

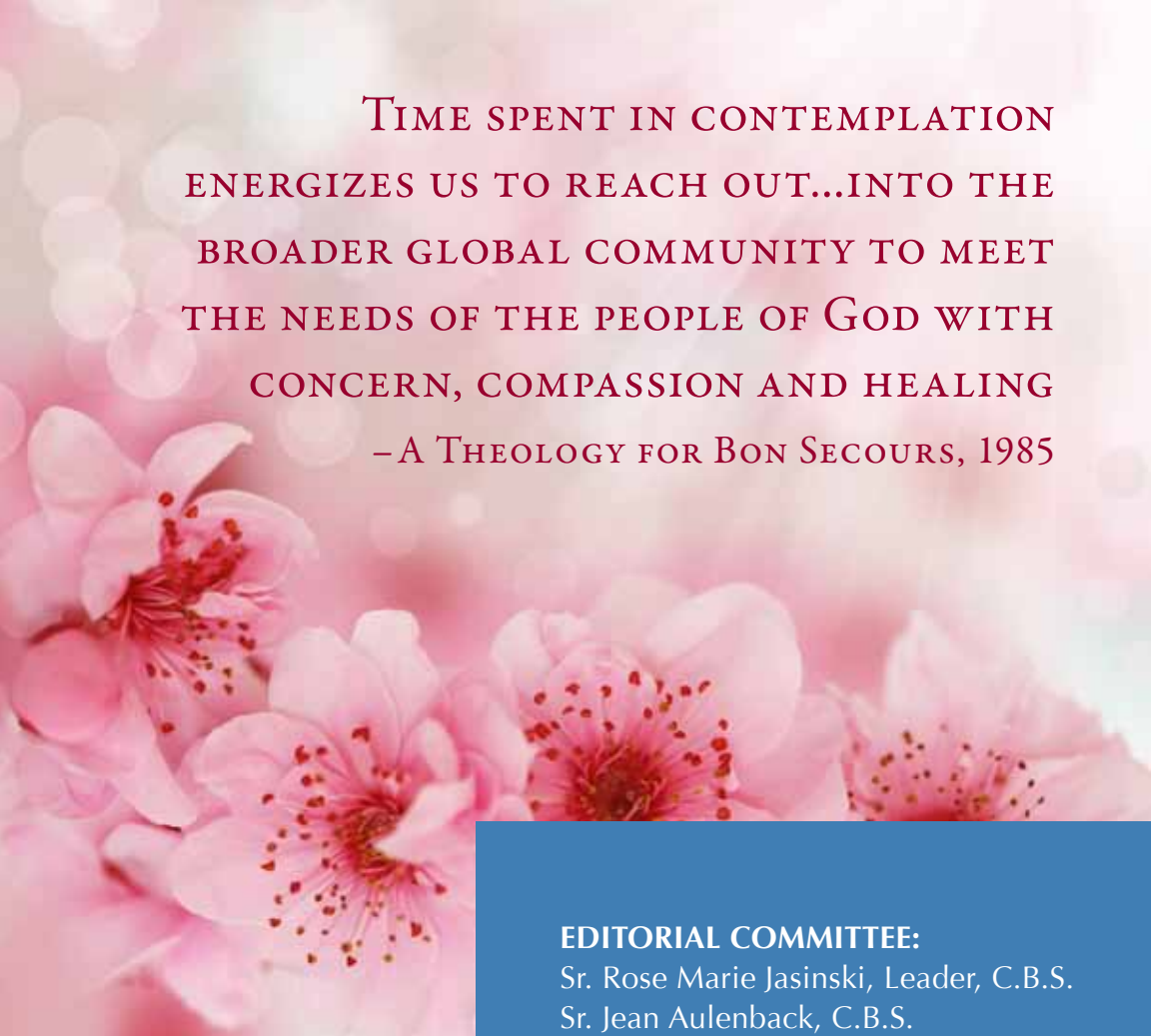
# *f*OCUS

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours

SPRING 2012



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

A background image of pink cherry blossoms in full bloom, with soft, out-of-focus petals and vibrant red centers. The flowers are arranged in a cluster, filling the upper and middle portions of the page.

