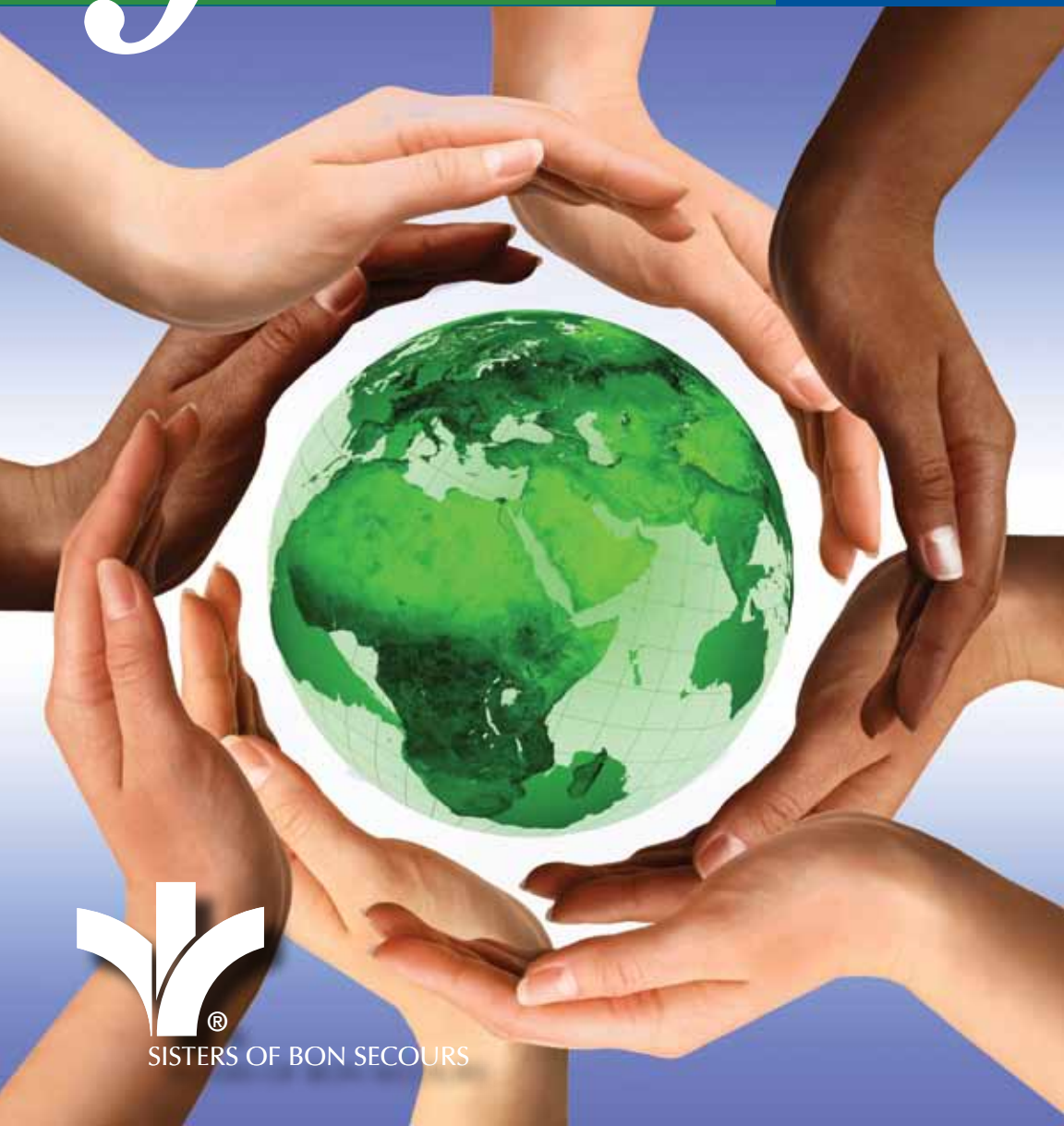



# *f*OCUS

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours

FALL 2011



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS



"IF YOU WANT TO GO QUICKLY,  
GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO  
FAR, GO TOGETHER."

— AFRICAN PROVERB

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# Dear Friends



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

During the past few months, I have had some wonderful experiences I would like to share with you. During the summer, I had the privilege of visiting with our sisters in Ireland and experiencing their very gracious hospitality. We stayed in one of the local communities, and it was truly a pleasure to spend quality time with the sisters. At the conclusion of our visit in Ireland, we took a short plane ride across the Irish Sea to also visit with our sisters in Glasgow, Scotland. We had a delightful and relaxing visit with the sisters and associates there. One of the highlights of my trip was seeing Riverdance; this exciting performance told the story of Ireland's beginnings. The staging and dynamic nature of the performance truly reflected what an emotional, spiritual time this was for the early settlers. Seeing this performance in Ireland was truly a religious experience for me.

In September, the sisters in the United States hosted sisters from Ireland, Great Britain, France and Peru in Marriottsville at the Enlarged Congregation Team (ECT) meeting. Members of the Congregation Team, chairpersons of all our international committees and a member-at-large from each country attended this ECT meeting. All of the committees that have been meeting by conference call and in person throughout the year reported on their progress. Our new Congregation structure is indeed working well, and it was exciting to be able to share what was going on in each of our countries.

One result of the ECT was the development of a new policy on preparation for missionary work such as our sisters are doing in South Africa. We reflected on our mission focus statement and discussed methods of communication with one another, specifically the value to all of us of the Intranet and the

importance of using it on a regular basis. We had a session with Fr. Fintan Sheeran of the Congregation of Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary on inviting new members to join our community, and I found his insights enlightening. He has been a consultant and facilitator for 30 years on religious formation. Two other highlights of the meetings were a lively performance by the St. Matthew's Gospel Choir and a Mass of Commitment for the new members of the United States Volunteer Ministry Program. We warmly welcomed four young women who will be ministering to people in West Baltimore through several outreach programs connected with Bon Secours Hospital.

It also gives me great joy to announce that we will be celebrating with Sr. Chris Webb as she takes her final vows in November. Read about her journey through the formation process on page 6. Her commitment to becoming a sister of Bon Secours has been a blessing and will enhance our Congregation.

In this issue, you also will read about how successful our new Congregation structure without province boundaries has been and the very interesting ministry work being done with immigrants by one of our sisters in Great Britain. Multiculturalism, both in the United States and around the world, has always been important to the sisters of Bon Secours, and we are proud to share with you how we are embracing multiculturalism right here in Marriottsville.

