



Sisters AGING WELL Together

A Privileged Ministry Within Ministry: A Practical Approach



A Geriatric Certificate Program for US Women Religious Congregations



A GERIATRIC CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FOR US WOMEN RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

It is essential for Community leaders and those responsible for elder care within their communities to have the appropriate knowledge, information, and resources to support the culture of religious life and foster the continued well-being and growth of each elder in the context of both the current times and those of the future. What decisions are needed to support the culture and ensure long-term benefits for the entire Community?

It is the experience of The Avila Institute of Gerontology that religious Communities can benefit by coming together to collaborate, share, and discuss ways to support the culture of religious life and the well-being of sisters with great sensitivity to both elder members and the community at large. This certificate program provides Communities with practical information that addresses our current lived reality and offers guidance to plan strategically, ensuring that Communities can continue to thrive. The four-day in-person program will address these issues. See the topic descriptions on pages 4-6.

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE

The scholarship, valued at \$1,800 per sister, covers the following:

In-Person Geriatric Certificate Program Training

An in-person Geriatric Certificate Program (GCP) for women religious congregations **over a four-day period**, including room and board (travel not included).

See available dates and locations on page 3.

Available One-Hour Virtual Discussion Every Other Month

Every other month, a one-hour virtual discussion on the following topics:

- Customized content based on participants' pressing needs to be identified throughout the discussions.
- Continued training on the AIG Care Transitions Assessment tool (CTA) and interpreting the results.

SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify for a scholarship, applicants must commit to the following:

- Attend and actively participate in one of the three four-day in-person GCPs.
- Attend and actively participate in the every other month virtual discussions following GCP attendance.
(Recommended but not required)
- Implement at least one part of the CTA within their Community and report back on the results.
- Complete and submit all Pre/Post-Tests and surveys.
- Complete and submit a reflection paper.



ONE LAST DATE AND LOCATION FOR:

**Saturday-Tuesday
November 11-14, 2023**

Carmelite Spiritual Center

8419 Bailey Rd., Darien, IL 60561
www.carmelitespiritualcenter.org

Day One begins at 1:00 p.m. (Optional Mass/Lunch beforehand). Day Four ends at 1:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION

Thanks to the generosity of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, a limited number of scholarships are available. If you would like to be considered for a scholarship, please complete and submit the online registration form (<https://forms.office.com/r/8SjhxM7h4a>) or you can print and complete the form on page 7 as soon as possible.

Our objective is to distribute scholarships to as many Sisters as possible. All registrants will be notified whether they are receiving a scholarship within two weeks of registration form receipt.

If you plan to attend and are not seeking a scholarship, please complete the form on page 7 and send with your payment.

Space is limited.



CONFERENCE OVERVIEW AND SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

DAY 1

KEYNOTE – The Privilege of Being Called an Elder

Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm.

Do we see being an “elder” as a privilege? Do we fear this term? In order to address one’s fears about aging, it is essential to first name those fears. This interactive session will allow us to come to terms with our own fears of aging and ascertain if we are prepared to answer those fears so we can minister to others.

The Transformation of Aging – Understanding Normal Aging

Alfred Norwood, MBA, BS

As we age, we tend to experience changes in our physical and cognitive abilities. For many, this means a slowdown in some of our functions. Today, we view those near the age of 65 to be in the beginning stages of that slowdown, with gradual decline occurring in the years thereafter. But some people experience decline that is considered beyond normal aging, particularly with regard to the decline in cognitive skills associated with dementia. In this session, we will discuss the differences between normal aging and abnormal aging, steps that we can take now to address risk factors for abnormal aging, and how Communities can develop a plan to provide the appropriate care for members as they age and continue to transform to their best selves.

Health Care Proxies, Living Wills, and HIPAA

MC Sullivan, RN, MTS, JD

People often want (and expect) to be in control of decisions about their healthcare. But the reality is often very different, as many people with advanced serious illness are not mentally or physically capable of making their own care decisions as they near the end of their life. Many unfortunately receive care that is not concordant with their values, goals and informed preferences.” - *Catholic Health Association of the United States*

In this presentation, MC Sullivan explains the critical role of advance directives with regard to end-of-life decision making that aligns with Catholic teaching.