TIME SPENT IN CONTEMPLATION  
ENERGIZES US TO REACH OUT...INTO THE  
BROADER GLOBAL COMMUNITY TO MEET  
THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD WITH  
CONCERN, COMPASSION AND HEALING  
– A THEOLOGY FOR BON SECOURS, 1985

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# Dear Friends



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

The last several months have been busy with many exciting travel opportunities, which allowed me to meet with our sisters and see some of our ministries around the world. I had the pleasure of attending the Congregation Team meeting in Peru in January and again had the opportunity to visit with our sisters and to see some of them in ministry. We continue to be pleased with the sense of togetherness and amount of sharing that has been achieved around the Congregation. Each country has started to work on new by-laws to reflect our new global structure; new by-laws also are being done for the entire Congregation. In February, I experienced firsthand our ministry in South Africa, where our sisters work in an antiretroviral therapy clinic helping people with HIV/AIDS as well as visiting and bringing food to poor families, orphaned children and the elderly in their homes. I saw how our mission to provide “Good Help to Those in Need®” is both needed and thriving in this part of the world. In April, we had our Congregation mid-term Assembly in Dublin, Ireland, where 115 sisters (19 from the United States) attended meetings to evaluate progress on the Congregation’s goals established at the General Chapter in 2009. We also shared experiences with each other on how we are living out the Mission Focus Statement and the revitalization for ministry.

Throughout the Congregation, January 24 is always a very special day for the Sisters of Bon Secours, marking the founding of our Congregation in 1824 in Paris, France. Bon Secours Health System also has chosen this date for employee recognition celebrations. In this issue of FOCUS, we share photos from celebrations recognizing this special day as we celebrate our 188th anniversary year. You also can read in this issue about the new name for the Bon Secours Spiritual Center. Now known as the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours, this new name better reflects the wide range of people, organizations and companies that use our center as well as the varied kinds of programs the center hosts. A wonderful celebration was held on April 26 to commemorate this new name and show off our beautiful retreat and conference center to the community.

The Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours is just one of our sponsored ministries, which have been integral to the Sisters of Bon Secours for many years, both in the United States and internationally. In this issue, we share information about our sponsored ministries, what the support of religious congregations means to these ministries, and how they relate to the Sisters of Bon Secours' mission.

I also want to express our good wishes to our Irish sisters, who recently celebrated the 150th anniversary of Bon Secours sisters in Ireland. The work and spirituality of the early sisters of Bon Secours of Paris attracted the attention of an Irish woman in Paris, Catherine O'Farrell, and, with her persuasion, in 1861, four sisters came to Ireland and established the first foundation of the Sisters of Bon Secours outside of France. These sisters brought the mission of "Good Help" and healing by caring for the sick and dying in their homes in Dublin at a time when Ireland was still suffering the effects of the Great Famine and centuries of intermittent warfare for religious and political freedom. The Sisters of Bon Secours, as they did when they came to the United States in 1881, were the first sisters to stay in homes, caring for the sick and dying for as long as was required.

And finally, I want to say, on behalf of all the sisters in the United States, congratulations to our jubilarians. Sr. Mary James is celebrating her 70th jubilee; Sr. Justine Cyr her 60th jubilee; Sr. Dorothy Brogan her 60th jubilee; and Sr. Mary Shimo her 50th jubilee. What a rich history these sisters have with the Congregation. They have given so very much to us throughout the years. We are truly blessed to have them and the special gifts they share as part of our Congregation.

Peace,



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

Leader

Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A.



## Sponsored Ministries

# MAKE OUR CONGREGATION MORE VIBRANT

Over the years, the Sisters of Bon Secours have given “Good Help to Those in Need®” in many ways. “Our commitment to sponsored ministries has been a wonderful way to extend our mission and work with other religious congregations to make an impact in many areas from schools to housing to health care,” says Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, country leader. “We would like to share with you what our contributions have meant to our sponsored ministries both in the United States and internationally.”