And finally, as the holiday season approaches, I want to wish each of you and your families a blessed and peaceful Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

Peace,



Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, C.B.S.  
Leader  
Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A.



# Coming Full Circle



## SR. CHRIS WEBB REFLECTS ON HER SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO BECOMING A SISTER OF BON SECOURS

When **Sr. Chris Webb** takes her final vows on November 12, 2011, it will be a realization of a calling she has had practically her entire life and the culmination of a spiritual journey that has taken her on an interesting path.

“Since the age of 3, I considered being a sister,” recalls Sr. Chris. “When other young girls were talking of marriage and kids, I stood firm that I was going to be a sister.” However, when she inquired about her prospects for religious life at the age of 19, she was told no because she was a juvenile diabetic.

As one door shut, God opened a window—Chris married and had two sons. She pursued a life of service as a chaplain, and it was this ministry that would once again lead her back to her vocation and the Sisters of Bon Secours.

“I was working as a medical tech in the lab of St. Francis Hospital in Charleston, S.C., when the Sisters of Bon Secours took over sponsorship of the hospital,” says Sr. Chris. “I went to congratulate a friend who had been promoted to director of Mission, and, during our conversation, he mentioned that I sounded like I was ‘open to the Spirit.’” With her children grown, she was in a period of her life when she could pursue her calling—but it was not without trepidation.

“While I was very active—playing softball, biking with friends, holding down a full-time job as well as working part time in hospice, and pursuing my master’s degree in chaplaincy—I was worried that I would be told no again,” says Sr. Chris. For several days, she pondered over the vocation card, given to her by the hospital’s director of Mission. She took the brave step of emailing Sr. Pat Dowling, director of vocation for the Sisters of Bon Secours, who in turn invited Sr. Chris to come to Baltimore.

This trip would be a confirmation for Sr. Chris. “As Sr. Pat and I talked and I learned more, I realized that the Sisters of Bon Secours embodied everything I had told my spiritual director I wanted to do,” comments Sr. Chris. “I wanted to do so much and I realized I couldn’t do it all on my own. However, being in a religious community, I could play a part in helping serve those in need. I knew I was ready to make the

discernment process after learning about the Sisters of Bon Secours' ministries." For the next 18 months, Sr. Chris continued her ministry work in Charleston, flying back to Baltimore for every "Come and See" weekend and associates meeting; this helped her stay in contact with the sisters and affirm that this was the right choice for her.

On January 24, 2005, Sr. Chris became a candidate in a simple ceremony in Marriottsville—surrounded by the support of several of the sisters of Bon Secours and local community members. After a six-week orientation that outlined the process and what to expect, Sr. Chris moved to New Jersey, where, as a candidate, she would now live in community with Srs. Rose Marie Jasinski and Fran Gorsuch as well as continue her discernment process. "Having become a board-certified chaplain in October 2004, I continued to serve others in that capacity, while staying in regular contact with Sr. Elaine Davia, who was now serving as director of formation for the Sisters of Bon Secours," says Sr. Chris, who was also continuing to talk with a spiritual director—something she had started to do two to three years prior to inquiring about the Sisters of Bon Secours.

Eighteen months later, Sr. Chris entered the Novitiate, a two-year stage, and took the title of "sister." During the first or canonical year of the Novitiate, the novices learn about the history of the Congregation and the Church as well as the charism and traditions of the Sisters of Bon Secours. Sr. Elaine stresses that one of the key differences between the Novitiate period and Candidacy is the shift in focus. "This period is marked more by study than ministry, unlike the period of Candidacy," says Sr. Elaine. "The novices, in their canonical year, perform volunteer ministry just once a week. In their second year, they continue their studies while doing more ministry—but still not as much as what they were doing as candidates."



In her second year as a novice, Sr. Chris moved to Portsmouth, Va., where she continued her education about the Sisters of Bon Secours as well as ministered as a chaplain. Three months prior to taking her temporary vows on November 1, 2008, Sr. Chris once again returned to Marriottsville to prepare. According to Sr. Chris, this time enabled her to get to know more of the sisters living in Marriottsville as well as to pray and reflect on this important moment of her life—a moment that she was able to share with her younger sister, two sons, her daughter-in-law and her 3-year-old grandson. "After professing my temporary vows, my grandson said 'yeah' and clapped," recalls Sr. Chris. "While he didn't really know what was happening at the time, I am looking forward to seeing what he has to say at my final vow ceremony now that he is 6."

In addition to her grandson, Sr. Chris will be joined by her sister and two sons as well as the sisters of Bon Secours as she takes her final vows on November 12, 2011. This moment brings to mind an especially poignant memory for Sr. Chris: "I remember sitting in the chapel one day around time for Mass and realizing that this is where I've always been. As a sister of Bon Secours, this is where my call was to be. Even before I entered the Sisters of Bon Secours and was pursuing my master's degree, I wrote many papers about the charism: compassion, healing and liberation. While I might not have used those words, I lived compassion daily—it's who I am. Healing is what I hope to offer. Liberation is the glimpses of God we don't always see—the peace that comes over someone who passes after struggling and the peace that comes over the family knowing their loved one is no longer suffering."

Living the charism is something Sr. Chris sees as a connective thread among all the sisters of Bon Secours across the world; it is the tie that binds, much like her desire to become a sister. While her journey may have taken a circuitous route, Sr. Chris looks back on her journey with appreciation. "At 19, it was just not the right time to enter religious life," she says. "If I had entered then, I would not have gotten married and had children. I would not be the person I am today. I bring these experiences to my life as a sister, and these experiences help me understand the gift I have to offer the community."

So, for those considering a calling to religious life, Sr. Chris has some sage advice: "Be patient. It comes in God's time."

# Come & See *Bon Secours* the Sisters of

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.

## **2012 Come and See Weekend Dates:**

February 17–19

June 8–10

October 19–21

For more information, call 1-877-742-0277 or visit [www.BonSecoursVocations.org](http://www.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.





# PROJECT GOOD HELP *Come and See Weekends* Take a Hands-on Twist

What could provide women considering a call to religious life as a sister of Bon Secours with a better understanding of the Congregation than witnessing its ministries in action? It was this concept that spurred the development of Project Good Help, a more hands-on twist on the "Come and See" weekends regularly offered by the Vocation and Formation Office in the United States.

