



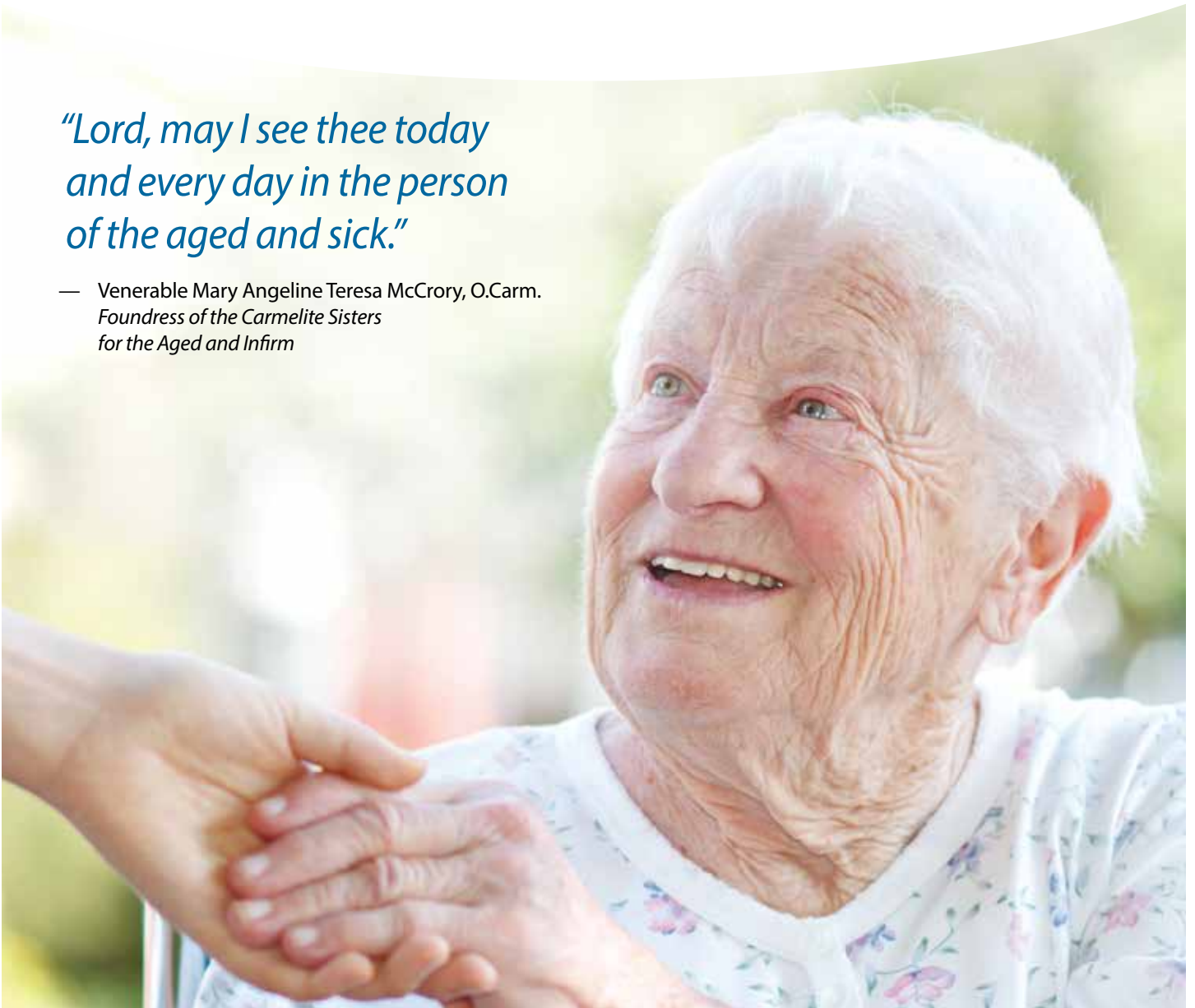
AVILA INSTITUTE
of GERONTOLOGY, Inc.