### MERCY HOUSING

Mercy Housing is one of the nation’s largest nonprofit affordable housing organizations serving more than 137,800 people every day. It builds new developments as well as acquires and rehabilitates existing housing. Recognizing that shelter alone is not sufficient for residents’ success and well-being, Mercy Housing also offers resident services at its properties across the country that include health classes, financial education, employment initiatives, parenting and after-school programs for children.

Nine religious communities are co-sponsors of Mercy Housing, including the Sisters of Bon Secours. “Religious communities have a long and rich history of serving those in need,” says Sr. Lillian Murphy, R.S.M., chief executive officer of Mercy Housing. “The reputation for integrity and trust our religious communities have built has helped give credence to our mission. Sisters are also traditionally risk takers and look at the needs of society today and figure out how to make things happen to meet those needs with compassion, both for today and well into the future.”

During the past 25 years, Mercy Housing has been a model for collaboration of religious ministries. “By working together, we have truly made an impact

*continued on page 8*



*A Mercy Housing Project*





*Giving "Good Help" in South Africa*



*Sisters Academy Graduation*

on many social issues and the Church as a whole," says Sr. Lillian. "The sisters also are known for defending the rights of the people and addressing their needs. Additionally, the Sisters of Bon Secours have provided thoughtful leadership to Mercy Housing and truly embraced their sponsorship. Sr. Pat Eck served as a chairperson of our board, and Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski brings her wisdom to the current board. Each religious community brings a different history and tradition to the table, making us all richer. Our core values of respect, justice and mercy reflect the missions of all our co-sponsors.

"This commitment to Mercy Housing is very important to the Sisters of Bon Secours as we align with the mission of Mercy Housing to create stable, vibrant and healthy communities for families, seniors and people with special needs, who lack the economic resources to access quality, safe housing opportunities," says Sr. Rose Marie. "Bon Secours Health System has a strong focus on building healthy communities, and housing certainly is an important part of a healthy community. Housing is also important to a person's overall health and well-being. Our sponsorship of Mercy Housing aligns very well with our overall health care ministry."

## **SISTERS ACADEMY**

Currently, Sisters Academy, which opened in September 2004, serves 63 middle-school girls from some of the poorest areas of Baltimore City. Students come with spirit and motivation and are intellectually curious and critical thinkers. At this important stage of their lives, they are forming a sense of their own identity, discovering their strengths and beginning to define their personal goals. During their four years (5th through 8th grades), students advance academically, explore their interests and acquire life skills.



They improve their scores on standardized tests and learn to play basketball or soccer. They find new ways to express themselves through art and music and even learn to cook. They provide service in the neighborhood, and the values they develop during their four years at Sisters Academy will guide their choices, actions and decisions well into the future. Sisters Academy also follows up with its students and provides support for them throughout their high school years.

Four religious congregations came together in 2002 to create this tuition-free middle school for girls in Baltimore City—the Sisters of Bon Secours, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. President of Sisters Academy Sr. Delia Dowling, S.S.N.D., credits these congregations with coming together and stepping up to do what was needed in the community. “Their common focus allowed more to be achieved together than could have been achieved separately,” says Sr. Delia. “The long history in Baltimore of all these congregations and their experience and wisdom gave immediate credibility to the school. They not only lend financial support and human resources to the project, but also remain faithful to each of their missions and continue to find new ways to be a part of the school every day.” The Sisters of Bon Secours, for example, has a day-long retreat at the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours in Marriottsville for the 8th graders. The sisters help promote the school in the community and publicly are identified with the school. Sisters Academy integrates the missions of all its sponsors and each year gives out awards to reflect the girls living out these missions. Representing the Sisters of Bon Secours is the Good Help award that is presented to a deserving student at graduation.

