


# fOCUS

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours

FALL 2010



<sup>®</sup>  
SISTERS OF BON SECOURS



PEOPLE USUALLY CONSIDER WALKING ON WATER  
OR IN THIN AIR A MIRACLE. BUT I THINK THAT THE  
REAL MIRACLE IS NOT TO WALK EITHER ON WATER  
OR IN THIN AIR, BUT TO WALK ON EARTH.

EVERY DAY WE ARE ENGAGED IN A MIRACLE WHICH WE  
DON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE: A BLUE SKY, WHITE CLOUDS,  
GREEN LEAVES, THE BLACK, CURIOUS EYES OF A CHILD –  
OUR OWN TWO EYES. ALL IS A MIRACLE.

THICH NHAT HANH, VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST MONK

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, leader, C.B.S.

Sr. Jean Aulenback, C.B.S.

Sr. Patricia Dowling, C.B.S.

Patty Dooley, candidate

Jennifer Murphy

Andrea Springer

**EDITOR & DESIGNER:**

Bonnie Heneson

Communications

**FOCUS** is published bi-annually by the Sisters of Bon Secours. For additional copies, questions or comments regarding this publication or the Sisters of Bon Secours, contact Sisters of Bon Secours, 1525 Marriottsville Road, Marriottsville, MD 21104 or 410-442-1333. For additional information about the Sisters of Bon Secours, visit [www.bonsecours.org/us](http://www.bonsecours.org/us).

# contents

## Dear Friends

Message from the Leader ..... 3

## Reflecting on First Call

Ecological Stewardship ..... 5

## Health System News

Results of Going Green ..... 9

## Bon Secours Ministries

A Future Filled with Hope ..... 12

## Sisters in Ministry

Sister Nancy Glynn Reflects  
on Ten Years in Paris ..... 14

Sister Frances McCabe  
Coordinates Marian Hall ..... 15

Sister Katherine Tierney Fights  
against Human Trafficking ..... 16

## Sponsored Ministries

Sisters Academy ..... 17

Mercy Housing ..... 18

## Sisters and Their Hobbies

Sister Mary Magdalen Helps  
in Vocation Office ..... 19

Sister Vicky Segura Is  
a Photographer and Gardener ..... 20

## Vocation and Formation News

Women in Temporary Profession  
Have International Experience ..... 21

Christian Decision-Making:  
A Way of Life ..... 23

Come and See Weekends ..... 24

## Living Our Mission

Joann Karibo,  
Genette Cameron-Reid,  
Maxim Williams,  
and Cindy Bishop  
Reflect on the  
Bon Secours Mission ..... 25

## Associate News

Sharing Associate Experiences ..... 27

## Volunteer Ministry

Welcome to New Volunteers ..... 29

## Spiritual Center News

Our Metanoia Commitment ..... 31

## In Memoriam

Remembering  
Sister Angela Neville ..... 35

Sister Mary Ellen Wagner ..... 36

## Around the Congregation

From Medicine Bottles to  
Wishes of Congratulations ..... 37

# Dear Friends



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

It is hard to believe that my first year as Country Leader is almost over. It has been a wonderful, exciting and challenging year, and I very much appreciate the opportunity I have had to meet, work and pray with so many exceptional people.

As our new model of governance has emerged, the Congregation Team members have continued to get to know each other better and develop a deeper sense of care and concern for the well-being of the entire Congregation, not just their own individual country. Also, one of the goals of the new governance model is to encourage decision making at the community level when appropriate. This will allow all of the sisters to be involved in decisions affecting their own lives and ministries, while also being challenged to keep in mind the good of the whole.

As the Country Leader for the United States, I believe that the sisters are energized around this new model of governance and especially around the Mission Focus Statement that was adopted at the 2009 General Chapter. The Mission Focus Statement gives us much to reflect on and discuss over the next several years. The challenge for us is to expand our consciousness and thinking about our healing ministry beyond the physical healing of a person to the healing of our world. How we accomplish this and what we choose to do to respond to this call gives us many exciting opportunities.

In this issue of Focus, you will read about how we reflected on our Mission Focus' First Call as "We call each sister and community to: Demonstrate in her lifestyle respect and protection for all creation." Our discussions at our May Assembly led us to reflect on how we, as sisters and our associates and co-workers, can contribute

to ecological stewardship and the greening of our planet. Sr. Rosemary Moynihan, S.C., director of Ecology and Global Ministries for Bon Secours Health System, presented an inspiring presentation on the many ways the Bon Secours Health System has “gone green” and the relationship between our ecological and global ministries. I hope you enjoy reading about this important direction that both the sisters and health system are embracing.

I have also had several wonderful opportunities to travel this past year to see the work of the sisters in some of the other countries where we minister. I recently returned from a trip to Peru where I visited several of the sisters’ ministries in Trujillo and Huancayo. The welcome and hospitality extended to us by our sisters in Peru was outstanding, and the children, parents and teachers in the schools we visited welcomed us warmly with music, dancing, poetry readings, gifts and prayers. The expressions of welcome and gratitude from all those we encountered were truly overwhelming.

We note with great sadness the recent passing of Sr. Angela Neville and Sr. Mary Ellen Wagner. Their many contributions to the Sisters of Bon Secours over the years will be long remembered, and they will be sorely missed by all of us.

As the holiday season approaches, I want to wish each of you and your families a happy, healthy and peaceful holiday season, and please know how much your friendship and association with the Sisters of Bon Secours mean to all of us.

Peace,



Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, C.B.S.,

Leader

Sisters of Bon Secours, USA



---

# *Sisters of Bon Secours*

## REFLECT UPON FIRST CALL & ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP

---

### **MISSION FOCUS:**

We, Women of Healing, commit ourselves to defend and care for all creation; to cry out with others against injustice and all that diminishes life on Earth.



### **FIRST CALL:**

We call each Sister and community to:  
Demonstrate in her lifestyle respect and protection for all creation.

At the May Country Assembly of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, the sisters began to examine ecological stewardship and how it relates to their Mission Focus: First Call. They heard a moving presentation by Sr. Rosemary Moynihan, S.C., director of Ecology and Global Ministry for Bon Secours Health System, in which she showed how the health system has integrated ecology and global ministry into its culture, mission, and strategic plan. (See Health System News on page 9)

Several people then participated on a panel to reflect on the Mission Focus: First Call and how to start integrating “going green” into their lives and culture. We share with you some of their reflections on Ecological Stewardship.



When asked “What touches you most deeply about the Commitment and the First Call?” **Sr. Elaine Davia** responded to the word “defend” in the commitment statement. “Perhaps it's because I've grown up loving outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, walking and gardening. I feel a deep pain when I hear of ways that our globe is being permanently ruined, such as the coal companies blowing the tops off and flattening the beautiful Appalachian mountains, one of the places I visited and hiked as a child and where I spent several months working some years ago. Sometimes I literally want to 'cry' out with the pain of it,” she says.



Sr. Elaine Davia, director of Formation for the Sisters of Bon Secours, also shares some personal stories that speak to respect and protection for all of creation. “Last year I deliberately stepped on a mosquito to kill it. Right away I realized how beautiful and delicate it was, and I felt a pain deep inside. I killed it out of fear. It was so fragile and delicate, and I’m so much bigger and more powerful than it was. In that moment, I had a profound sense of my power over another life form. It was so easy to kill it. How many other ways do I use the power I have to hurt another or not defend or protect out of fear or just insensitivity?”