This first annual Project Good Help was held in Baltimore from July 21–26. Sr. Pat Dowling, director of Vocation, and Sr. Fran Gorsuch, who is playing a role in vocation outreach, welcomed five women to be a part of this opportunity to serve those in Baltimore City.

On Friday, July 22, the group spent the first part of the day at the new Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry House on Washington Boulevard in Baltimore, helping to make it a home. While Marie Truffer and Shannon Curran, director of Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry, had done some massive work getting the new house in shape, there was plenty to keep the group occupied from housekeeping efforts in the kitchen to moving furniture for the living room, prayer room, bedrooms, study/work room and basement. The group returned on Monday afternoon to do the finishing touches including making the beds and hanging curtains.

Friday afternoon, Sr. Nancy Glynn joined the group at the Women's Resource Center. "After Sr. Pat shared the founding story with us, we visited with guests; took blood pressures (we had two nurses in the group); tidied up the kitchen, bathrooms and stairwell; and touched up paint," recalls Sr. Fran. Sunshine Monk, project coordinator for the Vocation and Formation Office, and her sons joined the group in their cleaning efforts. Sunshine took great pictures and interviewed visitors and volunteers.



*Participants of the inaugural Project Good Help Come and See Weekend*

On Saturday, Sr. Anna Mae Crane and Fr. Michael Murphy led the group on a history tour, followed by a thorough cleaning and inventory at My Brother's Keeper. Sunday after Liturgy at Marriottsville, Srs. Nancy Glynn and Mary Rita Nangle hosted the group for a wonderful lunch and sharing. "We spent the afternoon at Smallwood Summit, a low-income senior residence that is part of Bon Secours Baltimore's outreach ministry," says Sr. Fran. "Even though invitations had been posted, the volunteers went door-to-door to invite the residents down, and many responded. We had a great time playing pin the tail on the donkey (which they loved!), engaging in an art project, praying, singing and enjoying refreshments together. The simple prizes we had (soap, Kleenex, towels, etc.) were a big hit as well. We did take a detour on our way back to Marriottsville and had supper at the Inner Harbor."

The participants returned to My Brother's Keeper again Monday morning to set-up, serve and clean-up the hot dinner for about 80 guests, including children, as well as preparing two huge pans of squash casserole for Tuesday's dinner. In the afternoon, the group journeyed to the Family Support Center for a tour and provided help grading papers and organizing files for the adult GED classes. "We saw such pride in the faces of the staff and such hope and a sense of being at home in the faces of the children and parents who are served in so many ways," recalls Sr. Fran.

In looking back on this amazing experience, Sr. Fran and the Vocation and Formation Office want to thank all those who contributed to the success of the first annual Project Good Help.

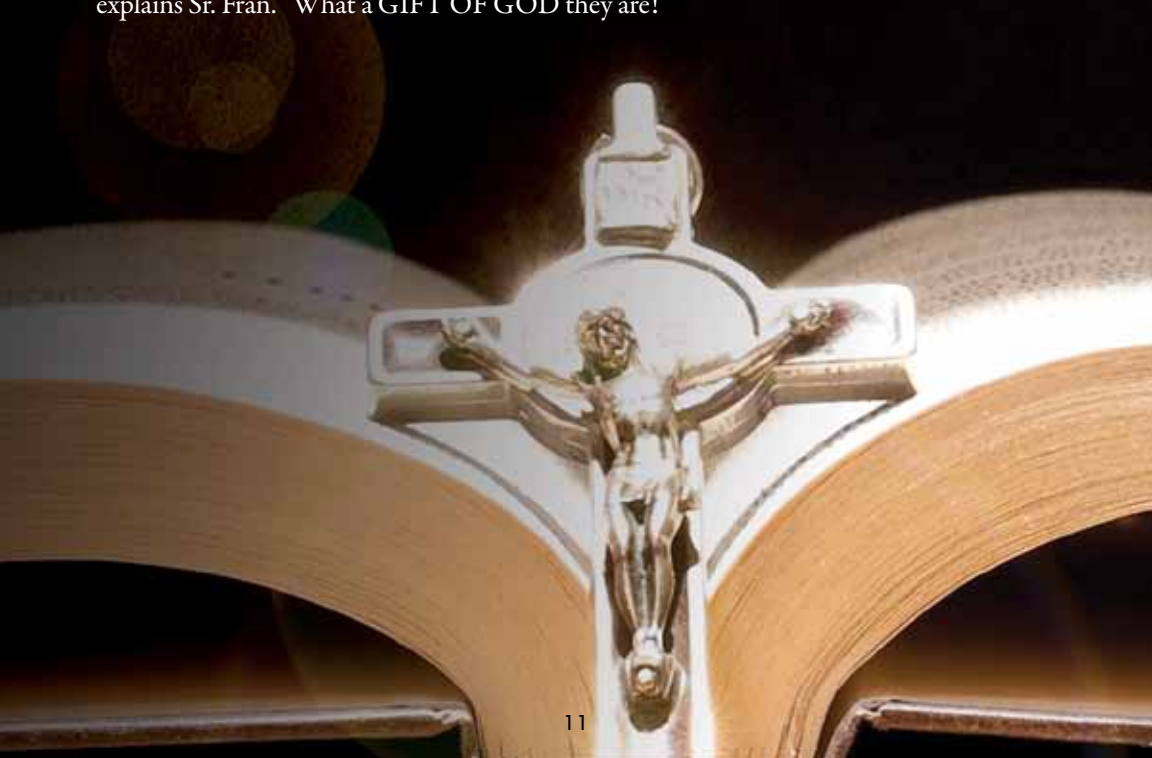
"We owe such thanks to so many people—above all to our good God whom we met in prayer each morning and evening, in the faces of all those we served and in the faces of one another," says Sr. Fran. "The entire staff at the Spiritual Center and the Leadership Office could not have been more accommodating, even packing lunches for us each day and preparing an ice cream social for Monday evening, which we shared with the sisters in the Baltimore area. The staff and sisters on Marian Hall, along with Srs. Jean Aulenback and Mary Cabrini, graciously welcomed us several evenings for dinner and for our stay on Marian Hall. Sunshine and Jen Murphy in the Vocation and Formation Office were tremendously helpful and professional in preparing for the program, and Amy Kulesa provided us with the wooden crosses, hearts and decorations for the arts project at Smallwood Summit. George Kleb and Erika McClammy of the Bon Secours of Maryland Foundation graciously helped arrange the service opportunities for us."