“The Sisters of Bon Secours’ relationship with Sisters Academy grew out of our holistic approach to life and our desire to serve the whole person, not just a person’s physical well-being. To be a sponsor of Sisters Academy is to support young girls by helping to provide resources that will ensure their continuing growth and development,” says Sr. Alice Talone. “Our charism of compassion, healing and liberation touches these girls and their families in many ways. We also try to provide ‘Good Help’ by supporting Sisters Academy functions and offering hospitality at our retreat center. In addition to my serving on the Sisters Academy board, there is also a representative from Bon Secours Health System on the board. It is truly a privilege for the Sisters of Bon Secours to give ‘Good Help’ to Sisters Academy.”

Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski comments that the Sisters of Bon Secours’ sponsorship of Sisters Academy has deep roots in our ministry in education, harkening back to Lille, France in 1825. So, it, too, is a natural alignment with our overall mission of holistic care.

## THE RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER AT BON SECOURS

Whether one is looking for a venue to host a retreat, conference or meeting, or simply looking for a place of respite, the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours is a wonderfully refreshing place to rest, relax and rejuvenate. One of the first sponsored ministries of the Sisters of Bon Secours, the center welcomes persons of all religious traditions in a true spirit of ecumenism and peace. In addition to first-class conference facilities, guest rooms, a fitness center and dining facilities, the Retreat and Conference Center provides an atmosphere of hospitality, peace and tranquility for those who wish to pray in the beautiful chapel, meditate in the Peace Garden, walk the Labyrinth, reflect by the pond, or explore and enjoy the presence of God in nature on the beautiful grounds.

“The Retreat and Conference Center is truly aligned with the Sisters of Bon Secours’ mission to help bring people to wholeness, to alleviate human suffering and to help others experience a deeper awareness of their own spirituality,” says Larry Kaskel, director of operations for the center. “Whether at a spiritual retreat or business conference, the center creates a relaxed atmosphere that provides a respite from the many demands we all encounter in our everyday lives.”

## INTERNATIONAL SPONSORED MINISTRIES

“In France, teaching and nursing have always been important ministries for the Sisters of Bon Secours,” says Sr. Nancy Glynn, who chairs the Congregation’s International Sponsorship Committee. In 1825 in Lille, France, the sisters opened a school that continues to flourish today. In the Loire Valley, our French sisters sponsor a large retirement and nursing home that includes assisted-living services and an infirmary for the sisters. These are significant commitments for the Congregation, and there is still a strong sponsorship presence in both of these ministries today.

In Peru, where the Congregation has its fastest growing number of sisters, the Madre de Cristo Health Center is flourishing and, in addition to providing an array of outpatient health services, has recently added same-day surgery as well as facilities for an overnight stay. The Bon Secours Health System, U.S.A., is helping plan an expansion of this health center as the sisters respond to the area’s great need for health care services. In a neighborhood close to the health center, the sisters sponsor a workshop that employs women from the community, helping these women develop tailoring and sewing skills. The workshop has contracts with schools, for example, to make their uniforms, and the workshop has even made clothing for Bon Secours Health System.

Recently, a new sponsored ministry in Peru was approved that will serve at-risk children. It will be located on land adjacent to the workshop. Construction is being funded by priests in Ireland who formerly did missionary work in Peru. The Faith and Joy School is a project in collaboration with the Jesuit Fathers. Located in Huancayo, which is south of Lima, the Faith and Joy School serves the poorest children in the region. Additionally, in various locations in the mountains of Peru, there are several contracts with local dioceses to provide pastoral services to the underserved people in these indigent regions of the country. In many cases, a priest visits these areas only occasionally, and the sisters represent the Church's daily presence to the people.

In England, the sisters staff a parish in Bourne End, near Beaconsfield, where the Sisters of Bon Secours formerly had a hospital. In this way, the sisters are able to continue to serve the community.