“I grew up in a large family in a house with a shallow well. All my life I have had a concern for conservation of water, paper, electricity, etc. Recycling is ingrained in my very cells. Now what compels me to action is seeing others, humans and other life forms, who need protection and someone to cry out for them.”

Sr. Elaine is energized by the fact that more than 300 sisters intentionally want to “protect and defend”... the power of this energy is exciting.



**Sr. Bernie Claps** notes that what touches her most deeply about the Commitment and First Call is the recognition of the interconnectedness of all things. This interconnectedness is not just between ourselves and each other in community, but with ourselves and all

other human beings and with creation. Sr. Bernie says, “Our ministry focus and call to personal commitment compels us, as a Congregation, and me personally, to work against the destructive forces that exploit and diminish all forms of life and that result in the alienation of any one part of creation from any other.” In sharing a personal story that speaks to respect and protection for all creatures, Sr. Bernie relates that recently her awareness has been raised regarding the issue of bottled water and its ecological impact. Its production and transportation use a huge amount of fossil fuels, and many plastic bottles end up in landfills. She no longer buys bottled water since in this country we are blessed with abundant, safe, drinkable tap water.



Associate **Pam Phillips** says that, as women of faith, we serve as moral agents called to be all that we are in the fullness of God’s love, and, through the gift of our free will, we are participating with God’s grace, since grace is God self-communicating with us. Responding to the call of healing was central to the founding sisters and is just as relevant today. As Jesus was a healer, so is each of us. We are in the presence of God since God dwells in us and in those around us. When we reach out to offer a kind

word, a warm embrace or a loving gesture, we are reaching out to God. This understanding helps us to realize our connectedness to one another and with our world. Moreover, there is a correlation between creation, that is redemptive, and redemption, which is the fulfillment of creation.

**Shannon Curran**, director of Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry Program, reflected that what caught her eye was the fact that the Mission Focus statement includes defending, caring for, and crying out against both injustice and **all that diminishes life on Earth**. “I think a lot of times we leave out that second phrase. In particular, the word ‘diminish’ caused me to stop and think about how, while I am focusing on the larger injustices in our world, I tend to overlook all those other things that I do,





or we do, that reduces the fullness of life. In a world, where we rarely give life the opportunity to flourish or allow people to reach their full human potential, the Mission Focus statement is good news,” says Shannon.

“In such a world, the Mission Focus statement is a radical proclamation of truth. It is radical because it is a reminder of what is true...it is a reminder that creation and life are good, that we are good, and that God is good. Because it is a radical proclamation of truth, it is something I’ve been waiting to hear, again, and to be called to, again. So, the first challenge is to be aware that if we want to authentically demonstrate respect and protection for all creation, then we must seek healing of our blindness to our unjust habits. I can only imagine that this healing would come through God’s grace, the strength of the Spirit, and God’s presence in others.”

At the end of the Assembly, the sisters concluded that the first step is awareness and seeking healing of their blindness through education and prayer, focusing on the interconnectedness of humans and the Earth. As we deepen our awareness, it affects our behavior. Genesis and native cultures have the awareness of co-creation, and we need to re-read, re-connect and strike the balance of enjoying God’s creatures while protecting them. The sisters realized that *“going green”* is connected to all we do and so much more than they imagined, and one can start by taking small steps to make a difference.

IS THERE ANYTHING MORE PAINFUL THAN  
REALIZING YOU DID NOT KNOW THE RIGHT  
QUESTIONS TO ASK AT THE ONLY TIME  
ON EARTH YOU WOULD HAVE THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

– ALICE WALKER  
THE WAY FORWARD IS A BROKEN HEART

# BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM *Shows Results of Going Green*

BY 2012 BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM  
WILL BE DISTINGUISHED FOR ECOLOGICAL  
STEWARDSHIP IN THE COMMUNITIES  
WE SERVE THROUGH A CULTURAL  
TRANSFORMATION THAT FULFILLS  
OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD'S CREATION  
AND EACH OTHER FOR GENERATIONS TO  
COME.

...ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP VISION  
BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM

All of Bon Secours Health System's local systems were recognized this past spring with Environmental Excellence Awards from Practice Greenhealth, a national membership organization for health care facilities committed to environmentally responsible operations. These awards recognized recycling, elimination of mercury from facilities, waste reduction and pollution prevention programs.

“Improving environmental performance is not an option for Bon Secours Health System and its facilities; it's an absolute necessity for a sustainable future,” says Rich Statuto, president and CEO of Bon Secours Health System. “We want to bring healing and respect not only to our patients, but to our planet as well. The health system is strongly committed to ecological stewardship, and we are very pleased that all local systems within Bon Secours Health System received awards.”

The Bon Secours Ecology Stewardship Plan is promoting a culture of sustainability and awareness of the far-reaching impact of decisions and actions on our world. System-wide efforts have been focused around waste stream management and energy management. The goal being to assess and reduce the health system's “carbon footprint” through efficient recycling and waste stream management, reducing the use of toxic chemicals, reducing energy use, and moving towards the use of sustainable products and resources. Local systems are customizing projects to their specific institutions.

Recycling efforts to date have increased the number of items recycled by at least 20 percent and as much as 341 percent, as local systems add additional categories for recycling. During the past year, the health system recycled 19 percent of all waste generated. Since the start of the health system's waste stream management program in 2008, there has been a 39 percent decrease in total waste spending for the health system. Bon Secours Health System, in addition to the Bon Secours Green Team, has recently formed a new Energy Council and is evaluating energy usage throughout the system to determine priorities and a baseline from which to operate. Food service is also looking at using local produce, organic meats and less disposables, as well as other ways to go green.

“In the health care sphere, we are learning that Greening and Global Outreach are both integrally connected and essential aspects of our ministry, changing how we think about what we do; they are not just add-ons. These efforts have truly deepened our

understanding of Bon Secours Health System's mission...the healing ministry of Jesus and providing Good Help to Those in Need®,” explains Sr. Rosemary Moynihan, S.C., director of Ecology and Global Ministries, Bon Secours Health System.

This understanding is changing how we think about what we do:

- We can no longer speak of quality of patient care or excellence in cardiac surgery and still clean patient rooms with toxic agents.
- We can no longer provide excellent health care to the communities we serve and not think about what we send to the land fill.
- We can no longer take for granted our natural resources...water, air and land...as we live in a global community where all need to share our beautiful planet.

There are many definitions of sustainability. Sustainable functioning means not using more than we need, and using easily renewable materials and energies with limited impact on the environment so others may simply live, and generations after us will have what they need.

## SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF GREENING

- Recycling
- Reduction of waste volume/goal to eliminate toxic agents and materials
- Use of local, biodegradable material
- Clean air, availability of light
- Construction and renovation
- Efficient energy and water use
- Choice of food
- Purchasing of eco-sustainable materials
- Green construction/Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™



# A Future Filled with *HOPE*

Bon Secours Ministries was created by the Vatican in 2006 at the request of the Sisters of Bon Secours to assume the responsibility of Catholic Church sponsorship of Bon Secours Health System. Bon Secours Ministries, comprised of seven members (four of whom are Sisters of Bon Secours), provides canonical oversight to the healing ministry of the health system as part of the living tradition and heritage of Bon Secours.

In its role as sponsor, Bon Secours Ministries provides direction and inspiration to Bon Secours Health System. In 2008, as part of the strategic planning process for the health system, Bon Secours Ministries created a directional statement for the health system called a Future Filled with Hope.

