

## ***Aging Gracefully - An Invitation to Contemplation***

This week, for your consideration, is a summary of the discussion on accomplishment, from Sr. Joan Chittister's book, *The Gift of Years – Growing Older Gracefully*. Following the summary are quotations on the burden and blessing of accomplishment, a personal reflection, and a call to contemplate meaning in view of your own life, no matter where you happen to be on the journey.

### ***Accomplishment***

When Sr. Joan published her book in 2008, the median age of the U.S. population base was thirty-six; it is now 38.2, which exemplifies the growth of the graying population in our country. However, Sr. Joan observes that the population is not only aging, it is thriving. We are healthier and more active than previous generations. Sr. Joan writes, "Old age is not a free ride to irresponsibility. Now we must take our place among the sages of the world, comparing, evaluating, cajoling, and bringing experience to bear as have the elders of every generation before us." It is our turn to creatively engage with others for the betterment of the world.

### ***Burden and Blessing***

*"The burden of a lack of commitment to accomplishment means that we have moved into a period of suspended animation, that aging is nothing more than deterioration. The truth is that aging means aging. Nothing more, nothing less. It is just us growing ripe."*

*"The blessing to a commitment of accomplishment is that, as we continue to bring our considerable skills, experience, and insight to bear on the present needs of humankind, we will certainly become wiser, definitely spiritually stronger, and more than ever a blessing to the rest of society."*

### ***Personal Reflection***

When I was in graduate school, there weren't enough training opportunities for students, especially working students! I want to develop a program for training students to provide oversight, guidance, and consultation for those entering the field of psychology. Supervision at all stages of study is necessary, but never more critical than when on practicum or internship. By offering supervision and sharing my experience, I will make it just a little bit better for those who are coming after me.

### ***Invitation to Personal Reflection and Contemplation***

What does your commitment of accomplishment include?

What steps will you take to mentor the generation that comes after you?

How can you become full of life – full of gratitude – full of energy and creativity?

In what ways will you grow wiser, spiritually stronger and become a blessing for all?

Warm regards,

***Barbara Szulc, Psy.D.***

Parish Counseling Services are available upon request. For an appointment, send an email to [BSzulc@HGAParish.org](mailto:BSzulc@HGAParish.org). No fees will be assessed, however, free-will offerings to Holy Guardian Angels Parish are kindly accepted.