Sr. Fran continues, "I think our days together are best summed up in the following prayer written by Sonja, one of our participants, which truly reflects our overarching theme:

## THE VISITATION:

WE COME WITH SPIRITUAL UNITY AS HUMBLE VISITORS  
WHO HOLD GOD'S PEOPLE IN OUR HEARTS –  
EXPLORING OUR FAITH, GUIDING EACH OTHER,  
PASSIONATELY HELPING THE SISTERS  
FROM THE VERY START –  
PRAYING TOGETHER FOR GOD'S DIRECTION  
NEVER THINKING OF SELF; LIKE MINDS  
MEETING GOD'S GOALS  
BECAUSE "BJASM" \* IS GOOD HELP!

"BJASM stands for the five women: Barbara from Maryland, Jennie from New Jersey, Amy and Sonja from Virginia, and Maria from Maryland," explains Sr. Fran. "What a GIFT OF GOD they are!"



# CONGREGATION EXPERIENCES THE BENEFITS OF GLOBAL MOBILITY

With advances in technology, businesses and organizations around the world are becoming more and more a part of the global economy. Two years ago, the Sisters of Bon Secours also embraced the concept of globalization, removing province boundaries and governing as one international religious community. The new model has been very successful, and Congregation Leader Sr. Patricia Eck explains that there are many positive outcomes the sisters of Bon Secours have already begun to experience from this new structure. “One of the most gratifying outcomes to me is the opportunity to really get to know each other on a more personal level,” says Sr. Pat. “We also have come to realize the diversity of skills and strengths our sisters in each country have and how our different talents can be shared throughout the Congregation to meet each other’s needs.”

The new structure also has allowed the Congregation to have a more unified knowledge base in order to address issues and make decisions. “A sister from one country may ask a question that others had not thought of but has relevance to all of us. It has given us the opportunity to share different perspectives and develop a high level of trust,” says, Sr. Pat.

Another benefit realized is the ability of sisters to move from one country to another as needs are identified and a specific sister’s level of contribution and experience would be helpful. For example, our sisters in France identified an Ecuadorian woman who soon would be living in Vendome, France, and wanted a religious community experience. They called on our sisters in Peru for help, and a Spanish-speaking Peruvian sister came to Vendome, is learning French and will accompany this person on her religious journey.



*Enlarged Congregation Team  
(photo taken by Diana Stager)*

Our country leaders now meet regularly and consistently, either in person or by conference call with a translator, to respond in a timely manner to the needs of the Congregation, our individual sisters and our ministry. “It is very special to see how we are supporting each other, and the beauty is in the diversity we have to share,” says Sr. Pat. “The openness to sharing and supporting each other’s needs, coupled with the recognition that we all have something to bring to the table, is especially heart warming.”

United States Country Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski reflects on the fact that although the new structure does not really change the day-to-day work of the sisters, there is definitely a greater sense of connectedness, shared responsibility and not being as territorial as we once were. “We are all part of something bigger—part of the whole,” says Sr. Rose Marie. “It is wonderful that, with technology and tools such as the Intranet and email, it has become so easy to stay connected.”

“Our sisters in Ireland and Great Britain feel more connected to one another through country assemblies and visits of sisters between countries,” says Sr. Marie Ryan, country leader for Ireland and Great Britain. “Srs. Mary O’Mullane and Majella Lyons, for example, joined the community in Glasgow for Sr. Joanne Irvine’s jubilee.” Sisters now feel they know more about the sisters in the Congregation-at-large through regular reports and photos from meetings in different countries. Since holding our “Come with Hope” meeting in the United States in 2008, which was open to all the sisters, the sisters in Ireland and Great Britain also can share in recognition of all our sisters and know on a more timely basis if someone is ill or has passed away. Some of the sisters from Ireland and Great Britain have been able to take advantage of ministry opportunities in other countries. Sr. Fedelini is looking forward to spending time in Ireland; Srs. Mary and Martina are sharing community and ministry with Srs. Rosa and Nelida in Tzaneen, South Africa; and Sr. Martha is always willing to go wherever she is needed to help a sister. Sisters also have enjoyed serving on international committees, especially the Membership and Peace and Justice committees. “These sisters have benefitted from this congregational experience, and, in turn, this gives all the sisters in their countries a deeper insight into the work of each committee and the issues being addressed,” says Sr. Marie.

Country Leader for Peru Sr. Rosalinda Pajuelo Urena says that, at first, there was much curiosity about the changes in Congregation structure, but the Peruvian sisters have since had the opportunity to experience community life in other countries, learn about other cultures, and how the sisters can work together on providing “Good Help” and bringing the message of hope and compassion to others. “We have shown an openness to be available to go to other places; we have sisters in the Congregation’s mission in South Africa and currently have a sister in Vendome, France,” says Sr. Rosalinda. “Although language certainly remains a challenge, it is not an obstacle as we use the Intranet and other forms of communications with translators. We are also pleased to have the opportunity to be a part of some of the international committees and share our gifts with others. We have certainly benefited from the new structure and understand that our vision should not only be on the country level, but also the Congregation level. We have learned to love and respect our sisters around the world, and our international experiences have truly enriched all of us.”

# Working in the *Global Village*

By **Sr. Bernadette Kwasna** of Great Britain



Thank God for cell phones! How could I possibly minister to people without them? I work for a national refugee charity in London, England. In April 2011, we took over the operation of a program that enables people who have sought asylum in the UK and irregular migrants to voluntarily return to their country of origin.

Having to make the decision on whether to move back to your country of origin is one of the most difficult decisions to make in life. There are many different reasons why people would want to return, and each person is different. Each has their own unique set of circumstances, gifts, skills and abilities. Each will experience this transition time differently. Some will settle faster than others. For some people, it may be impossible to feel settled. The first few hours, days and weeks back home as well as what support structures people have are vital to settling down and feeling connected with the home country's society. Research has shown that even a seemingly simple act such as whether a person or family is met upon arrival at the airport will impact this ability to settle down and feel connected.

Part of my ministry is to maintain contact with the person or family once they have returned home and to accompany them through the initial six-month period. It is wonderful to be able to pick up my phone and talk to someone in Katmandu, Nepal. I have always thought of Katmandu as being in a remote part of the world near the base camp for climbers of Mount Everest. Once faraway places can now be reached with the aid of modern technology. Currently, my clients are mainly from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, India, Iraq, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

A large part of my working day is spent helping my clients with very practical issues such as housing, health care, education, vocational training, employment or business opportunities; these are real practical things that will assist someone to generate income. For those with children, my assistance can include helping with child care costs so that the parent can work or helping with education costs for school-age children. I feel very privileged and blessed to be able to minister to so many different people from so many different countries each day.