The call of the Gospel is to proclaim and participate in accomplishing God's hope for the world marked by healing, compassion and liberation. As a ministry of the Church, continuing the healing mission of Jesus and in the tradition of the Sisters of Bon Secours, Bon Secours Health System believes that *"the struggle for a more humane world is not an option; it is an integral part of spreading the Gospel."* (Constitutions, Number 7, Congregation of Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris)

Faithful to the charism of Bon Secours, Bon Secours Ministries, as sponsor of Bon Secours Health System, call all within the health system to a Future Filled with Hope reflecting:

- A vibrant commitment to care for all entrusted to us, particularly those who are poor and marginalized, with no disparity of service to anyone, through policies, practices and advocacy plans that place the sacredness of the person as primary.
- A strong focus on the development of competent and confident health care ministers steeped in the richness of Catholic social teaching and the heritage of Bon Secours.
- A model of excellent quality care that coordinates the best resources to serve the needs of the patients, residents and families entrusted to us, with a special concern for those who are dying.
- A work place that supports and sustains individual and organizational spirituality grounded in a fundamental trust in God's love, creating an environment that enables co-workers to experience Bon Secours Health System as a place of ministry and meaning.
- An inclusive community of service that encourages diversity and affirms all persons and their unique gifts to bring about the good work God has entrusted to us in responding to the needs of the communities served.
- A deepened awareness of the stewardship entrusted to us for God's creation through thoughtful programs to ensure ecological sustainability and our involvement in global ministries.

Together, we can be faithful to our call and the promise we make to provide Good Help to Those in Need® in the communities we serve.

This directional statement served as the foundation for the strategic plan for Bon Secours Health System for fiscal years 2010-2012 and was the centerpiece for Leader Day, a ministry formation offering by the health system's Center for Ministry Leadership for all health system leaders. The directional statement serves as a call for all of Bon Secours Health System to embrace the challenge of serving the communities and people entrusted to our care in a way that is faithful to our Catholic and Bon Secours traditions. It provides a clear path for Bon Secours Health System as it moves into its future of continuing to provide Good Help to Those in Need.®



# A LETTER FROM

# *The Vatican*

The following are excerpts from a letter received from the Vatican in response to the Report to the Holy See for the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris 2005-2009 submitted by Sr. Nancy Glynn, immediate past Congregation Leader:

.....another legitimate expectation of leadership in Religious Institutes is that of showing care and concern for elderly members. These members, unable to offer active service to the extent that they once did, merit encouragement and affirmation in the contribution which they continue to make to the mission of the Institute through their prayer and example. We were pleased to see that these sisters were recognized in this report.

We were also pleased to learn of the acceptance of new candidates in the United States in recent years resulting in the reestablishment of the novitiate house. The emphasis placed on effective government and community living, as well as the establishment of International Circles, your commitment to Fe y Alegria Schools, and your continued dedication to the challenging field of health care ministry are to be commended.

May the Lord abundantly bless you and all the Sisters of Bon Secours and your Associates and collaborators as you seek to live the values which have sustained your Institute throughout the years.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Franc Card. Rodé, C.M.  
Prefect

# SR. NANCY GLYNN

## *Reflects on Ten Years as Congregation Leader*



“What a fantastic experience to have been able to live in Paris for 10 years at our Motherhouse and walk in the footsteps of our founding sisters who bought the Motherhouse in the 1840s. Living and praying where they did was indeed humbling, and it was a privilege and honor to have had the opportunity to serve the Congregation in this capacity,” says Sr. Nancy Glynn, who was Congregation Leader from 1999–2009.

According to Sr. Nancy, one of the most enriching parts of her ministry was living with our other sisters from around the world in a true international community. “We lived together, prayed together, ate together, and learned to appreciate each other’s culture and even food,” she says. Sr. Nancy also spent a great deal of time traveling to visit sisters in different countries and realized that, although the spirit and our mission are what unite us, each group of sisters has a very different culture. “This realization truly expanded my horizons, and I started to think about things from not just the United States’ perspective, but also a much more global viewpoint,” she comments.

### **Leading the Congregation Team**

The job of the Congregation Team is to carry out the decisions made at the Chapter, and Sr. Nancy’s two terms were very different in focus. Her first term focused on nurturing relationships, and international renewal sessions were held for the first time in each Province. Sisters could sign up for the country they wanted to go to for their international renewal experience. Sr. Nancy used her background on retreat planning and program development, and, working with one of our Peruvian sisters and the Congregation Team, structured these sessions with very positive results.

Sr. Nancy’s second term, which started in 2004, focused on restructuring the Congregation. All of the sisters participated in developing a new model of governance. Nine circles of sisters—comprised of sisters from each country—were formed, each examining a different aspect of the Congregation. Sr. Nancy commends the generosity of the sisters for their time, and, at the half-way point in the process, there was a Congregational Assembly in Ireland to assess progress. In 2008, all the sisters from each Province gathered in Marriottsville, Md.; this was the first international gathering of its kind for the sisters, and it set the stage for the new structure. At the 2009 Chapter in Rome, the new plan, which eliminated Province boundaries, was presented to and accepted by the sisters. “The new structure is truly a revitalization of our mission, and it streamlines our governance process,” says Sr. Nancy. “The new structure is globally oriented and allows us to share resources across country lines and focus on our mission.”

Another milestone during the last five years was the opening of the Sisters of Bon Secours’ mission in South Africa. This was a decision made at the 2004 Chapter as part of the sisters’ international focus. This is the first mission under both the ownership and direction of the whole Congregation, rather than a single country. “We have been there for two years now, and Srs. Elaine Davia and Vicky Segura recently returned after providing a few months relief to the sisters from Ireland and Peru who are there for a three-year ministry commitment.”

Right now Sr. Nancy is enjoying a sabbatical and being back in Marriottsville, reconnecting with the sisters there. She also is spending time visiting friends and family and will culminate her sabbatical with a 30-day retreat. Early in the fall, she will join the community living on Fulton Avenue in Baltimore and become involved in Bon Secours’ community outreach efforts.

## Sr. Frances McCabe Sees Spiritual Side of Coordinating Marian Hall



*Sr. Frances McCabe* manages 25 nurses and technicians, 10 who work full time. She coordinates washing laundry, preparing meals, going shopping and visiting doctors. She oversees the day-to-day details of the sisters who live on Marian Hall, but Sr. Frances says what she values most is simply sitting and talking with the sisters.

“They present a different perspective of the Sisters of Bon Secours than what I’ve seen because of their age and experience,” Sr. Frances says. “I enjoy listening to stories from their experiences.”

The sisters who live on Marian Hall in Marriottsville, Md., range in age from 82 to 95 and have decades of experience in nursing and health care. Now retired, they need regular care and rely on Sr. Frances and her staff to meet their needs.

“One of the best parts of my role is just to be present and able to listen to the sisters, understand them and help them in whatever way I can,” she says.

As coordinator of Marian Hall, Sr. Frances first addresses the needs of the sisters followed by the needs of her staff. She meets individually with the sisters on Marian Hall to learn what they need and how she can help. While this includes their physical needs, Sr. Frances also makes herself available spiritually.

“I’m here for them and will help them any way I can,” she says. “We get together and pray, and the sisters can talk about it if they choose. I gain a whole new insight into their relationship with God and others.

“In my role, I get to see their close relationship with God, each other, and the people they come in contact with. No matter what, they continue to share the Bon Secours charism with people.”