Geriatric Spiritual Care

2020 Certificate Program

*“Lord, may I see thee today
and every day in the person
of the aged and sick.”*

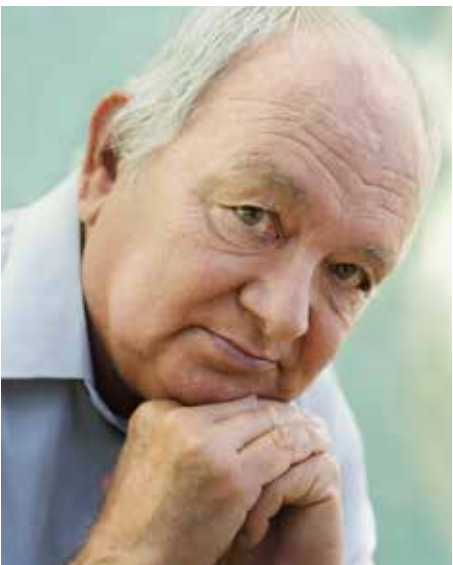
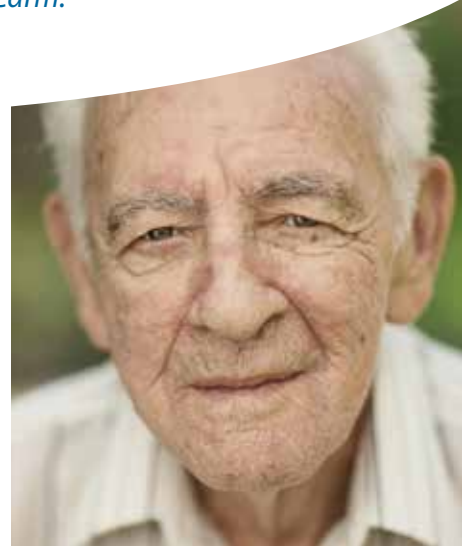
— Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm.
*Foundress of the Carmelite Sisters
for the Aged and Infirm*



**SPACE IS LIMITED — To reserve a spot and request an application,
please email Tricia Misonznick at triciam@avilainstitute.org**

"We can never be too kind to the elderly."

- Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm.





Geriatric Spiritual Care

2020 Certificate Program

It's a privilege to be called to the spiritual care of the elderly - to provide care for their bodies, their spirits and their souls. The right training can either enhance existing skills in long-term care or lead to becoming a pastoral caregiver.

Geriatric Spiritual Care can help residents come to terms with what has happened and what is happening, and how to cope and heal from emotional distress. Distress is often hard for them to express (this is especially true for those with memory impairments such as Alzheimer's and other causes of dementia). Understanding spirituality and how it applies to our lives while being sensitive to the ethical concerns of today will help give caregivers a working knowledge of how to provide the best spiritual comfort for our elders.

The Geriatric Spiritual Care (GSC) program consists of 65 classroom hours distributed over 4 weekends and a week of clinical hands-on experience under expert guidance.

WHO IS THIS PROGRAM FOR?

- Any long-term care professional looking to better understand the spiritual health of the elderly or looking to further and/or refresh their skills
- Anyone appointed to assist in a pastoral care department
- Anyone curious about seeking a career as a pastoral care or spiritual care giver – this program can be a bridge to those who may want to pursue the chaplaincy ministry program can be a bridge to Chaplaincy
- Anyone looking to enhance his or her ministry skills for visiting elder members in his or her communities, hospitals, long-term care facilities, etc.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Geriatric Spiritual Care (GSC) Certificate Program will prepare participants to enter this field of elder care and serve the specific spiritual needs of elders. The program is taught with a team approach by a diverse and expert group of faculty.

The GSC program consists of 65 classroom hours distributed over 4 weekends and a week of clinical hands-on experience under expert guidance.

The class usually consists of 8-10 students.

PROGRAM TOPICS

1. Dynamics of Spiritual Care

- Life Review and Assessment
- Spirituality
- Prayer, Ritual and Sacrament

2. Theology of Suffering

- Theological Reflection/
Care Partnering
- Dynamics of Grief, Loss
and Separation
- Ministry to the Dying

3. Active Listening

- Listening Skills
- Communication to Residents
with Dementia
- Understanding Dynamics
with Family and Staff

4. Moral Ethics

- Practical Ethics/ Moral Theology
- Cultural and Religious Diversity
- Review of Case Studies/Practical
Ministerial Details

5. Palliative Care

- Palliative Care
- Recognizing Signs when
Death is Near
- Difficult Conversations during
the Dying Process

Community Networking

- Parish Ministry to the Elderly
- Developing a Spiritual Care
Network
- Developing a Pastoral Care
Department
- Recruiting Volunteers

Clinical Experience

Affords participants the opportunity to interact and apply learned skills with residents with memory impairment and those receiving palliative or end-of-life care.



DATES AND LOCATIONS

CLASSES (65 hours) are held one weekend per month (Friday to Sunday) in Germantown, NY

Weekend 1: January 24-26, 2020

Weekend 2: February 21-23, 2020

Weekend 3: March 27-29, 2020

Weekend 4: April 17-19, 2020

CLINICAL (55 hrs) will be held for one week in May at a long-term care facility served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm

TUITION

Tuition is \$3000 and includes 65 hours of class time, 55 hours of clinical time, materials, meals, and over-night accommodations.

Scholarships are available. Please contact us for more information.