***I am reminded of Jesus' words in the Gospel: "Go throughout the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to all."***

# Sr. Peggy Mathewson: Blessings from a Health Care Ministry



**Sr. Margaret Mathewson**, better known as Sr. Peggy, started volunteering and working at St. Francis nursing home in Darby, Pa., as a young girl. It was there that she first encountered the Sisters of Bon Secours and realized she wanted to be a nurse.

After graduation, Sr. Peggy attended the Camillus School of Practical Nursing, which was run by the Sisters of Bon Secours. She then went on to become a registered nurse, serving in various nursing and supervisory capacities as she worked in rehabilitation, medical and surgical nursing, intensive and coronary care, recovery room and geriatrics in Baltimore, Philadelphia and Michigan.

Health care became Sr. Peggy's ministry, specifically geriatric health care. In inner city Detroit, she worked with the Sisters of Mercy, helping the poor and elderly. Sr. Peggy developed a geriatric assessment center to evaluate the elderly in their homes and to link the patient and families with community services. In Norfolk, Va., she developed a program for elderly with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. She also served as the primary provider for residents in nursing homes and assisted-living facilities with Long Term Care of Virginia.

Sr. Peggy has served as director of Marian Hall, the sisters' retirement center at Marriottsville, and did consultations for other religious communities regarding the care and management of the frail elderly religious.

Starting in October, Sr. Peggy will explore other options in which she is being called to serve the Lord. "I know it will be in some health care aspect, but it is yet to be determined," says Sr. Peggy. "My prayer is that I remain open to His call and continue to convey 'Good Help to Those in Need®' through service."

She continues, "Since I entered the Sisters of Bon Secours, I wanted to be a nurse and make a difference in the lives of those I come in contact. Serving the sick and dying has been a wonderful, life-giving experience for me. My daily prayer is that I remain faithful to that call from God to serve the sick, poor and dying."

When you reflect on the service Sr. Peggy has given through her health care ministry, it is no surprise that one of her favorite quotes comes from Matthew 25:36: "I was sick and you visited me."

"I am blessed to have this opportunity to serve the sick," Sr. Peggy says. "The charism of Bon Secours continues."



# Sr. Alice Talone *Reflects on Sabbatical*



After six years of leading the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A., **Sr. Alice Talone** took a well-deserved sabbatical. “My sabbatical was truly a blessing and a special gift from the Congregation that I am so very grateful for,” says Sr. Alice. “It gave me more time for prayer and reflection and especially to learn more about myself and the many interesting people I met. It was a blessed transition time for me.”

Sr. Alice attended many workshops and programs around the country during the year; these workshops and programs deepened her understanding of herself, her relationship to God, the environment and scripture. She especially enjoyed a workshop with Sr. Sandra Schneider, I.H.M., entitled “Theology of Religious Life.” Sr. Alice and Sr. Nancy Glynn also took a workshop on “Surviving and Thriving” after leaving religious leadership. In Illinois, she attended a retreat focused on women in scripture. Sr. Alice also attended several excellent programs at Bon Secours Spiritual Center in Marriottsville; among her favorites were “Earth, Women and Divine Love,” which expanded her knowledge of our wounded earth, and a workshop given by Joyce Rupp called “The Institute of Compassionate Prayer.” In preparation for a trip to Ireland, Sr. Alice attended a workshop on “Compassion with the Celtic Tradition,” where she explored the Celtic belief that everything in life is an expression of God. Sr. Alice took a Celtic pilgrimage in Ireland that she described as “a blessed time to connect with my Celtic roots and to visit with the sisters of Bon Secours in Dublin.”

During her sabbatical, Sr. Alice also participated in an “over 65” workshop, a computer course at the senior center, and aquatics at the Y. Most importantly, she had the time to reconnect with family and friends. In October 2011, Sr. Alice spent three weeks in South Africa, where she visited with friends and spent time with the sisters of Bon Secours at the Congregation’s mission there.

Looking ahead, Sr. Alice is excited about once again ministering to the poor in West Baltimore and working with a parish nursing program, as she had done for many years. She was a beloved force in West Baltimore, and her commitment to the poor and dying was known throughout the community. “My heart has always been with the poor, and it is a gift from God to be able to minister with them,” says Sr. Alice.

# Returning from a Special Journey

By Sr. Mary Regina Flatley



When you last heard from me, I shared some thoughts on our Community Book Club for the last issue of Focus. At that time I was living in Venice, Fla. At the end of last year, I moved back to Marriottsville, Md., and now live with our sisters of Bon Secours at Marriottsville.

My last experience in Venice was one that, of all of my ministries as a sister of Bon Secours, was most deeply spiritual and cherished. I was blessed to journey with Sr. Mary Catherine, following her major surgery, as she received treatment and prepared herself for going home to her God.

In the six months following surgery, she became aware of the call from God that she would soon be going to meet Him. It was a difficult time but a time of sharing, listening, helping and being with a friend on their journey to meet God.

Throughout this journey, we had many conversations, which are still with me now. I remember she told me she would "know who would greet her in Heaven," specifically her mother (Mama) and father. She believed that her longtime friend and beloved cat, Coco Chere, would be there also to greet her.

During this journey, she also edified me with her willingness to ponder, prepare and remember God's goodness to her during her life. Our conversations and moments of sharing were about the many blessings she had received—not about the illness and difficulty with her health.

We also prepared, in a way, for the journey of "going home." Her desire to accept what was happening to her and be present to the given moment is very hard to articulate for me at this point. My prayer is still one of thanksgiving for the grace to be on this journey with her and the blessing that this opportunity was for me.

I have time now at Marriottsville to remember our conversations and times together of laughter and tears. I am reminded of her daily, as I agreed to keep her new cat, Cara Mia, with me after Sr. Mary Catherine moved to another phase of her journey.

Mia and I now enjoy our new residence at Marriottsville and being in the midst of our sisters here in Maryland. I enjoy being back at Marriottsville. I miss our friends in Florida but keep in touch with many of them through email.

I enjoy the grounds, the opportunity to share in classes in our formation program and the get-togethers with the sisters. I continue to enjoy reading, particularly good mysteries as well as keeping in touch with many friends and family through the Internet.