Sr. Frances has served as coordinator of Marian Hall for a little more than a year, and though challenging, she says she benefits spiritually. “It’s made my relationship with God stronger because I’m turning to Him more for answers. I’m realizing I don’t have the answers for everything. God has to answer some of the questions for me.”

Whatever the task, Sr. Frances sees her role on Marian Hall as part of the Sisters of Bon Secours’ broad ministry of caring for the less fortunate and needy. “Right now,” she says resolutely, “it’s my mission to care for the sick and elderly sisters.”



# SR. KATHERINE TIERNEY

## Leading the Fight Against Human Trafficking

When the Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States decided to join UNANIMA, Sr. Katherine Tierney, who resides in Tralee, Ireland, was asked to be the sister's Irish contact. At that time trafficking of women was not as big a problem as it is today.

Sr. Katherine, with representatives from various women's groups, social workers, teachers, and others, formed the group "Stop Trafficking." The main work of "Stop Trafficking" is creating awareness, and the group has recourse to the Garda Siochana (police) and free Legal Aid for advice at all times. Unfortunately, Ireland is now a point of entry to Europe for criminals trafficking women and children. Some arrests have been made, but the awareness program continues using meetings, letters, signatures to public bodies, information leaflets, car stickers, and posters. In fact, every communication means available in this electronic age is being utilized.

The information received from UNANIMA and Ruhama is explained and distributed at every public meeting on trafficking. Since 2007, a yearly conference on different aspects of 'Violence against Women' has been hosted in Tralee. In 2008, Sr. Mary Patricia Mulhall, a Brigidine sister, was guest speaker on behalf of UNANIMA. Her input made a huge impact on the audience, which included 50 college students. But unless the law is changed and the 'buyers' are prosecuted, trafficking will continue. "So the campaign continues," says Sr. Katherine.

On another front, Sr. Katherine keeps a copy of a magazine article in her offices that she likes to show to visitors who call at St. Brendan's Pastoral Centre. The article is called, "Outsiders Need Not Apply." It's about people on the margins of society, mainly poor people, who tried to join the Catholic Church but were put off by the unwelcoming attitude by some Catholics and a jungle of red tape. Sr. Katherine likes people to read it, because her job, as she sees it, is all about making people feel welcome and wanted, regardless of their religious beliefs or social status.

Over the years, Sr. Katherine has dealt with many difficult issues and how they relate to the Church. In the early '90s, she became aware of the growing problem of alienation from the Church due to marriage difficulties and co-founded a support group SPA (Separated People's Association). In the '90's, she also recognized the many issues with taking your own life in the Church and founded Listening Ear, a counselling and support service for the tragically bereaved families of people who committed suicide.

Since 1979, Sr. Katherine has served as a counsellor at St. Brendan's Pastoral Centre in Tralee with responsibility for a large housing estate. Over the years, the work developed from training programs to prayer groups to addressing issues of the day.

In her spare time, Sr. Katherine enjoys listening to music, walking on the beach in Banna and pursuing her special interest in holistic medicine. She also likes studying other cultures and has visited parts of the United States, Australia, and several European countries.



Sr. Katherine serves on the Peace and Justice Committee of the Congregation of Bon Secours.

*(L. to r.) Sisters Katherine Tierney, de Lourdes and de Lellis at 40th anniversary celebration of their parish.*

## Sisters Academy Prepares Girls to Live Healthy Lives

Sisters Academy of Baltimore will continue health and life skills education for its middle school girls thanks to a \$29,000 grant from the Sisters of Bon Secours Ministry Grant Fund. The grant supports a life skills class that meets twice a week covering topics such as physical fitness, drug awareness, peer pressure and conflict resolution.



“Our students are at a time in their lives when they need to develop good habits and skills,” says Sr. Delia Dowling, a School Sister of Notre Dame and president of Sisters Academy. “We not only provide an academic education, we educate the whole person, which includes social and emotional growth as well as physical and spiritual growth.”

Sisters Academy located in southwest Baltimore began in 2004 through the collaboration of the Sisters of Bon Secours, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. The tuition-free middle school serves girls in grades 5 through 8 who come from families of limited economic means. Small class sizes provide students individual attention to prepare them for top-quality high schools so they will have choices in the future.

“The Sisters of Bon Secours believe in a holistic approach to all of life and, because of that, believe being a sponsor of Sisters Academy lives out what Bon Secours means: Good Help to Those in Need,” says Sr. Alice Talone, immediate past president of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA.

In addition to limited economic means, Sisters Academy students may struggle with difficult family situations such as death or illness among family and friends. In response, Sisters Academy hired a school counselor last year. “It’s good to have someone right here to refer students to,” says Sr. Delia. “We’ve been able to deal with issues that need to be faced.”

The life skills class began when the school opened and covers a range of topics: nutrition, fitness, healthy friendships, alcohol and drug awareness, peer pressure, organization, goal setting, conflict resolution, self-esteem and the challenges of adolescence. Sisters Academy has designed the class to work in collaboration with physical education.



“In the future, Sisters Academy seeks to further integrate the life skills class with physical education and counseling services,” Sr. Delia says. “Likewise, Sisters Academy plans to reach out to parents in the future to learn their goals for their children’s growth and work with students, teachers and parents to achieve them.”



*Sr. Alice Talone presents the Sisters of Bon Secours award to Morgan Bell, who demonstrated Good Help to Those in Need.® Morgan is now in ninth grade at Maryvale Preparatory School in Brooklandville, Md.*



# MERCY HOUSING:

## A Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Bon Secours

*A more humane world where  
poverty is alleviated,  
communities are healthy and  
all people can develop their full potential.  
We believe that affordable housing and supportive programs  
improve the economic status of residents,  
transform neighborhoods and  
stabilize lives.  
.....Vision Statement of Mercy Housing*



Mercy Housing was founded in 1981 by the Sisters of Mercy of Omaha, Neb., for the purpose of providing a concrete, organized response to concerns for housing injustice for persons who are economically poor. Mercy Housing, which today operates in 41 states and 203 cities, is financially sponsored by five women's religious Congregations, one of which is the Sisters of Bon Secours. Additionally Bon Secours Health System also supports Mercy Housing.

With its core values of Respect, Justice and Mercy, Mercy Housing's mission is to create stable, vibrant and healthy communities by developing, financing and operating affordable, program-enriched housing for individuals, families, seniors and people with special needs, who lack the economic resources to access quality, safe housing opportunities. Its major activities include housing development to include new construction as well as acquisition and rehabbing of property, property management, resident services, portfolio risk management, and national lending and development consulting through the Mercy Loan Fund.

Mercy Housing wants to know that people in need can  
*“Live in Hope...Because We Were There.”*

## DECADES LATER, SR. MARY MAGDALEN CONDRY RETURNS TO VOCATIONS

At age 18, *Sr. Mary Magdalen Condry* received information from the Sisters of Bon Secours Vocation Office that changed her life. Decades later, after serving with the Sisters of Bon Secours in France, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, Sr. Mary Magdalen volunteers in the Vocation Office in Marriottsville, Md., where she reaches out to people considering religious life.



“We contact hundreds of young people. Of course, out of a hundred, you might get five interested people, but that’s every business. That’s how I entered the Sisters of Bon Secours myself – because of the information someone sent me,” Sr. Mary Magdalen says.