APPLY NOW - SPACE IS LIMITED

To attend, all prospective students must complete and submit an application. To request an application please contact Tricia Misonznick at (518) 537-5000 or email triciam@avilainstitute.org.

COMPLETION OF THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Participants must have a completed application and must be accepted to attend the program.

To graduate the program participants are responsible for:

- Attending every class
- Attending and participating during clinical hours
- Complete required papers
- Meeting with their mentor
- Completing all assignments given by the faculty

For further information and questions, please contact Tricia at (518) 537-5000.



WHAT PAST GRADUATES SAY ABOUT THE PROGRAM

"I am deeply grateful to the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM) of Marymount Convent, Tarrytown NY who sent me to take the Geriatric Spiritual Care course this year. I am the Pastoral Care Coordinator here at this Convent (a new position), and found the course to be an excellent, intensive delve into the many aspects of pastoral care with the aged and infirm sisters in my care. Particularly helpful were the modules on listening and being a caring presence, a representative of Christ for people in their times of need and the many losses an aged and infirm person experiences. The faculty were excellent, the other students were great companions on this important journey."

- Martha Louise Harkness

"My time at the Avila Institute really touched my heart ... it went beyond my expectations. I not only learned about the aging process, but also about death and dying, where God is in all of this and just maybe, where I might fit into it all. My prayer life has deepened and I am seeking new, creative ways to use what I learned. It is an amazing program."

- Cynthia Tokos

"Deeply compassionate and sensitive to the individual, the Geriatric Spiritual Care Program has given me an appreciation of journeying with the elderly. Sister Peter Lillian and the faculty with their rich experiential dimension in addition to their expertise provided insightful information to guide meaningful interaction with elderly men and women. The course was well paced, adapted to participants who had full-time work, and also provided readings and resources to use for further reflection and instruction. The clinical experience was beneficial to help apply things we learned but also to see the Sisters and staff members model in the ministry what we had learned in the classroom."

- Sister Nancy Marie Jamroz



Module 1 — Dynamics of Spiritual Care

Participants will explore the journey they have taken through a personal life review to better understand the spiritual journey of our elders. This experience will help participants to better understand the spiritual journey of our elders. We need to keep in mind that their spirituality has grown out of their own individual and unique life experiences. Spiritual activities will be offered that are appropriate for the elderly in any setting. The most basic activity is that of prayer and its relationship to the needs and expectations of the elderly. Ritual will also be discussed, with emphasis placed on what is liturgically appropriate. The Magisterium and the Sacramental Life of the Christian will be explored as they relate to the role and activities of the spiritual caregiver.

Objectives

- To develop the technique of life review as a source for rendering geriatric spiritual care.
- To recognize the individuality of spirituality.
- To acquire an understanding of prayer, ritual, and sacraments in the life of the elderly.

Components

1. Life Review/Assessment
2. Spirituality
3. Prayer, Ritual, and Sacrament

“How elders view their living situation is more critical than their actual living situation.”



Module 2 — Theology of Suffering

While almost all individuals experience some form of suffering during their lives, it is especially true for the elderly. While suffering is material in nature it also has a spiritual dimension with which the geriatric spiritual caregiver needs to become familiar.

Participants will research this perspective of suffering in both the Old and New Testaments. Here the emphasis will be on the spiritual value of the Paschal Mystery as personified by Christ and theological reflections will be the tool. The impact of loss and separation will be explored, recognizing that grief is a natural process throughout our life cycle. The participant's ability to deal with death precedes their ability to help individuals deal with loss and bereavement. The presenter will explore skills that can be utilized in dealing with death and dying.

Objectives

- To identify a theology of suffering through the use of Old and New Testament verses.
- To emphasize the spiritual value of the Paschal Mystery.
- To come to terms with the reality of death and the dying process.
- To comprehend the dynamics of grief and appropriate responses.

Components

1. Theological Reflection/Care Partnering
2. Dynamics of Grief, Loss & Separation
3. Ministry to the Dying

“One must work through painful feelings in order to detach from the deceased or the loss in order to reinvest in life.”



Module 3 — Active Listening

Active listening relates to the role of those engaged in Geriatric Spiritual Care. This module involves three interrelated components; the dynamics of active listening, the use of and response to silence, and the distinction between symptom and problem.

The presentation will attempt to help the participants explore the technique and significance of active listening. Active listening also involves the ability to recognize different types of behavior in people with dementia.

Observation, discussion, and response mechanisms will be addressed. The distinction between symptom and problem will be made. This distinction in spiritual care is essential, since the symptom may be an indication of an existing problem. Signs and symbols will be discussed as a communication tool to elicit response to their faith tradition. Efforts in communication skills with family and staff will be explored, using role playing to demonstrate points. The need for referrals and for a team approach will be explored.