In South Africa, one of the Congregation's newer global ministries is centered around providing services to people with HIV and AIDs. Sisters of Bon Secours provide health care services to people in a clinic setting as well as in their homes. Services that include medical care, counseling, nutrition services, medication and food distribution create a supportive environment for people struggling with AIDS. Our sisters also help meet the basic needs of the refugees, families and orphans living in the village.

Sr. Nancy explains that both the United States and Ireland now have a new structure for their health care ministries, which are now sponsored by a public juridic person, rather than the Sisters of Bon Secours directly. "Our health care ministries in Ireland and the United States continue to be a significant presence within Catholic health care in both countries," says Sr. Nancy. "The sisters continue their presence and influence through membership on the boards of health system entities and by their presence in the health care facilities."

# Paving the Way for a Better Tomorrow

**Sr. Anna Mae Crane helps others through her ministry at My Brother's Keeper**



For more than 30 years, My Brother's Keeper, a faith-based ministry serving those in need in the Irvington community of Baltimore City, has been known for providing hot meals to roughly 70 people a day. However, this organization is far more than a soup kitchen, and **Sr. Anna Mae Crane** is helping play a part in My Brother's Keeper's initiative to bring about a transformation within Baltimore's inner city.

## The Road to Employment

In an effort to break the cycle of poverty, overcome addiction, and connect people with programs that offer the opportunity for a better quality of life, My Brother's Keeper offers a work development program. Sr. Anna Mae and the entire team at My Brother's Keeper are engaging with local clergy to identify those within Baltimore's Irvington area who are unemployed or underemployed.

"We look at the possible underlying reasons why people are not employed such as literacy, math skills and readiness for construction jobs," says Sr. Anna Mae. "We are working to find ways to get them trained and ready, especially with construction for the new red metro line through Baltimore slated to begin in 2014."

Through the workforce development program, My Brother's Keeper provides neighborhood residents with information about local job openings through a weekly job posting board. Guests are invited to attend weekly group sessions on employment-related topics such as online job searches, resumé writing and workforce development programs in Baltimore City.

## Community Building

As a grassroots organization, My Brother's Keeper works with Baltimore City agencies, other nonprofit programs, local businesses, neighborhood associations and churches to affect change. This change is not limited to changing thoughts and behaviors toward employment and job training; it is also about improving the health and well-being of those who live in the Irvington community.



Under the leadership of Father Michael Murphy, chair of My Brother's Keepers' board of directors and chaplain at Mount Saint Joseph High School in Baltimore, the organization has begun to lay the foundation for providing access to needed medical care.

"We engage in community meetings with neighborhood associations and local churches to identify the health issues faced by those who are uninsured or underinsured," explains Sr. Anna Mae. "Fr. Mike Murphy has a good partnership with St. Agnes Hospital through which he is encouraging physicians and nurses to volunteer in the area." These efforts to engage local health care professionals add to the ongoing health-related services that My Brother's Keeper provides including prescription assistance, medical co-payments, therapy and mental health referrals.

For Sr. Anna Mae, the wide range of social services that My Brother's Keeper provides speak directly to the mission, vision and charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours. "Providing 'Good Help' is rooted in the very name of our Congregation, and My Brother's Keeper is dedicated to providing those in need with the services and resources they require," says Sr. Anna Mae. "This awareness of the needs of others and taking action on their behalf is integral not only to what we do as sisters, but also to what is done on a daily basis at My Brother's Keeper."

At My Brother's Keeper, the focus goes beyond just helping those in need; the organization aims to empower individuals. Like the ancient proverb "Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime," My Brother's Keeper aims to provide those living in the Irvington community with the ability to raise themselves up. "This reaffirms their dignity as persons for they have the capacity to do amazing things, and we are paving the way for them to do so," says Sr. Anna Mae.