“I say a prayer for the people who receive the information. I hope it inspires people to make a difference in the world. I’m not only interested in the Sisters of Bon Secours, but also the world as a whole – that people would be happy and find what they’re looking for.”

With this spirit, Sr. Mary Magdalen performs office work in the Vocation Office, which includes helping with marketing, mailing and advertising. She enjoys her work, she says, and the people she works with.

“Sunshine Monk, an administrative assistant in the office, is very pleasant. She makes it interesting. She loves her work and that’s important because she gives more to it. She’s very gracious.”

In addition to her office duties, Sr. Mary Magdalen talks with young people considering religious life. They ask her questions, and she shares the benefits and challenges of serving with the Sisters of Bon Secours. “It makes me feel good because I’m very honest with them. I don’t doctor things up,” she says.

Sr. Mary Magdalen’s work in the Vocation Office gives her a stable and flexible schedule, which she says benefits her spirituality. “It has given me more freedom to do an hour-long meditation every day, and I have more time to read and learn more about my spirituality.”

Sr. Mary Magdalen decided to become a nurse with the Sisters of Bon Secours, and now she helps others make the same decision. Looking back, she reflects, “I love my life, and I’m very grateful. I have absolutely no regrets.”

# SR. Vicky Segura: GARDENING AND PHOTOGRAPHY ARE HER PASSIONS



“GARDENING PROVIDES NOURISHMENT FOR MY SOUL.”

As a hospice and palliative medicine physician for Bon Secours Richmond, Sr. Vicky Segura turns to gardening for comfort. “In hospice work, I see people who are undergoing loss: loss of life and loss of loved ones. Gardening is a wonderful consolation to me. Seeing new plants thrive and grow inspires me,” she explains.

Sr. Vicky’s grandmother was a gardener in the Philippines, and the memories of her beautiful orchid collection inspired her granddaughter’s love of horticulture. For Sr. Vicky, a certified master gardener, gardening is a spiritual experience. “By taking care of plants that beautify the area, I’m taking care of creation. There is spirituality in growth.”

Sr. Vicky’s work in her garden also influences her other passion: photography. “Whenever I see something beautiful in nature, I take a picture of it,” she says.

When she entered Bon Secours in 1979, Sr. Vicky turned to photography to become the unofficial historian of the Bon Secours community, capturing special occasions like jubilee celebrations. She especially enjoys getting sisters together for group photos.

Like gardening, photography is an interest Sr. Vicky inherited from her family. Her father, also a photography hobbyist, never went anywhere without a camera. “These passions really came from my family. This is why I love photography. This is why I love gardening. It’s because my family—my father and my grandmother—had so much influence on me,” says Sr. Vicky.

When Sr. Vicky made her final vows, she had five family members in the audience snapping pictures to capture the moment. “Photography is just something that’s in my blood,” she says.



## *An International Experience for Women in Temporary Profession*

About two years ago, Sisters of Bon Secours formation directors from Peru, Ireland and the United States began working on a program for the women in initial formation who have made temporary profession of vows. In August 2010, there was a gathering in Paris of the six women in temporary profession from Peru and two from the United States, as well as many other sisters who joined the group as participants and translators.

“One of the main purposes of the program was to help the sisters in formation to get to know each other, our history and the cultures of our various countries and to develop relationships that can grow in the future,” explains Sr. Elaine Davia, director of Formation for Sisters of Bon Secours, USA.

Another very important objective of the program was for the sisters to visit the historical and foundational sites of the Sisters of Bon Secours in order to experience the early history and charism of the sisters and to deepen each person’s identity as a Sister of Bon Secours.

There was input on the vows, spirituality of Bon Secours, and leadership for the future of religious life with reflection time on each topic. The input was continually tied into the Bon Secours Mission Focus Statement 2009:

*We Women of Healing  
commit ourselves  
to defend and care for all creation;  
... to cry out with others  
against injustice and all that diminishes life.*

“Among the highlights of the experience was the time spent with each other, especially our French sisters, and having a wonderful, in-depth, historical tour of our Mother House and Chapel by Sr. Yvonne Moreau. We also visited the Chapel of Our Lady in the Church of St. Sulpice, where the first 12 Sisters of Bon Secours made their vows,” explains Sr. Elaine.

As one participant stated, “I experienced the extreme courage of our first sisters, which caused me to ask, ‘How can we be that way today?’”



“I’ve been to our Mother House and to these foundation sites several times before. Each time I go I have a new, renewed sense of wonder about the vocation stories, courage, generosity and innovation of those very first women,” says Sr. Elaine. “I feel so privileged and humbled to stand on their shoulders and challenged to keep listening to how I am to carry this forward by the way I live my life and in this time.”

*(L. to r.) Sisters Elaine, Angelita and Maureen plan International Formation Experience*





# CHRISTIAN DECISION-MAKING: *A Way of Life*

*By Sr. Patricia Dowling, vocation director*

We make decisions every day that shape our lives. Most of us have puzzled over life-changing directions and decisions and have felt like pilgrims on a journey with no guarantees about the outcome. I for one certainly have faced those times, and it's akin to living through a time of ambiguity. As a vocation director, I'm often asked,

- "How do you figure out what God is calling you to do with your life?"
- "If I sense that God is calling me to something in life, how do I make that choice?"
- "Can I be 100 percent sure that the decision is right?"
- "Does my faith make a difference in my choices?"

Christian discernment, a process that can help us to make good choices, takes into consideration the personal, religious, social, and even cultural situations. The next few paragraphs unpack this process to help us see how discernment is a way of life and can help us in our decision making.

First, to be clear, discernment is not about the mindless tasks of life, like choosing what dress I'll wear today. It has more to do with how I live my life and sifting through values and attitudes and relationships and desires. As I reflect on my day, in prayer, what do I hear both from God and from others? My relationship with God and others has an effect on me and even shapes my decisions. Discernment on the level of major decisions involves a longer, structured process. It's important to understand that discernment is about choosing a life that leads to living it fully in God's love. So, a prerequisite for good discernment is having a real relationship with God and recognizing that God is present in my life and the world. My spiritual director suggests taking a minute every couple of hours to ask myself, "Where have I experienced God in the events of my life and world in the last hours? For what do I thank God? Where did I experience difficulty?"

Discerning requires having an attitude of openness, patience, trust, honesty and freedom. Do I trust that God will lead me to the right choice? Is there freedom to consider options and in openness and honesty to accept whatever the outcome? It's a process involving my head and my heart.

In very simple terms discernment involves being aware, gathering information, making a decision and looking for confirmation. A more structured process would look like this:

*Prayer:* take time to listen to the Spirit in the circumstances of your life .

*The issue:* define what you want to know clearly: new job, marriage, call to religious life, a move.

**Information:** Gather all the information/facts around the choices and take time to understand your experiences, life skills, the ramifications.

**Options:** Create options/alternatives. What course of action exists or possibilities that you can imagine?

**Feelings:** Reflect, observe, and interpret your feelings and desires in relation to God's desire for you. Also ask, "Where am I resisting?"

**Weighing:** Consider the reasons for and against each option. Does one have more weight?

**Decision:** Make a tentative choice/decision and live with it for a while.

**Confirmation:** Do you experience a sense of rightness over time; feel at peace and joyful, or the opposite – unease or a need to continue exploring?

Seeking the assistance of a good spiritual director or spiritual companion can be very helpful to someone discerning to understand how the Spirit is leading and inviting them in the circumstances of their life. For someone exploring religious life, this is really critical. While each person's journey will be unique, we can be certain that Christian discernment as a way of life will enrich us as we entrust our lives to God who will show us the way.