Objectives

- To better understand the technique and significance of active listening when interacting with the elderly.
- To become more comfortable in dealing with silence.
- To recognize behavior as manifested by people with dementia.
- To better understand the distinction between symptom and problem.
- To understand the dynamics with family and staff.

Components

1. Listening Skills
2. Communication to Residents with Dementia
3. Understanding Dynamics with Family and Staff

*“The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood.
The best way to understand people is to listen to them.”*

— Ralph Nichols



Module 4 — Moral Ethics

We live in a very complex society and confusion tends to rise over what constitutes appropriate ethical behavior. This module contains three components; practical ethics, comparative religion, and case studies as a source for decision making.

In covering practical ethics, the question “Why is there confusion over ethics?” will be addressed. The presenter will explore the sources of values, ethics, religious ethics, law, and etiquette. The distinction between ethics and moral theology will be addressed through a basic presentation of major religions. The emphasis will be of the origins and similarities in the major religions. Case studies on ethical issues will be reviewed for use in class. The ethical theories and principles will be used as a support system in providing quality of life. The importance of confidentiality will be stressed. The practices and procedures for ministry will be detailed.

Objectives

- To enhance the participants’ understanding of the theories and principles of ethics as a source for a decision-making process.
- To broaden an understanding of the major religions of the world and their influences in creating values within society.
- To establish a methodology for discovering right and wrong.
- To utilize case studies as a source of understanding the decision-making process.

Components

1. Practical Ethics/Moral Theology
2. Cultural and Religious Diversity
3. Review of Case Studies/Practical Ministerial Details

“The moral response is one that most fully respects and promotes human life in relation with God, with other human beings and with all of creation.”

— Kenneth Overberg



Module 5 — Palliative Care

In this session participants will be introduced to the practice of palliative care. This approach seeks to provide relief from the five domains of pain that all persons experience when faced with a debilitating diagnosis: physical, spiritual, emotional, psychiatric and familial. It allows each resident to receive the appropriate treatment that brings him/her comfort and the best possible care and can be combined with curative care or with less aggressive care. Palliative care is not the same as hospice care or end-of-life care which is reserved for those who are clearly dying. Participants will discuss signs that death is near and how to give care during the dying process.

Objectives

- Discuss palliative care.
- Address difficult conversations during the dying process.
- Recognize symptoms and understand basic medical terminology during the dying process.

Components

1. Palliative Care
2. Recognizing Signs when Death is Near
3. Difficult Conversations during the Dying Process

“[Palliative care], is an expression of the properly human attitude of taking care of one another, especially of those who suffer.”

— Pope Francis



Community Networking

Community Networking will identify the importance of forming a Spiritual Care Network. It will also discuss different parish programs that are designed specifically for the elderly. We will also discuss other current aging issues facing spiritual care workers and the elders they serve.

Objectives

- To identify components of a Spiritual Care Network.
- To understand parish ministry to the elderly.
- Address current issues in spiritual care.

Components

1. Parish Ministry to the Elderly
2. Developing a Spiritual Care Network
3. Developing a Pastoral Care Department
4. Recruiting Volunteers

*“One must have a deep and abiding love for the elderly
and a real desire to be of service to them.”*

– Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm.



Clinical Experience

After completing the 5 modules, participants will advance to the clinical component of the program. Each student must attend 55 hours of clinical time at the assigned long-term care facility served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. The site coordinator will develop the schedule for each student.

- Participants will have the opportunity to interact and apply learned skills with residents with memory impairment and those receiving palliative or end-of-life care.
- Participants will interact with staff from all departments.
- Participants have an opportunity to participate in group discussion to reflect on experiences from the day.

***“To clasp the hand of an aged person and give meaning
in the autumn of their life.”***

– Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory, O.Carm.



*The challenge of providing high quality care is ours.
We are the standard-bearers against those who would
exploit the infirmity of old age for their own profit.*

– Mother Mary Angeline Teresa, O.Carm.
Foundress of the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm

About the Avila Institute of Gerontology, Inc.

We at the Avila Institute of Gerontology believe that people in all stages of life deserve to be cared for in their entirety—spirit, soul, and body. With this philosophy, our expert staff, who bring years of academic expertise and compassionate hands on-care to the table, educate individuals looking to become spiritual caregivers.

The Avila Institute of Gerontology was incorporated in 1988, initiated by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm as a response to the growing complexity of geriatric healthcare. As the educational arm of the Congregation, the Institute creates a unique opportunity for individuals to share experiences and knowledge about the care of the aged.

Functioning in accord with the teaching authority of the Church, the educational services of Avila Institute thoroughly reflect the Congregation's commitment to quality and compassionate care in an atmosphere of respect for each human life. The Institute strives to present the most recent information to enhance the field of gerontology.

Learn more at www.avilainstitute.org.