Items that will be covered include:

- Types of advance directives
- Position of the Catholic Church
- How to prepare an advance directive

DAY 2

Recruiting, Retaining, and Promoting Value Driven Employees; What Haven’t We Tried?

Sr. Annelle Fitzpatrick, CSJ, PhD

The US labor shortage, coupled with research from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which reports that every one in four employees of long-term care facilities are immigrants, makes the challenge of attracting and retaining a committed workforce difficult. In addition to language barriers, there are often cultural and religious barriers, as many of us are unfamiliar with religious traditions of our non-Catholic employees. Given the fact of changing workforce demographics, perhaps it is time to ask ourselves, “What do we know about the religious teachings of my Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Buddhist, or Jain employees?” What, if anything, do we, as Catholics, have in common with these unfamiliar religions? What do they teach about suffering and care of the sick and dying? In this session, participants will have the opportunity to learn more about the rich tapestry that unites people of faith. Perhaps by tapping into the spiritual energy inherent in our employees, we might recognize that being faith based is not only our most important recruiting tool, but also the very key to bringing out the best in all our employees!



Impact of Change and Stress as We Transition in Life and Ministry

Francis Battisti, Ph.D.
Helen E. Battisti, Ph.D., RDN, CDN

Routine and tradition are an important part of one's identity. This is especially true for those who have lived Community Life for a large part of their adulthood. Many have been part of their Community for 60 or 70 years - and beyond! Aging often brings about changes in people's lives that require a transition into a new way of living and serving. These changes can be quite stressful because they necessitate leaving behind or altering certain actions, routines, and traditions. In this session, we will discuss coping with change and how we can navigate the impact it has on the elders we serve. Strategies for combatting the stress associated with moving from independence to dependence will be discussed.

Culture of Care

Clare L. Horn, LCSW

One of the most important things that a Community can do is devise a plan to care for its members as they age. Critical to this planning is the incorporation of person-centered care concepts. Person-centered care is a method of providing care for the person in alignment with their needs, preferences, history, and beliefs. A culture of care that accounts for all of these considerations for each individual member while maintaining the stability of the whole Community is an essential ingredient in the person-centered care recipe. In this session, we will discuss the foundational principles of person-centered care in the context of religious life, methods for assessing the culture of care within a Community, and how to support Community Members as they age in continuing to build relationships with self, God, others, and all creation.

Forming a Healthcare Team

Shane Cooney, BA
Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm.
Alfred Norwood, MBA, BS

A holistic approach of care requires a team that provides pastoral, spiritual, medical, social, physical, cognitive, and psychological care. This team can provide insights into the various needs of the individual and how the Commu-

nity can respond to those needs. In this session, we will discuss how to form the healthcare team, what areas of expertise are needed, and what actions the team must take to plan for future needs.

DAY 3

Letting Go – Loss, Grief, Finding Meaning in Life, and Staying Connected

Francis Battisti, Ph.D.
Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm.
Sr. Mary O'Donovan, O.Carm.

As we age, it is expected that we will lose things – health, independence, loved ones and friends, and even meaning. These losses often produce grief as we remember and miss those things that once brought us joy and peace. Grief is a normal part of the aging process, but how we handle that grief plays a big part on our overall health and well-being. It is important to recognize and confront the emotions that we experience following a loss in a way that allows us to process grief, practice self-care, and continue moving forward on the journey. In this session, we will discuss the experiences of loss of grief, how to help others find meaning in life when one is grieving, and the importance of staying connected to those who have journeyed with you.

Is it Care-Giving or Care-Partnering? Discussion

Francis Battisti, Ph.D.
Helen E. Battisti, Ph.D., RDN, CDN
Shane Cooney, BA
Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm.
Clare Horn, LCSW
Alfred Norwood, MBA, BS

In our elder years, understanding the story of our lives more deeply can bring us comfort, peace, and wisdom. Having an awareness that one is on a journey – both internally and externally – and how that journey has brought us to the current day can help to alleviate the stress associated with age-related transitions. In this session, we will discuss the importance of honoring one's story and the benefit of conducting a life review, so we transform from a caregiver to a care-partner. In this transformation, we begin to understand the importance of self-care as part of care-partnering.