For more information on discerning if you are called to religious life, we welcome your call to our vocation office for assistance or to learn more. Call 410-442-3172 or email: [CB SVocations@bshsi.org](mailto:CB SVocations@bshsi.org).

Visit our website at <http://BonSecoursVocations.org>.

# Come & See

the Sisters of *Bon Secours*

Single Catholic women who want to explore the possibility of religious life: here's your opportunity to meet and talk with sisters, receive input, have time for reflection on a vocation, and be with other women who are also exploring their calling.

**2011 Come and See  
Weekend Dates:**

February 18–20

June 24–26

October 21–23

For more information, visit <http://BonSecoursVocations.org>. Our website also has links to a variety of social media outlets of which the Sisters of Bon Secours are a part. Join us online on Facebook and Twitter.



# LIVING OUR MISSION

**Joeann Karibo** recently retired from Bon Secours Health System after 23 years of service. Since 1997, Joeann has been the Director of Community Commitment at the Health System Office. Over the years, Joeann has also contributed to the other ministries of the Sisters of Bon Secours as a member of the Volunteer Ministry Development and Advisory Committee; chair of the Review Committee for the Ministry Grant Fund; and the Sisters of Bon Secours' appointed member of the board of directors of Sisters Academy of Baltimore.



The sisters express their sincere appreciation to Joeann for all she has done over the years to further the mission and for her dedicated efforts to keep the health system's focus on improving the quality of life and health in our communities, our nation and our world.

*"After 23 years of being a part of the mission of Bon Secours, all I can say is it has been a joy and blessing to work with wonderful people committed to doing good things for the right reasons. I am especially excited about Bon Secours' renewed understanding and embracement of the many ways in which we can pursue achievement of our mission to create communities of health and hope. Over the last four years, one of Bon Secours Health System's goals has been 'Building Healthier Communities.' In each community served, we have a dedicated community organizer working to engage and empower the members of the community to systematically improve the quality of life and holistic health. To date, through many innovative and collaborative initiatives, more progress has been made in achieving this goal than I ever could have dreamed. My husband, Mark, and I have been members of the Bon Secours family for many years. Mark is a member of the group that performs music for Bon Secours' liturgies and celebrations. I may be retiring, but Mark is not. Mark and I will remain members of the Bon Secours family for many years to come."*



**Cindy Bishop** is a chaplain at Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital, Greenville, S.C. Cindy has been a chaplain for more than 20 years and an employee with Bon Secours St. Francis for four years.

*"I have been given the privilege of working for a wonderful organization that allows me to care for all who have been entrusted to our care here at Bon Secours St. Francis. I come to work every day grateful for the opportunity to meet the needs of our patients, families and staff. Sometimes, it is through a prayer, a listening ear, or perhaps holding the hand of a patient or loved one who just received bad news. Sometimes it's sharing a sacred moment with a family as a patient dies. One aspect of ministry that is very important to me is at the beginning and end of life—sometimes occurring simultaneously*

*in cases of fetal demise. I have loved working to develop our perinatal loss services. This also extends to supporting staff and the community through partnering with a local hospital to offer a perinatal loss support group."*

**Genette Cameron-Reid** has been executive assistant to the Senior Vice President for Sponsorship since 2005 in the Bon Secours Richmond Health System.



*"Each day, I am blessed to witness, firsthand, the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours. As executive assistant to Sr. Anne Marie Mack, I often see the end result of what our mission provides to the community, whether it is carried out through advocacy, community outreach or by the care provided at St. Mary's Hospital, where our offices are located.*

*Sr. Anne Marie lives the mission of Bon Secours in an authentic way – through the hardships and joy of those we serve. I have grown through her example of always considering first the lives of patients, staff and the community-at-large. As a health system, we are stronger in our mission because of Sr. Anne Marie's presence – not because she reminds us, but because she lives and leads by example.*

*We are blessed by her inspiration, her kindness and her dedication to the care and sustainability of the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours."*



**Maxim Williams** is Director of Community Relations Building for Bon Secours St. Francis Health System in Greenville, S.C., and reports directly to the Senior Vice President for Mission. He has been with Bon Secours for the past two years.

*"I live the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours every day as I lead our healthy community initiatives, working with communities to build healthier environments. I leverage the value of people and incubate empowerment to create better communities. We work side-by-side with community leaders and those who live and work in our communities to co-create a better environment. We do not just deal with the clinical side of health, but also look at the whole person and deal with issues such as crime, drugs and economics that often are the barriers to creating better communities. We work with all of God's children, young and old, rich and poor, because we are all connected; ours is the inclusive ministry of Jesus."*

# Associate News

*by Amy Kulesa, director of Associates*

Kindly care for suffering human beings and all creatures is at the heart of the Sisters' charism of compassion, healing and liberation. The importance of concern for our planetary home, Earth, whose care has been entrusted to us by God, is also increasingly becoming part of our awareness. In the modern age, we observe the dire consequences of human beings not treating created things in a sacred manner. At this year's annual retreat of the Bon Secours Associates in October, associates and sisters participated in a prayer walk where they meditated upon the words of St. Francis of Assisi from his Canticle of Brother Sun:

*Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures,  
especially Sir Brother Sun,  
who is the day and through whom You give us light,  
and he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,  
and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,  
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,  
and through the air, cloudy and serene,  
and every kind of weather  
through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
who is very useful and humble and precious and pure.*

St. Francis' words raised the group's awareness of the sacredness of the whole created order and how we worship God through the way we serve as stewards of God's creation.



One Associate group is currently beginning a book study and group discussion of *Loving Creation* by Kathleen Fischer, which examines ecology in light of Christian spirituality. Associates at various local health systems have been involved in initiatives that stressed the “greening” of their work sites as well as the surrounding, often urban, neighborhoods. Reflecting the emphasis on holistic care for all creation in the Mission Focus Statement of the Sisters, associates are seeking ways to deepen and grow in their integration of faith and concern for the created order. Historically, what has been central to Bon Secours’ mission is to provide compassionate medical and spiritual care to sick and dying human beings. Associates and sisters now labor to extend this mission to the whole of creation in union with the spirit of St. Francis as he says:

*Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,  
who sustains and governs us,  
and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.*

*Praised be You, my Lord,  
through those who give pardon for Your love  
and bear sickness and trials.  
Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.*

*Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks  
and serve Him with great humility.*



# VOLUNTEER MINISTRY WELCOMES NEW VOLUNTEERS



*Maia Bentz* is an alumna of the College of St. Benedict in Minnesota. Though Maia was an English major, she took the required classes to apply to medical school, which she is doing this year. Born

and raised in Minnesota, Maia is interested in living in a new part of the country and learning about the diverse community of Baltimore. She will be serving in the renal department of the Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore, working with patients on dialysis. Maia hopes to bring a positive energy to those she serves and desires to help where she is most needed. She hopes this experience will help her become a more empathetic and understanding physician in the future.



*Katy Fallavollita* graduated in May from Stonehill College in Easton, Mass., with a degree in biology. She will be volunteering in the vascular lab at Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore, working with patients during testing. Katy will also organize community health screenings. She hopes to provide patients with a positive experience during their time in the hospital and help make their visit more comfortable. Katy was attracted to the urban location of the

Volunteer Ministry program and is looking forward to living simply and in community with her fellow volunteers during her year at Bon Secours.