***If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at My Brother's Keeper, visit [www.mybrotherskeeperbaltimore.org](http://www.mybrotherskeeperbaltimore.org).***



# Giving *Good Help* to Children with Disabilities

*Sr. Marie-Claude Dupuis Reflects on Her Ministry in Paris*



**Sr. Marie-Claude Dupuis**, a Sister of Bon Secours in France, has been ministering for 22 years in Paris at L'Institut d'Education Motrice, sponsored by the Order of St. John of God, as an AMP (Aide Medico Psychologique/ medical-psychological helper). Sr. Marie-Claude works as part of a multidisciplinary team composed of teachers, educators, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and psychologists.

L' Institut d'Education Motrice serves 95 children, adolescents and young adults with mobility impairments whose origin can be cerebral, muscular or from other causes. These young people also may have associated disorders such as those impacting language or memory. Their disabilities often cause learning difficulties that require intervention by a multidisciplinary team. For these children and teenagers, who cannot benefit from mainstream education, the goal is to construct a customized teaching plan that corresponds to their expectations, needs and capabilities. This is accomplished by implementing a social and educational support and therapy plan that is adapted to the person's needs with the goal being to allow the person as much autonomy as possible.

"I have a long history of supporting young people with disabilities and being with them from sunrise to sunset to help in all aspects of their daily life. I help with such functions as eating and bathing as well as helping them to participate in various activities at school and during their leisure time, such as dining out or going to a museum," says Sr. Marie-Claude.

Given the training she received in nursing school, Sr. Marie-Claude can perform medical tasks such as an endotracheal aspiration of a young person with myopathy. She becomes very close to the young people she works with and helps them acquire or maintain their independence. She truly lives out the Sisters of Bon Secours' charism of healing, liberation and compassion.

"I find myself really living out the charism of our Congregation everyday, working with these young people as well as living the values of the Order of St. John of God, which are hospitality, listening, respect and solidarity," says Sr. Marie-Claude.

# *A Call within a Call*

## *Sr. Bernadette Claps' Evolving Ministry*



Life is ever changing, always evolving, never static. Even when we think we are settled and know the life path before us, God has a way of leading us further, urging us on to develop our gifts in new ways in the service of God's people. This has been the experience of **Sr. Bernadette Claps** who recently began her new position as manager of spiritual care and mission at the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours.

Sr. Bernie, as she likes to be called, has spent her life as a social worker, a profession that has given her wonderful opportunities to work with children, adults, families, people with disabilities and the economically poor. In her various roles as case worker, therapist and administrator, she felt a call to be of "Good Help to Those in Need<sup>®</sup>" even before she knew of the Sisters of Bon Secours and their charism of compassion, healing and liberation.

When she began to feel that God was calling her to something more, the urging led her to the Sisters of Bon Secours, whose charism resonated with her personal and professional values. After prayerful discernment and an act of trust in God, she entered the Sisters of Bon Secours in 2006.

Since joining the sisters, her work, now her ministry, has continued in the area of social services in Baltimore. This included working with homeless and at-risk women in the Bon Secours Women's Resource Center. This ministry was one of presence, acceptance, hospitality and assistance in meeting basic needs of the women as well as helping these women access social services, education, counseling and other programs that would help them stabilize and improve their lives.

Before starting her current ministry, she served at two Bon Secours independent living apartment buildings. One building has apartments for seniors and the other is for seniors and people with disabilities. The goal was to assist tenants in accessing benefits and services that would enable them to live independently, safely and with dignity. This ministry was also one of presence, listening and accompaniment.

Sr. Bernie sees her ministry as an evolving vocation. It was one that evolved from God's work in her life. It stirred her desire to want to live her life as a sister focused on God's message of love and serving God's people in ways that God would lead.

## CELEBRATING 70 YEARS



### *Sr. Mary James Keating*

Sr. Mary James Keating was born in Bethlehem, Pa. She worked as a bookkeeper for the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company before entering the community. Her first contact with the Sisters of Bon Secours came when she told her parish priest that she wanted to become a nurse.