# ROOTED IN THE PAST, *STANDING IN THE PRESENT,* REACHING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Sr. Mary Shimo and the Bon Secours, U.S.A., Archives



*Sr. Mary Shimo (left)  
and Mary Herbert*

For *Sr. Mary Shimo*, working in the Bon Secours, U.S.A., Archives is more than just a hobby. Since 1989, when she was assigned to archival work because of her interest in history, Sr. Mary spent many evenings and weekends surrounded by piles of documents and files. "I purged the files. I organized and I shredded," laughs Sr. Mary.

Today, more than 20 years later, you can still find Sr. Mary in the U.S.A. archives, along with part-time professional archivist, Mary Herbert. The archives, however, appear very different today than they did 20 years ago. Now housed in a temperature- and humidity-controlled space specific for archives preservation, the archives have been "catapulted into the 21st century," according to Sr. Mary.

Sr. Justine Cyr was the originator of the U.S.A. archives, which function as a repository for material relevant to the Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States, dating from 1881 to the present. The collection contains materials on the founding, history, mission and growth of the Congregation in the United States.

"Sr. Justine did a truly loving task in beginning to save these documents for the archives," says Sr. Mary, who lists two letters among her favorite archived items. The first is a 1919 letter to the Superior General in Paris from George Jenkins, the philanthropist who provided funds to open Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore. The letter urges that Mother Urban Tierney be maintained as the administrator because of the fine work she was doing and because "even the Protestant doctors like her." The second letter is from Monsignor Broderick at St. Martin's Church, declaring that the sisters of Bon Secours are in charge of the St. Martin's Day Nursery and are to maintain control of the nursery operations.

"I appreciate history," explains Sr. Mary. "I know how history speaks to us today. I think that we can learn from our history."



Sr. Mary points out the symbolism of Bon Secours' logo of the fleur-de-lis. "The three branches show that the sisters are:

- 1.) rooted in the past,
- 2.) standing in the present, and
- 3.) reaching toward the future.

This symbolism mirrors the work I do in the archives." While standing in the present, she is researching the past to preserve for the future.

"Part of the blessing of the archives is that we can preserve and share," says Sr. Mary. "We do it with honor, knowing that it is sacred work." That sentiment is shared by Mary Herbert, who feels inspired when reflecting on all the sisters have accomplished. "I feel privileged to care for this history, so it can be used by those who follow us," she says.

*The archives are open to students and researchers of Bon Secours history by appointment, by calling 410-442-3111 or emailing CBSArchives@bshsi.org. The archives also provide two e-books, "A Century of Caring 1881-1981" and "History of the Congregation of Bon Secours of Paris," which are available online at <http://bonsecours.org/us/Archives-usa>.*



# *Embracing Diversity*

## CELEBRATING THE UNIQUENESS OF OUR BON SECOURS CO-WORKERS

America has long been viewed as a cultural melting pot, bringing together people from different countries with various traditions, languages and cultures. Likewise, the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A., headquarters is its own melting pot with tremendous diversity among the more than 60 employees working in the main building in Marriottsville, Md.

To help celebrate this cultural diversity, enable information sharing and recognize birthdays, an almost monthly forum has been formed thanks to the efforts of Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, country leader for the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A.; Larry Kaskel, operations manager for Bon Secours Spiritual Center; and Andrea Springer, executive assistant to the country leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A. Drawing roughly 30 people to each celebration, those in attendance have the opportunity to share, listen and understand more about those they work with. To date, two celebrations have been held: one highlighting Helina Nadew from Ethiopia, the other recognizing Hamid Estandiari from Iran. “Both of these celebrations also included food and were very well received. We have many coworkers from other countries, and it’s been a great experience to hear not only about their home countries but also about their experiences coming to America and becoming citizens,” comments Andrea. Those working at the U.S.A. headquarters look forward to these ongoing opportunities for growth and knowledge sharing, embracing the differences and commonalities amongst their Bon Secours co-workers.



*(above) Beza Nadew participates in a celebration of Ethiopia. (below) Helina Nadew talks about Ethiopia to those in attendance.*



# LIVING OUR MISSION

*Henry “Trey” Lane* has supervised the grounds of Bon Secours Spiritual Center in Marriottsville, Md., for almost 15 years. He and his assistant maintain the grounds, remove leaves and snow, and plant trees and flowers. They plant 2,500 flowering annuals every spring to add color to the grounds.



*“The Bon Secours Spiritual Center is a rare and beautiful place, and I take a lot of pride in maintaining the landscape of the center. A lot of visitors come to the center, and I want them to take pleasure in the natural beauty of the landscape. I think it brings a sense of peace and tranquility to the visitors who are often here on retreats. I often hear from the visitors and sisters about how well the grounds appeal to them. The sisters have been wonderful to work with over the years.”*



*Franca Martino-Starvaggi* is the operations manager for the Long Term Home Health Care program with Bon Secours New York. She also helps the central intake staff at Schervier Nursing Care Center and serves on committees with Bon Secours New York. Franca is a licensed certified social worker with certificates in bioethics and medical humanities.

*“The Sisters of Bon Secours’ charism of healing, comfort and compassion has touched me deeply. The reason I chose social work as a career many years ago was to help people with their issues and problems and to advocate for those without a voice. I always followed the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours, but never knew it until I came to work here two years ago and heard the mission for the first time: to provide ‘Good Help to Those in Need.’ I knew then that I was in the right place.”*



**Peggy Moseley** has served the Bon Secours Health System (BSHSI) for more than 25 years. She oversees the system's marketing and corporate communications, leading a creative team to provide communication tools and resources for BSHSI. Her career with BSHSI began at St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond, Va., in 1986. She has served in roles for strategic planning, marketing and corporate communications.



*"I am blessed to have spent the majority of my working life with BSHSI. I am so inspired by the sisters of Bon Secours' commitment to their charism and strong dedication to this health ministry. This mission calls many to serve. It has continually enabled many to make a profound difference in our communities. Through my work over the years, I have had many opportunities to make a positive difference in someone's life, both in the workplace and community, sometimes small and sometimes great. What a blessing to be able to say that. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve this ministry."*



**Steve Zollos** is the administrative director of Healthy Communities in Hampton Roads, Va. Healthy Communities works to improve the environment where vulnerable populations live in order to improve the health and wellness of residents. Steve oversees programming, budgeting, staff management and operations for Healthy Communities and Senior Services as well as the local transportation services for Maryview Medical Center, DePaul Medical Center and Mary Immaculate Hospital.

