

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Supporting Peoples' Journeys through Maturing Years

Toronto – Sister Mary Rose Marrin has a message for churches and for society in general: look at aging as a spiritual journey and assist maturing adults during this passage. Issues of purpose and meaning become more urgent as people age. A ministry that supports the lifelong faith development of women and men is essential. In a world where peoples' longevity has increased by 30 years over the last century, her message is timely.

“We need to balance the decline we experience as we age with the potential for inner growth,” said Sr. Mary Rose. “We need to create a new vision of aging: the impact of having this vision can be powerful.” To this end, she has developed a highly interactive program that invites participants to see their retirement years in this new light. Four programmes, each involving four sessions, offer participants a chance to gain insight into their own lived experience and to understand the importance of developing relationships in their faith communities. She developed this program at St. Mary's Parish in Barrie, ON, and has since introduced it to numerous Catholic parishes in the Toronto archdiocese.

“My goal is to raise awareness,” said Sr. Mary Rose. “We need to change our attitude to the second half of life – to honour the wisdom of maturing adults.” Ministry with older adults is the least developed ministry in our parishes, yet the demographics point to the current and future need for this ministry. Her dream is see “a committed group” take up this work and move it forward.

Sister Mary Rose is a Sister of St. Joseph of Toronto with background in teaching, spiritual formation, congregational leadership and parish ministry. She obtained a BA from the University of Toronto, a Masters of Theological Studies from Jesuit Weston, Cambridge, MA and certificates in Spiritual Gerontology and Lifelong Faith Development at the Johnson Institute in St. Louis, Missouri. She credits the director, Dr. Richard P. Johnson, author of *Parish Ministry for Maturing Adults*, as a pioneer in developing curriculum in the area of spiritual maturity for adults.

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