Being vs Doing: What Brings Meaning to My Life Now?

Clare L. Horn, LCSW

All human beings endeavor to live their lives with purpose. In religious life, this purpose is often manifested in the ministry of Community and knowing we are serving God's people. As we age, changes in our bodies and mind can limit our abilities to serve in the ways that we are used to, which may mean that the ways in which we find our purpose must also change. Those who live very active lives can sometimes have a difficult time "winding down" and finding alternative ways to stay involved in religious life. Did our position define who we are? In this session, we will discuss what it means to bring purpose to religious, spiritual, and communal life, how to discern the Spirit as we transition into the different seasons of our lives, and how we can begin to discover the value in moving from "doing" to "being."

Discussion

Shane Cooney, BA

Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm.

DAY 4

An Assessment Tool Designed for Care Transitions

Shane Cooney, BA

Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm.

Accurate assessment of the health and wellness needs of both individual members and the Community as a whole is an essential component in the sustainability of any religious Community. In this session, we will discuss how to utilize the AIG Care Transitions tool, a dynamic measurement instrument that produces a snapshot of the entire Community at the time of assessment while also gathering data that will help the Community identify current and future issues related to care and transition. Knowing that each Community will have their own unique set of goals and challenges during transition, the material is organized in sections that are to be used when needed for specific situations.

POST-CONFERENCE EVERY OTHER MONTH VIRTUAL DISCUSSIONS

Follow Up and Implementation

Discussion groups will take place every two months for a period of six months via video meeting as part of the program. Discussions will be facilitated by members of the Avila Institute of Gerontology on topics that participants identified for further education. Each meeting will be an interactive session that requires the participation of all program attendees in order to accurately identify ongoing educational needs. In addition to this, members of the AIG Team will be available to help implement a system for assessing the needs of communities and suggest various considerations and determinations that must be made to support the development of a strategic plan to help them achieve their goals.

**REGISTRATION | GERIATRIC CERTIFICATE PROGRAM TRAINING****PERSONAL INFORMATION** *Please print clearly.*

Date: _____

NAME (First and Last Name): _____

Badge Name: _____

Position / Title: _____

Congregation: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____ Sign me up for emails regarding future programsDo you have any dietary restrictions we need to be aware of? No Yes _____**DIRECTIONS**

Thoroughly complete this form and return with check (if applicable) to:

Avila Institute of Gerontology, Inc.
600 Woods Rd.

Germantown, NY 12526

tonys@avilainstitute.org

Or fax to: (518) 537-4725

FORM RETURN DATES

Scholarship requests are due 30 days before each program start date.

Please complete and return this form as soon as possible, to be considered for a scholarship. Our objective is to distribute scholarships to as many Sisters as possible. All registrants will be notified whether they are receiving a scholarship within two weeks of registration form receipt.

Payment

Include a check for \$1,800 payable to the Avila Institute of Gerontology, Inc.

Four Day In-Person Geriatric Certificate Program (GCP) Training**Saturday-Tuesday November 11-14, 2023**

Carmelite Spiritual Center | Darien, IL

SCHOLARSHIPS/ PAYMENT

Thanks to the generosity of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, scholarships are available to cover the \$1,800 program costs which includes overnight accommodations, meals, and materials. (Travel not included.)

 I am interested in being considered for a scholarship I will attend and do not need a scholarship**SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFICATIONS**

To qualify for a scholarship, registrants must commit to the following:

- Attend and actively participate in one of the three four-day in-person GCPs.
- Attend and actively participate in the every other month virtual discussions following GCP attendance. *(Recommended but not required).*

- Implement at least one part of the CTA within their Community and report back on the results.
- Complete and submit all Pre/ Post-Tests and surveys.
- Complete and submit a reflection paper.

For more information about this program and the registration/scholarship process, please call 518-537-5000.