

Elderly Parents

The following are thoughts and advice shared with us by parishioners who took care of their elderly parents: how did that experience impact them and their family, and lessons they learned:

- Lots of doctor appointments
 - Kids (grandkids) were little at the time – learned about sacrifice watching parents care for their parent (grandparent)
 - Moved in w/parent to take better care of them - could not have done w/out spouse support (siblings also assisted)
 - Worried about how this would affect caregivers family like – kids came to stay the summer at grandparent house and had a blast
 - How can I be a nice/kind person so kids want to take care of me
 - Looking forward to future visits from Philoptochos
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- Parent (grandparent) was always the healthy one – then became ill: grandparents had to switch roles at this point but caregiving spouse not very mobile
 - When ill spouse passed, other parent started to not do well either.
 - Would call parent and played church service over the phone to hear before webcam was an option
 - Constantly on the phone coordinating the need for a lot out of state care
 - Had to fly to out of state parents twice a month – eventually surviving parent moved closer
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- Parent lived to 96.5 – lots of health problems entire life – every time we visited always in the hospital
 - Lived a long life b/c of positive attitude
 - When we moved parent into our home things became stressful; we also had NO privacy

- Family was neglected b/c mind always on parent – you need the support of your family
 - Parent was very stubborn; getting them out was very important to them
 - Learned to be very patient
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- Parents passed when 99 and 101 – required MANY years of care
 - One parent was an only child, so hard to care for their elderly parent w/no support of siblings
 - Grandkids would visit often and got more out of it than grandparent
 - Received email every morning to know they were ok – missed the messages after they passed
 - Listening to parent (grandparent) was important to them
 - Companionship and socialization is important – liked to go to church
 - Parishioners sending cards to them also meant a lot
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- Grateful for the opportunity to spend time together
 - Loneliness crushes the person
 - Having a plan is good
 - Working TOGETHER is important
 - Have to learn to argue rationally w/someone who can't understand
 - Many negative/bad behaviors as a result of a disease become amplified
 - Know your limitations – sometimes having them in your home will not work
 - Stay connected w/the church – they WANT to hear the WORD
 - Take care of yourself