*Kristin Henning* attended the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass., as a pre-medical Asian studies major. No stranger to service, Kristin spent six weeks in a sister parish in Nalweyo, Uganda, teaching English, math and reading. During her Volunteer Ministry year, she will be volunteering in the cardiology department of Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore, helping perform EKGs, stress tests and echocardiograms. She is excited about combining her passion

for health care and service during the program. In the future, Kristin hopes to combine service and health care as a medical missionary working for a nonprofit organization or as a physician involved in United Nations peacekeeping missions abroad and/or disaster relief efforts.

*Kari Kragness* is a 2010 graduate of the College of St. Benedict in Minnesota with a degree in biology. Before she goes on to medical school in 2011, Kari will be serving in the Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore as a patient liaison in the emergency department, assisting doctors and nurses in this fast-paced environment. She is eager to witness health care from a new perspective and believes that her time at Bon Secours will make her a well-rounded physician. Kari also hopes to initiate and serve on community outreach projects during her year as a Bon Secours volunteer. She is looking forward to developing relationships with her fellow volunteers and her patients.



*Rachel Mattos* recently graduated from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia with a major in English literature and a minor in art history. A Maryland native, Rachel is excited to give back to the Baltimore community. Rachel will be volunteering at the Bon Secours Family Care Center in Baltimore, working at the center's free child care center for infants and toddlers. Rachel previously served with a "Back on My Feet" chapter in Philadelphia, an organization that promotes the self-sufficiency of homeless populations by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-esteem. She is looking forward to living and growing with her fellow volunteers, while focusing on simple living.



*Sarah Wilson* graduated from Stonehill College in Massachusetts with a Bachelor of Science in neuroscience and a minor in studio arts. She aspires to a career in health care and is hoping to gain further direction with her career path during her time with the Volunteer Ministry program. Sarah will be serving in the Tele-Heart Program and the Community Faith Nurse Ministry, assisting to educate the community and patients in planning low-sodium diets. She will also be helping with community outreach activities in churches and nursing homes in Baltimore. Sarah looks forward to developing important provider-patient interaction skills and connecting with her patients and community.



# Bon Secours Spiritual Center Grows in Eco-Spirituality and Action

*By Thomas E. Little, Ed.D., executive director of Bon Secours Spiritual Center*

Among the significant outcomes of the 2009 General Chapter of the Sisters of Bon Secours was a call to the Congregation's members to renew their commitment to "defend and care for all of creation; to cry out with others against injustice and all that diminishes life on Earth." In this Mission Focus statement, the chapter members urged their sisters and all their coworkers in the ministry of healing to understand that care about our ecology and the use of our natural resources is a spiritual imperative proceeding from the heart and mission of Bon Secours. Most enlightening in this statement is the call to each sister and each of us, their associates in mission, to ground this reawakening in a process of *Metanoia*, a change of mind, heart and spirit that leads to renewed action to sustain and share the resources of creation as a work of justice founded in God's Spirit.

In spiritual parlance, the word *Metanoia* means achieving a change of mind or a reorientation that results from repentance from a former way of seeing to a new way of being and acting in the world. *Metanoia* does not imply change for change's sake. It indicates a positive orientation rooted in a deep understanding of the implications of the cause and of the object of the change. *Metanoia* is a response to God's Spirit nudging us to make a positive change in our lives and in the way we live in our society and our world. Minimally, it challenges us to recognize what is not correct in our living and the conduct of our affairs in light of our promises to God and to each other. But in its fullest sense, *Metanoia* is a personal awakening to the responsibility we own and share to join God in the renewal of ourselves and of all the ways we live with and for others in our world. This positive change wells up from a dawning personal and shared understanding of our call to live as God intends so we can realize God's promise for us and for all of God's creation.

With their call to consider, commit and change our ways of being and acting on behalf of justice and creation, the Sisters of Bon Secours invite all of us who cooperate in their ministry of compassion, healing and liberation to explore and discover what it means to be consciously part of a community and a cause even larger than our regular work and mission. This larger community seeks to discover in creation the sacredness of God's gifts, the relationships that root us in the Divine and bind us to each other in deeper ways than we have ever known before.



### **Our Metanoia Commitment at the Spiritual Center**

The challenge to us in the Spiritual Center is to build our awareness of the sisters' commitment among ourselves and with our guests. Our spiritual "turning" must ultimately translate into changing the ways we do our business, serve our guests, and use our resources to realize and restore a sense of wholeness and balance in our lives. Once we have "cleared the decks" sufficiently, we journey on to see how we might come to a deeper relationship with the Holy and accept our responsibility to join with others to renew the face of the Earth.

Our faith tradition has always urged us as caretakers of the Earth to support action that stewards God's creation. Our spiritual legacy teaches that our faith is grounded in the community of a Trinitarian God, and this, our growing eco-spirituality, helps us learn that the Divine life extends to and includes all we touch and that touches us. The entire cosmos is a part of our God's self-revelation to us, and, as spiritual seekers, we must expand our exploration in God in the context of our relationship with the whole cosmos, recognizing God as Creator and center of this masterpiece. We have sung of this relationship in our prayer, and, in our liturgy, we recognized and called on all of creation to join in celebration: "Let the Heavens rejoice and the Earth be glad..." (Psalm. 96) And our spiritual legacy and tradition has given us contemplatives, past and present, who have helped us experience God's handiwork in the magnificence of the cosmos. Now it is our task to carefully examine how we might act so we too can join this line of praise.

Today God's Spirit, through the invitation of the sisters, urges us to learn the depth of the connection between our spiritual journey and the dreaded implications of climate change, pollution, deforestation, hazardous waste management, and the extinction of many plant and animal species. We are coming to see that our world's "do anything you want" attitude belies the connection between God, creation and us. When we do not respect our connection to everything living and lose our call to vigilance for God's creation, we have lost sight of a major moral and human-rights issue for which we are accountable in the contemporary spiritual community.

### **Commitments to Action**

At the Spiritual Center, we are committed to respond to the sisters' call through personal prayer and reflection and by becoming more informed and aware of ecological issues and demonstrating in our organizational lifestyle respect for and protection of our resources and all of creation. In light of this commitment, we are now using more recycled goods in our daily services, including the choice of cups, plates and utensils used in the dining and hospitality areas. We are finding new eco-friendly cleaning agents to reduce our pollution-potential in cleaning, and we are more closely monitoring the use of electricity and other energy resources as we light and maintain effective and efficient work and meeting

environments. Our activities include reducing the number of containers, cans and bottles we provide in our hospitality areas, which ultimately have to be recycled. We are measuring the waste we generate to better connect our planning and information management systems so our service meets our guests' expectations and so we do not over prepare or poorly use our food and material resources. Future staff development initiatives will help us keep our awareness high and strengthen our commitments to achieve our best balance between our service and resource usage patterns and our faith commitments.

In their statement, the sisters urge each other to collaborate and plan concretely so their commitments could be experienced locally and globally. They expect us to create networks of awareness and concern that “motivate, support and invite each other to accountability.” The Spiritual Center commits itself to action as stewards of God’s creation and as a model for how this *Metanoia* works to the best use of our precious resources. We are discovering and redefining the spiritual resources and the material management systems we need to be good help to each other and to our Earth. We will model for our guests and each other our spiritual commitment to serve and to discover ways to help restore harmony and balance in ourselves, in our service systems, and in our world.