Sr. Mary James entered the Novitiate in 1942, and graduated from the Bon Secours School of Nursing in 1947. She served the sick in Grosse Pointe, Mich.; Methuen, Mass.; Darby and Rosemont, Pa.; Wildwood, N.J.; and Richmond, Va. She became a registered X-ray technician in 1958 and served in this capacity for many years.

Sr. Mary James ministered at the Osteopathic Medical College Hospital in Philadelphia, Pa., for 17 years. She also did home nursing as well as visiting the sick and elderly until her retirement in 2003. “By caring for the sick in their homes, I have been able to carry on the original charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours,” says Sr. Mary James.

## CELEBRATING 60 YEARS



### *Sr. Justine Cyr*

Sr. Justine Cyr knew she wanted to become a religious, and the warmth and kindness of the Sisters of Bon Secours led her to become a sister in 1952. “It was the humanness of the sisters I met that influenced my decision to become a part of Congregation of Bon Secours,” says Sr. Justine. A 1957 graduate of the Bon Secours School of Nursing, she served for many years at Bon Secours’ hospitals nationwide, first as pediatric

head nurse in Baltimore, Md. and Methuen, Mass.; then as director of Nursing Services at Methuen, Mass., and Grosse Pointe, Mich.; and finally as administrator at Grosse Pointe. In 1964, she earned her bachelor’s in nursing.

From 1973–77, she was health facilities coordinator for the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A., and was instrumental in creating Bon Secours Health System. During those years, she also held the positions of provincial councillor and provincial secretary and treasurer. From 1979–89, she served two terms as provincial of the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A. She served as Assistant Superior General of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris from 1977-79 and Superior General from 1989–2000, living in Rome and Paris.



After her 11 years abroad, Sr. Justine returned to Marriottsville, where she took a well-earned sabbatical. She received her master's degree in spiritual and pastoral services from Loyola University in 2002. Throughout her time as a sister, Sr. Justine has held several positions at health service-related organizations throughout the United States. From 1983–89, she served as chairperson for Bon Secours, Inc. and Bon Secours Health System. From 1985–89, she was the chairperson for the National Steering Committee on Catholic Health Care Ministry and the U.S. chair for the Commission on Catholic Health Care Ministry, U.S.A. There, her work led to the creation of the National Coalition on Catholic Health Care, U.S.A. She has also served as a board member for the Catholic Health Association, U.S.A., in St. Louis, Mo.; the Center of Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) in Washington, D.C.; Caritas Christi Health System in Boston, Mass.; and the Bon Secours Michigan Health Corporation.

“All of the services that I have been privileged to offer to individuals in ministry and community, to the Congregation and outside organizations related to the Church as well as the opportunity to continue the healing ministry of Christ have been most rewarding,” she says.

## CELEBRATING 60 YEARS



*Sr. Dorothy Brogan*

Born in Ireland, Sr. Dorothy Brogan entered the Sisters of Bon Secours in 1952 and took her final vows in 1960. She has served the Congregation in many ways in many places. She first worked as a licensed practical nurse in Pennsylvania at Our Lady Help of Christians and Villa St. Joseph as well as at Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Mass. A graduate of the Camillus School of Practical Nursing, she took graduate courses at Holy Cross Hospital Health Care Ministry and the Institute of Music and Imagery.

From 1976–80, Sr. Dorothy was vocation director for the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A., and, in 1981, Sr. Dorothy became a pastoral associate in Richmond. While in Richmond, she was on both the Congregation's Provincial General Assembly Planning Committee and the task force for the Ministry of Spirituality. She was the local coordinator for the sisters in Richmond and on the board of directors of St. Mary's Health Corporation and St. John's Hospital. In 1989, Sr. Dorothy took a sabbatical year at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., in a program that focused on leadership.