*"Having the opportunity to be an ambassador of the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours to the community has been an answer to a prayer. A number of years ago, I found myself asking God to open my eyes to the needs of others. After a little over a year of prayer, I accepted the role of leading Building Healthy Communities in addition to my previous responsibilities. Since then, I have been able to see needs clearly. Thanks to the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours, we have met the immediate needs of hundreds of people and the community at large. We expanded a local food pantry, established a community park, opened a clothing closet, built a community garden and helped establish a playground in a disadvantaged neighborhood, among other mission-oriented efforts. Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:40)."*

# ASSOCIATES:

## Laypeople Committed to Walking Alongside the Sisters in Solidarity and Support of the Bon Secours' Mission

by *Amy Kulesa*, director, *Bon Secours Associate*



"I've heard of the associates, but who exactly are they and what do they do?" is a question I have been asked more than once by individuals, some who have a lengthy background with Bon Secours. You may be involved in the ministries of Bon Secours through the local health systems, the Bon Secours Spiritual Center or other local outreaches, and have perhaps seen an associate brochure or heard the name, but can't quite place where the associates are situated in the overall constellation of Bon Secours.

Associates are people who have had some contact with the Sisters of Bon Secours and its mission and, being impressed with this, want to live out and share this mission with other like-minded people. Being an associate is a very special way to deepen your relationship with God, the sisters and other people who have a "heart for Bon Secours" as well as to be part of an extended spiritual community that spans the globe. Every month, we meet locally for prayer, faith-sharing, mutual encouragement and service to God's people, knowing we are part of a global mission to extend "Good Help to Those in Need®." There are now associates in five countries! One of the most effective ways to deepen and grow in one's faith, in whatever tradition, is to be involved in small faith-sharing community; this is essentially what the associates are. In this small community, we open our lives and gifts to one another and take the risk to join with others in a common mission, keeping spiritually centered in the values and spiritual legacy of Bon Secours.

For people affiliated with Bon Secours, whether as co-workers, volunteers, alumni of the nursing school or visitors to the Spiritual Center, you may ask, "Why consider commitment as an associate?" It is a way to focus and make more intentional our spiritual lives. Did you know that many Catholic religious congregations, both of men and women, have associates? Some of these congregations are the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, the Xaverian Brothers, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, various Franciscan groups and many others. In all of these cases, including Bon Secours, being an associate is a way to share in a more personal and

engaged way in the mission and life of the religious congregation. Many of our readers are already doing that in their work and ministries in Bon Secours, having deep roots in Bon Secours. I have found, however, that only a small percentage of these know about or have actually considered exploring the associates!

If you live and work in Central Maryland; Richmond; the Wilmington-Philadelphia area; the Hampton Roads, Va., area; Greenville or Charleston, S.C.; or St. Petersburg, Fla., we already have associates who meet together monthly. There has been an interest in starting new groups in other areas where Bon Secours has a presence.

As anthropologist Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Bon Secours associates are extending Bon Secours' mission to families, schools, communities and hospitals as well as to the poor in order to live more fully their commitment to share compassion, healing and liberation to others in the spirit of Christ. They do this in the context of a small group of laypeople committed to walking alongside the sisters in solidarity and support of the Bon Secours mission.

**We invite you to come and visit a monthly associate gathering in your area. Contact Amy Kulesa at [amy\\_kulesa@bshsi.org](mailto:amy_kulesa@bshsi.org) or 410-442-3131 to get connected to your local associate representative or sister and learn more!**

*From left to right: Associate Mary Jane reading a book on the Marriottsville campus; Sr. Chris Webb (right) with Associate Jackie Davis; and Associate Finola Steiner prays and walks the Labyrinth on the grounds in Marriottsville.*



# BON SECOURS VOLUNTEER MINISTRY HELD COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

By Shannon Curran, director, Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry Program

Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry recently commissioned its 2011–2012 community of volunteers. As the volunteer commissioning ceremony was held while the Congregation Team and Enlarged Congregation Team were meeting in Marriottsville, we were delighted to commission the volunteers with international representation from the sisters and blessings from "all the ends of the earth" (Ps 22:27).

The commissioning ceremony also fell on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and the readings from Philippians and the Gospel of John spoke to both the shape and nature of this year of service.

*...Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself,...(Phil 2:5-7)*

*...Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (Jn 3:17)*

In the second chapter of Philippians, St. Paul shares the hymn of Christ. While the entire hymn speaks to the volunteers' year, the image of Christ emptying himself is one that the volunteers have the opportunity to experience in many ways this year. In fact, even before they arrived, the volunteers began this self-emptying with their commitment to serve for a year. In light of John's words, as the volunteers continue to empty themselves in service to each other and their neighbors, they are presented with the opportunity to discover how it is possible for the world to be saved through the mystery of Christ.

As the volunteers begin this journey of self-emptying, we ask that you please keep each one in your prayers both today and throughout the year.



From all over the country, Bon Secours volunteers travel to center their lives on living the Sisters of Bon Secours' charism of compassion, healing and liberation in southwest Baltimore. Joining us this year are: **Sarah Ceponis** from Connecticut, **Maureen McElligott** from Wisconsin, **Katharine McDonald** from Illinois and **Brittney Weisner** from Ohio.

Sarah, who is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, is working at Bon Secours' Family Support Center. Katharine, a graduate of Northwestern University, is working in the Emergency Department of Bon Secours Hospital Baltimore. A graduate of Villanova University, Maureen is working in the Tele-heart Program. Brittney graduated from the University of Dayton and is working in the Cardiovascular Department of Bon Secours Hospital.

By supporting community health programs, tending to patients, nurturing children and assisting co-workers at Bon Secours' hospital, foundation and family support center, these young women provide "Good Help to Those in Need®" in Baltimore.



*(L. to r.) Bon Secours Volunteers Sarah Ceponis, Maureen McElligott, Katharine McDonald and Brittney Weisner*



## BON SECOURS SPIRITUAL CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

Almost every day, we see someone walking the labyrinth, and it has become a very special part of our spiritual center. This past summer, the labyrinth entrance was remodeled with a grant from the TKF Foundation, which facilitated the installation of a beautiful, new stone wall and stone path. Now that two of the spiritual center's hospitality rooms are renovated, we plan to completely remodel both of our ladies' room facilities in 2012.

