

## Priest pens spiritual survival guide for recession

A priest and author says religious leaders aren't paying attention to older people hit by recession. SOONER or later, it happens to each of us, Richard Rohr says.

“There always will be at least one situation in our lives that we cannot fix, control, explain, change or even understand,” the Franciscan priest said.

Maybe you’ve been laid off from a job you held for years. Perhaps you’ve experienced a nasty divorce. Or maybe the crisis is more subtle: You suddenly realized that you’ll never have the life you dreamed of living.

Any life-changing moment can knock a person down. But it can also open doors if, as Rohr puts it, a person learns how to “fall upward.”

Rohr, a 68-year-old Roman Catholic author and internationally known speaker, says older Americans face a problem: Religious leaders aren’t paying much attention to them.

Much of contemporary religion is geared toward teaching people how to navigate the first half of their lives, when they’re building careers and families. Rohr calls it a “goal-oriented” spirituality.

Yet there’s less help for people dealing with the challenges of aging: the loss of health, the death of friends, and coming to terms with mistakes that cannot be undone, he says.

Rohr’s new book, “Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life,” is his attempt to fill that void. It also functions as a spiritual survival guide for hard times as millions of Americans young and old struggle to cope with “falling”: losing their homes, careers and status.

Rohr says he coined the phrase “falling upward” to describe a paradox. Nearly everyone will fall in life because they’ll confront some type of loss, he says. Yet failure can lead to growth if a person makes the right decisions.

Fr. Richard Rohr