

Core Concepts for Parish Ministry with Maturing Adults

A ministry of faith development for men and women in the second half of life.

A New Pastoral Need: Current demographics indicate that senior adults are beginning to outnumber the younger generation and are living 20 - 30 years longer than previous generations. They are a **new generation** in need of ongoing faith development and support through all the opportunities, challenges and transitions that mark the second half of life.

Scope: Not just "elders" but all groups in the second half of life. There are three distinct groups:

- Pre-retired and early retired (50 - 70)
- The more seasoned retired (70 - 90)
- The elders (85 - 90+)

Each group has specific needs.

Inclusive: The ministry reaches out to the entire parish, not just the inner core of regular participants but also to those on the edges of parish life and participation. It includes the whole senior population: married couples as well as men and women who are single, widowed or divorced.

A Spiritual Ministry

This is a genuine parish ministry with and for maturing adults, not just a social club for seniors. Its primary aim is growth in Christian maturity.

The goal of the ministry is to support Lifelong Faith Development through

- **Connection and Community:** Intentional building of connection with oneself, with the faith community, with the broader community, with the gift of creation, and with God.
- **Mission:** A lifelong outreach to others with an emphasis on supporting the senior population of the parish. In addition, the ministry fosters participation in the ministries of the parish and in activities of service on behalf of the wider community.
- **Programmes Aimed at Personal Growth:** Through reflection, insight, and wisdom, content will address life issues and lived experience within the context of Christian faith.



Guiding Principles for Ministry with Maturing Adults

Its **focus** is lifelong faith development and growth in Christian maturity

It is **holistic**, touching all dimensions of life: spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, social.

Its **foundation** is belief in the ongoing call of God to each individual to the end of life.

Its **inspiration** is Jesus Christ and the mystery of his dying and rising.

Its **goal** is "transformative learning" — increased insight leading to personal growth.

Its **content** arises out of the real situations in which people live.

Its **methodology** respects the principles of adult learning.

Its **spirit** is characterized by hospitality, outreach and welcome.

It is **an integral part** of parish life.

*Adapted from Parish Ministry with Maturing Adults
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