We all, staff and guests alike, need to cooperate in this effort. We believe that an authentic eco-spirituality fosters an environmental vigilance that stirs our free choice and personal dedication and vigilance. So, we seek and daily rediscover here the personal presence of the Divine who urges us to ever-deeper levels of involvement in this mission. We continue to learn from the mystery of which we are a part, and we learn from the suffering of others, the need for compassion, the depth and sting of poverty, and our own powerlessness to change or to fully respond in service without God’s grace and power. We grow in compassion as we use the tools and resources available to us in the Spirit: prayer, thoughtful reflection, collaborative support, forgiveness, an awareness of our mortality, and our call to live in God whose Spirit stirs us on. And as we move forward, we invite our guests and collaborators to join us in our effort to be part of this action of Bon Secours to become true healers of the Earth.



# SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

## Commission History To Be Written

Professors Diane and Martin Gordon have been commissioned by the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, to write and publish a history of the Sisters of Bon Secours' last 30 years, 1980–2010, in the United States. This will complement the history that was written of the sisters early years covering the period through the 1970s. Starting with the impact of Vatican II on religious communities, and specifically on the Congregation of Bon Secours, and ending with recent changes in the sponsorship of Bon Secours Health System and the sisters' health care ministry, the Gordons will complete their history next summer.

The Gordons both teach in the history department of University of Maryland University College. Diane holds the Ph.D. in classics from the University of Wisconsin, where she specialized in the study of the early Christian Church. Martin's doctorate in American studies is from George Washington University, where he specialized in American military history with a minor in history of religion in America. Fellow faculty member Marylou Gjernes, a consultant for this project, has recently served as co-author of *Walter Reed Army Medical Center Centennial: A Pictorial History, 1909–2009*.

**If anyone would like to share any historical information or lived experience of the Sisters of Bon Secours from 1980–2010, please contact Andrea Springer in the United States Leadership Office in Marriottsville, Md., by January 7, 2011. You can also e-mail Andrea at [andrea\\_springer@bshsi.org](mailto:andrea_springer@bshsi.org).**



# IN MEMORIAM

Sr. ANGELA NEVILLE



*Sr. Angela Neville*, a member of the Congregation of Bon Secours since 1947, died on July 11 from a pulmonary embolism at the age of 82.

One of 15 children, Sr. Angela was born in Baltimore and attended Seton High School and the Bon Secours School of Nursing, where she received her RN degree in 1953. She took her final vows in 1956 at the Sisters of Bon Secours Mother House in Paris, France.

Over the years, Sr. Angela served as a staff nurse, and in many locations head nurse, in Bon Secours' health care facilities around the country. Among her ministries, she served as head nurse at Villa Maria Nursing and Rehabilitation Hospital in Miami, Fla.; Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Mass.; Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore, Md.; St. Mary's Hospital and St. John Vianney Center in Richmond, Va.; and at Bon Secours facilities in Darby and Rosemont, Pa.

In 1992, she joined the activities staff at Maria Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Hospital in St. Petersburg, Fla., and in 2003 retired to Miami. In 2006, Sr. Angela moved to Marian Hall, where she resided at the time of her death.

While on Marian Hall, Sr. Angela's relationship to God continued through her service every Monday at My Brother's Keeper, a soup kitchen in West Baltimore. She received a lot of joy working with people who are poor and always said, "You can see Christ in them." Her faith also played a role in her scrapbooking hobby, which allowed her to document her religious life with photographs from different events that she participated in since joining the Congregation after high school. She went to scrapbooking class and enjoyed the socialization and the opportunity to meet new people.

Sr. Angela is survived by her community, four brothers and three sisters as well as nieces and nephews.



# IN MEMORIAM

SR. MARY ELLEN WAGNER



*Sr. Mary Ellen Wagner* died on Sept. 12 in Marriottsville, Md., at the age of 81 after a long struggle with cancer.

She grew up in Cambridge, Ohio, with her parents, three sisters and a brother. While attending the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minn., Mary Ellen entered the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity and made her final profession in 1955. Sr. Mary Ellen went on to receive her Bachelor of Science degree in home economics education from the College of St. Teresa in Winona and her master's degree in education from Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Mich. Following a lengthy teaching career, she became a certified chaplain in 1976.

In 1987, Sr. Mary Ellen began the process of transfer to the Sisters of Bon Secours, completing it three years later with the renewal of her vows in the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours in 1990.

Sr. Mary Ellen resided in Grosse Pointe, Mich., until recently when she relocated to Marian Hall in Marriottsville, Md. During her years in Michigan, Sr. Mary Ellen served as director of spiritual care at St. John-Bon Secours Nursing Home and then Bon Secours Place Assisted Living Facility, where she ministered until her retirement in 2002. She was also well known for her retreat work with the elderly. Most recently, she was a volunteer, tutoring students at Hanstein Elementary School in Michigan, and, in 2008, she received an award in appreciation for her outstanding service to the school.

She served as a member of the Congregation's Vowed Membership Task Force, the Provincial General Assembly Planning Committee, the Mission Partnership Committee, and the Vocation/Formation Team. She also was a board member of the Bon Secours Michigan Health System and the Sisters of Bon Secours Nursing Care Center in Michigan.

An excellent cook, baker, seamstress, and needle pointer, Sr. Mary Ellen also enjoyed quilting and playing cards.

Sr. Mary Ellen is survived by her community, three sisters and a brother.

# Around the Congregation



Congratulations to candidate *Patty Dooley* who completed her 10-week clinical pastoral education unit at Greenville Memorial Hospital in South Carolina. Following this education unit, Patty is working on the floors with the chaplain at St. Francis Hospital in Greenville, ministering to the very sick and dying. She plans to take the extended education unit as she pursues a chaplaincy ministry.



Congratulations to *Sr. Bernie Claps* for receiving a graduate certificate in spiritual direction from Washington Theological Union.



*The Enlarged Congregation Team (ECT)* had its first meeting in Ireland in the beginning of October. The ECT includes the Congregation Team; representatives from each country (Sr. Rosa Gomez for Peru, Sr. Jacqueline Rebours for France, Maria Cuffe for Ireland, and Sr. Vicky Segura for the United States); and chairpersons of the international committees.

Best of luck to *Sr. Mary Rita Nangle* who recently started a new ministry as a patient visitor at Bon Secours Baltimore Health System.



Congratulations and good luck to *Andrea Springer* who will be an associate professor at the College of Notre Dame this fall. Andrea will teach contemporary spirituality in the Accelerated Nursing College.



*Sr. Elaine Davia* has been collecting medicine bottles to send to our ministry in Tzaneen South Africa. To date, thanks to those who have generously donated their cleaned and emptied medicine bottles, she has collected more than 1,000 bottles that have been sent to the sisters in South Africa for use in the antiretroviral clinic that the sisters have established. Another box of bottles is being sent over in November. "The response has been fantastic," says Sr. Elaine, "and the sisters in Tzaneen want everyone to know how much these contributions of medicine bottles are appreciated." If you would like to donate medicine bottles, we are accepting the small gold/yellow ones, NOT the larger bulk size white bottles. We are also not sending smaller white ones with small openings and with words directly on the plastic. We are asking people to wash and dry the inside of the bottles and remove the pharmacy labels before donating.



# focus

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

1525 Marriottsville Road  
Marriottsville, Maryland 21104  
(410) 442-1333  
[www.bonsecours.org/us](http://www.bonsecours.org/us)