

# AGING *in His Grace*

ST. BENEDICT ORTHODOX CHURCH  
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## *WEEK 1 ~ Dare to Explore*

### I. Golden Apples

- “Fairy tales say that apples were golden only to refresh the forgotten moment when we found that they were green. They make rivers run with wine only to make us remember, for one wild moment, that they run with water.” ~ G. K. Chesterton
- How do you look at the world? How do you look at old age?

### II. From Monasticism to Geriatrics

- My personal journeys: what I found in monasteries I also found in senior care...

### III. Dealing with Old Age

- What do you think of? Positive and Negatives parts of old age

### IV. Old Age is an Exile

- A retreat, forced by fallen nature and human mortality, away from so much.
- One may wonder, “Now what remains to be done?”
- Do these losses tell the whole story?

### V. An Exile into What?

- “We lose nothing without replacing it” ~ Sigmund Freud
- “This afternoon of human life must also have a significance of its own and cannot be *merely* a pitiful appendage to life’s morning” ~ Carl Jung
- To where is old age taking us?

### VI. Mainstream Perspectives and Their Problems

- Successful aging?
- Activities Theory & Functionalistic perspective - just fun and youth

- “The media offer a solution to aging through “a few self-help books here, a little cosmetic surgery there, concentrating on creative leisure pursuits – bungee-jumping at 103, popping a few pills of promise.” ~ Neuhaus
- “The spirit of the age is characterized by a seductive invitation to well-being through independence, bodily perfection and agelessness. The pimple-free obsession of our youth has become the wrinkle-free obsession of old age.” ~ Hudson
- ‘Successful aging’ has become an unquenchable fantasy to stretch youth as long as possible.
- Bingo, plastic surgery...is this all there is to old age??

## VII. Our Goal

- Old age is an exile, towards what?
- How does traditional Christianity answer this?
- How can we live it out in our own lives and those of our aging companions?

## VIII. Looking Ahead (Overview of Week)

- October 4 - Dare to Explore
- October 11 - Aging or Awakening
- October 18 - Gerotranscendence and Theosis
- (October 21<sup>st</sup> > Saturday Retreat)  
“Aging Gracefully: Accepting Change and Challenges”
- October 25 - Encountering God in Old Age (and Dementia)
- October 8 - Presentation by Dignity Memorial
- October 15 - Living in Gratitude for Our Elders

## IX. The Voyage of Life

- A reflection on Thomas Cole’s painting, “Voyage of Life”