



### MAKE A DONATION TO SUPPORT OUR WORK

The CGA is looking for your help so as we can continue our vital ministry of evangelisation and support of Grandparents in their faith.

We are asking for a donation so as we can continue to plan events and resource you with materials into 2022 and beyond.

There are many ways you can support us: You can use Paypal on our website, request our bank details for a bank transfer or send us a cheque. Please email us and we will make sure that you can send us a donation in the cost convenient way for you. Thank you in advance and Happy Christmas!

### CONNECT WITH US ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



You can connect with us on Twitter as @CathGrandAssoc and find us on Facebook as 'Catholic Grandparents Association'. We share a daily thought for the day and a range of other helpful resources. So do give us a follow or a like!



**Catholic Grandparents Association**  
**Our Mission: Passing on the faith**  
**and keeping prayer at the heart of family life**  
[www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org](http://www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org)  
**Email: [info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.com](mailto:info@catholicgrandparentsassociation.com)**