Facility upgrades are not the only improvements of note. The Bon Secours Spiritual Center now hosts memorial services and luncheons after the funeral. Several memorial services have been held to date as well as a few luncheons, serving more than 100 guests. "We look forward to being able to serve more people in our community at this difficult time in their lives," says Larry Kaskel, operations manager of the spiritual center.

This desire to ease the pain and suffering of those in mourning is something the staff at the Bon Secours Spiritual Center are clearly demonstrating. One guest recently commented, "The staff was exemplary in their expressions of sincere caring, their dedication in accommodating the wishes of the family and their sensitivity to this sorrowful day. The Lord's presence and guidance was evident; this I felt strongly throughout the day, which eased the grief and anguish."

While adding new services, the spiritual center has continued hosting retreats including a retreat with author and national speaker Joyce Rupp that was highly praised by all who attended. Joyce Rupp will be here again in 2012. Bon Secours Spiritual Center plans to host more than 50 retreats in 2012; information about upcoming retreats can be found at [www.bonsecours.org](http://www.bonsecours.org).

In order to continue to provide impactful retreats and meet the needs of our guests, the spiritual center is pleased to announce that Sr. Bernadette Claps joined the staff in 2011 as the manager of Spiritual Care and Mission.



# BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM *Prepares For Health Care Reform*

As we read about health care reform and what will be coming into play in the next few years, we need to understand that, in order to continue to survive and thrive, health care facilities must plan for change now. As Bon Secours Health System's new strategic quality plan is being developed for fiscal years 2013–15, a major focus of the plan is how the health system prepares for and operates under new health care guidelines.

One of the primary strategies Bon Secours Health System (BSHSI) is employing as it prepares for health care reform is continuing to improve quality and efficiency of care and lowering fixed and variable costs. The health system must be prepared to assume more risk, deliver even higher quality care and control costs of services provided. Our new electronic medical record (EMR) is playing, and will continue to play, a major role in changing the way BSHSI delivers health care, improving quality and patient safety as well as allowing more operating efficiencies, thus reducing costs. The EMR allows all patient information to be found in one place, securely accessible from a computer anywhere 24/7. Total integration of patient information is available to physicians, pharmacists, nurses and clinical care providers.

The clinical transformation initiative, with the cornerstone being the EMR, is changing the way BSHSI delivers care across the continuum from our pre-acute to acute care, home care and long-term care patients. Clinical transformation is defined as a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to achieve care delivery excellence throughout the patient care continuum that measurably improves quality; creates holistic, patient-centered care experiences; and reduces health care costs. As we redesign the way we deliver health care, we are working closely with our physicians to co-manage patient care. BSHSI also is employing additional physicians to be better able to work collaboratively with aligned incentives and objectives.

Additionally, in preparation for health care reform, a clinical informatics partnership has been established. Clinical informatics is the intersection and integration of people, processes, technology, data and the knowledge we derive from it, which creates an extraordinary experience of care through continuous improvement for the communities we serve. Collaboration and teamwork, from the boardroom to the bedside, is serving to improve patient outcomes as well as the bottom line.



The informatics strategy focuses on all hospitals, regardless of whether they have gone live with ConnectCare, the EMR. The purpose of the clinical informatics partnership is to drive our people, process and technology forward together to promote improvements in care delivery. Some of the first areas the partnership focused on were creating a common integrated dashboard across the system, project prioritization, data replication, early warning systems and optimization sub-teams. As the infomatics work continues to evolve, this partnership will be a critical component to integrating efforts as well as driving clinical and operational success.

Federal and private insurers are providing reimbursement based more on accountable care, quality indexes and bundling payments with physician services. Revenue enhancement programs for providing efficient quality care are becoming the norm. The health system is looking carefully at how reimbursement is scheduled to change and evaluating its cost structure to reduce fixed and variable costs. All health care facilities will have to be able to thrive on less and maximize reimbursement enhancements for delivering quality care.

“The redesign of how we deliver care and our cost structure focuses on delivering the right care to the right patient at the right time. By being proactive, BSHSI will emerge even stronger in the future as it continues to serve its communities with affordable, accessible health care,” says BSHSI President and CEO Rich Statuto.

“Additionally, our mission-driven advocacy efforts across BSHSI continue to focus on bearing witness to inform and influence public policy in Washington. These efforts aim to safeguard conscience protections, improve quality care, reduce duplication and waste in service delivery to control costs, and ensure the health of the public through proven evidence-based protocols for population health,” says Roslyn Brock, vice president, Advocacy and Government Relations.



Roslyn Brock was licensed to preach in August 2006 and completed seminary training in May 2009 at the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Va. She was ordained as a Baptist reverend on July 18, 2011, and continues to serve as an associate minister at the historic Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Va.

## Sr. Pat Eck To Be *Honored by the Vatican*



Congratulations to *Sr. Pat Eck*, Congregation Leader for the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris since 2009 and chairperson of Bon Secours Ministries, the sponsor for Bon Secours Health System, who will receive the Papal award, Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice medal, on November 20, 2011. This award is the highest honor given to a member of a religious community by the Vatican.

Instituted by Pope Leo XIII in 1888, the honor is bestowed upon lay people and clergy who have provided distinguished service to the Roman Catholic Church. Sr. Pat will receive the medal at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore.

Sr. Pat entered religious life on September 12, 1966, dedicating her ministry to the care of the sick, particularly those who are poor or marginalized. With a health care career that spans more than 40 years, Sr. Pat has served in several roles including clinical nursing, health care administration, and sponsorship and governance for Bon Secours Health System.

Through the years, Sr. Pat has served on the Leadership Team of the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A, and, in 2006, she was one of the primary leaders in creating and structuring Bon Secours Ministries as the Public Juridic Person/sponsor for Bon Secours Health System and is currently the chairperson of Bon Secours Ministries.

Sr. Pat served as chairperson of the Catholic Health Association (CHA) and, in 2007, received the Sister Mary Concilia Moran Award from CHA. She has also served as chairperson of the Corporate Members of Mercy Housing.

“I am grateful for the recognition of the long-standing presence of the sisters in the Archdiocese, especially in Baltimore and Marriottsville. This is indeed an honor for us all,” Sr. Pat said.

## Around the Congregation



*Sr. Anna Mae Crane* is now working at My Brother's Keeper in Irvington, Md., assisting with community development, job placement and job training.



*Sr. Bernadette Claps* has assumed the position of director of Spiritual Care and Mission. She will be interfacing with local churches and parishes in her new role as well as using her training in spiritual direction. A former social worker, Sr. Bernie has also been certified in spiritual direction.



# focus

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