



On being a Grandparent . . .

My overwhelming sense of being a grandparent is one of Joy. It brings with it an exuberance and sense of wonder which I had not felt in years. One aspect I enjoy most as a grandparent is being allowed to be foolish and frivolous and just have fun – simply not having to be a “grown-up” all the time. As a grandparent you can do all the things you wanted to do with your own children but often didn’t (except sometimes in the holidays) because you were so busy being the sensible parent and running to life ruled by the clock. Making a mess, in my day, was not an outcome you wanted as a parent. But as a grandparent, when it invariably happens, it’s really not a problem because tidying can be done when they’ve gone home. Having another home for them to go to is also definitely an advantage – for parents, grandchildren and grandparents! Of course, you get them to help pack things up but there’s not the pressure to enforce picking up every single item which then results in tears and tantrums. That is probably the greatest difference between being a parent and grandparent. There isn’t that responsibility for forming the child to be a responsible and respectful adult.

There is another side of being a grandparent which I find is also a great joy and that is in being able to help your children. Something really miraculous happens when a baby is born – as we all know. New relationships are created which change everything. Suddenly, two people who were in charge, and to a large extent in control of their own lives, now become - parents. Their lives are now dictated to by the smallest and most vulnerable person in their – family. Yes, now they are a family, and that smallest of dictators does not communicate via the spoken word! Everything is new, the responsibility feels overwhelming and that nice tidy home you used to have, back when you had uninterrupted sleep, looks the way you feel. Enter the grandparents! Yes, a new relationship has also been formed between you and your children. Suddenly they are shocked to discover that you have been there and done that. Of course they knew that, but now they appreciate it. Being able to do a load of washing and fold some clothes has never been so sweet. Suddenly you are useful for all sorts of reasons.

There is no doubt that grandchildren bring with them a unique and life-infusing love that may wreak havoc with your back and joints but is far more long lasting than any aches and pains. Whether it is listening to stories or worries, or being asked for advice(!), babysitting or doing a load of washing or the dishes, cooking or reading stories - when doing it as a grandparent the rewards are so sweet.



Marie Shaddock – Ouyen Parish

See the Beatitudes of Grandparents below:

The Beatitudes of Grandparents . . .

How blessed are you if your house has been turned upside down and what isn't up high is on the ground; for you have not been alone.

How blessed are you if there is more food on the floor than could ever have been in that little bowl; for you have fed the hungry and witnessed the miracle of multiplication.

How blessed are you if you have read stories and rhymes; for that is the reward of time.

How blessed are you if your body and back ache; for your heart and arms have been full.

How blessed are you if your glasses and phone and all manner of things are covered in sticky little prints; for you have proof of being loved.

How blessed are you when your child says to you "How did you do it?!" for you have been valued.

How blessed are you when you hear your name called and see little eyes light up; for you have tasted heaven.

How blessed are you if you have held a sleeping child; for you have beheld the glory of God.