Reflections on spirituality in later life

Elizabeth MacKinlay Guest Editor


To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15528030.2016.1196944

Published online: 17 Jun 2016.
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It is my pleasure to write a brief word on the three articles in this edition of the *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging* drawn from articles developed from the 2014 Center for Aging and Pastoral Studies (CAPS) Conference, held in Canberra, Australia. The articles present a wide area of scholarship in ageing and spirituality. Wells writes a reflective article on Pentecostalism as a means of spiritual expression for older adults, asking the question of whether Pentecostalism is reaching the coming cohort of older people. She applies Smith’s concept of a “Pentecostal world-view” as the predominant lens through which to examine beliefs and practices within the Pentecostal Church, especially as they relate to older Pentecostals. Wrigley-Carr writes on “Soul Care” for people with dementia, including those with advanced dementia, basing the article on von Hügel’s “three Elements of Religion,” giving emphasis to the mystical and institutional elements as ways of connecting with people who have dementia. McDonald writes from a nursing perspective, engaging with questions of life quality in long-term care and the place of spirituality. She argues that a focus on meaning in life as experienced by aged care residents, rather than loss of functional capacity, is vitally important in developing quality of life for residents in long-term care.

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