



Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



Mission Focus: Women of healing... defending and caring for all creation

July & August 2025

Praying and Acting for an End to Violence Everywhere



National Gun Violence Awareness month is in June and, Sisters were ready with messages of non-violence. The Sisters of Bon Secours, along with 7 other congregations of religious women in the Baltimore area, invested in a bus advertising campaign to raise awareness and encourage action to reduce gun violence. The effort received quite a bit of media attention from both Catholic and secular media.

On any given day you might see a Baltimore City bus with a "Put the Guns Down" message. The QR code on the ads takes readers to a [campaign webpage](#) with advocacy actions and information about the [Archdiocese of Baltimore's gun buyback](#) in August.

According to state and federal data, gun violence in Maryland disproportionately impacts communities of color in Baltimore, where many of the guns recovered by law enforcement enter the state from across state lines. In 2024 alone, 201 people were killed by firearms in Baltimore. Many were young. Most were people of color. All were beloved by someone. These are not just statistics. These are lives lost, families shattered, futures stolen. And behind each number is a story that vowed religious refuse to ignore. As progress made on reducing gun violence is threatened by a reduction of funding for community violence prevention and intervention and bills are introduced that remove common sense gun safety regulations, we all must stand up and demand an end to senseless violence in our communities and support for those most impacted.

JPIC Days of Remembrance

July 14
St. Kateri Tekakwitha
Patroness of
Ecology and the Environment

July 30
World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

August 9
International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

August 15
The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

August 19
World Humanitarian Day

August 23
International Day for Remembrance of the Slave Trade & Its Abolition

August 23
St. Rose of Lima Patron Saint of Peru and the Americas



Exploring Nonviolence as the Path Forward...

The Nonviolence Now Podcast hosted by Loyal Beyhum and Alisha Foster and sponsored by Pace e Bene explores nonviolence as the path forward.

- Listen to session one of the podcast, "[What is Non-violence](#)" and reflect on the following:
- What is one thing you do to foster the inner work of non-violence?
- Where do you see active resistance to violence in your own life and in the life of your community?



Sisters Speak Out: Washington, DC



On June 24, 56 congregations of religious women descended on Capitol Hill to pray for legislators and the needs of the most vulnerable and to advocate against the provisions in the US federal budget bill that are detrimental to people living in poverty like cuts to Medicaid and nutrition assistance. Organizers said the coalition of Catholic sisters who gathered in Washington represents 17,800 sisters in 37 states and 11 countries.

Bon Secours participated in the event even in oppressive 100-degree heat. Sisters, young adults and associates prayed and advocated for the people and communities who will be adversely affected by this bill. They advocated for reduced cuts to programs that support poor and marginalized communities and for a decrease in spending on arrests and detention of non-criminal immigrants working to support their families. It was a day of public witness, for Sisters and their supporters to vocally oppose a bill designed to take from the poor and give to the rich. Back in Marriottsville, Sr. Elaine organized a rosary and prayer in the chapel with those that could not travel to DC. Twenty-one similar events were scheduled to take place throughout the USA.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Hope for the Future

In June, associates, young adults and JPIC Area Team members gathered in the DRC for a retreat led by Fr. Jacques Kuziala a Consolata Missionary. Participants explored how to put the Bon Secours charism of compassion, healing and liberation to music in their individual and communal lives during this jubilee year.

Acting as pilgrims of hope, Catholic bishops and Protestant pastors in the Democratic Republic of Congo recently submitted what they call a "Social Pact for Peace and Living Together in the Democratic Republic of Congo" to President Felix Tshisekedi in the capital, Kinshasa. This peace pact aims to restore social cohesion, resolve conflict through dialogue, leverage diversity to build a more resilient community, convince leaders to end armed conflict, promote sustainable development and limit the exploitation of natural resources. Now, the churches plan to rally congregations, politicians, and local communities around the goal of ending the conflict and fostering peaceful coexistence.

Hope is very important in the DRC especially now as a Peace Agreement has been signed by the foreign ministers of Rwanda and the DRC. It is yet to be determined if this fragile peace agreement will hold.



2025 UNANIMA Woman of Courage Award: Juana Garcia Valverde, Casma, Peru

At the end of June, we celebrated a very special lay missionary from Spain who has dedicated her life to serving the most vulnerable. She has ministered in Casma, Peru for more than 35 years, and over 90 elderly and mentally challenged residents currently live at the San Jose de Casma nursing home. The residents affectionally call her Sr. Juanita. The celebration started with several priests, sisters and public officials speaking about Juanita's humble spirit, complete confidence in God and compassionate care for the sick and elderly. Mass with the Bishop of Chimbote followed and a beautiful luncheon. A consistent thread through Juana's story was her complete trust in the providence of God. Juana will go down in UNANIMA history as the last woman to be recognized with this prestigious award.