In 1992, Sr. Dorothy began preparing to go to the Sisters of Bon Secours' mission in Riobamba, Ecuador, where she ministered to the poor in the barrio. After returning from Ecuador, she participated in a Spanish parish ministry in Miami before launching a new ministry in the Hospice of Charlotte in Port Charlotte, Fla. In 2000, Sr. Dorothy

became hospice chaplain in Greenville, S.C., and subsequently chaplain of the Palliative Care team there. Her work with hospice and palliative care patients continues today in Greenville, where she is part of the Inpatient Palliative Care team and serves as its chaplain. She also makes home pastoral visits to people who may live alone, be in the end stages of their life or need to make end-of-life decisions.

“My journey in religious life has opened many doors of opportunity and challenge through which I have grown personally, spiritually and professionally,” says Sr. Dorothy, who has also been a member of the Sisters of Bon Secours Vocation Formation team and serves as president of Bon Secours St. Francis Health System Foundation and on the local health system’s ethics committee. “I am very blessed and received a wonderful gift to be able to follow in the footsteps of all the Sisters of Bon Secours who came before me. My ministry directly reflects the mission and charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours as most of my ministry has involved ministering to the sick and dying in both institutional and home settings through my work with hospice and palliative care patients and their families. In my ministry with the sick and dying, I often receive more than I give, and I see God’s work very alive in the faith and courage of the sick. I also am blessed to have my community of sisters, who have taken the journey with me throughout all these many years.”

## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



*Sr. Mary Shimo*

Sr. Mary Shimo speaks of the wonderful opportunities she has had as a Sister of Bon Secours, both in terms of the education she has gotten and the experiences she has had. “No one could have anticipated all the things I have done from nursing to being a chaplain to running a hospital gift shop for six years. It has been a journey of surprises with so many places and directions I never would have thought to go,” says Sr. Mary. For

the past 12 years, she has coordinated the volunteers-student programs at Bon Secours Baltimore Health System. This involves overseeing the volunteer program and the affiliations with area schools as part of the hospital’s student clinical internship program. “One of the things I really like about working in a hospital is that I still have the opportunity to use my chaplaincy skills in many ways,” she says.

Sr. Mary Shimo entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in 1962 and professed her final vows in 1971. She received her bachelor’s degree in nursing science from the University of Maryland and her Master of Arts in religion and medical care from George Washington University. She has also taken many courses in theology, parish ministry and pastoral care.



She started her nursing career at Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore on the rehabilitation unit, where she ministered for five years. Following her nursing career, Sr. Mary became a chaplain and, in 1977, became a pastoral associate at St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond. In 1983, she returned to Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore as director of pastoral care. From 1990–2000, she served as director of pastoral care at Carroll County General Hospital in Maryland, returning to Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore in 2000 as volunteer coordinator.

An active member of the Congregation, Sr. Mary has chaired the Sisters of Bon Secours Jubilee Celebration, been on the vocation team, chaired the Provincial General Assembly Committee, and has served two terms on the Sisters of Bon Secours' United States Leadership Team. She has been chair, co-chair and a member of many committees and is now a member of the United States Finance Committee. She also served as president of the Washington Village Community Medical Center board in Baltimore from 1983–92. Sr. Mary is known as the “keeper of the archives,” and has built and maintained a wonderful history of the Congregation that is housed in Marriottsville. She is currently on the Bon Secours Baltimore Health System board and the national Bon Secours Health System board of directors.

In 2009, Sr. Mary Shimo was named secretary to the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris and has traveled with the Congregation Leadership Team to meetings in Peru, France and Ireland to take minutes. “This is a wonderful opportunity to get to see Bon Secours in all the ways it is expressed and experienced in other cultures,” says Sr. Mary.

You also might find Sr. Mary at an Orioles' baseball game or cheering for the Ravens during their seasons. Her annual Super Bowl parties have become a tradition with her Bon Secours sisters. Knitting baby afghans, which she sells to benefit the Baltimore ministries, and lap covers for patients also keeps her fingers busy. She has a wonderful sense of humor that is often seen in her emails and in her pleasant disposition.

# SISTERS OF BON SECOURS CELEBRATE FOUNDERS' DAY

ON JANUARY 24



January 24 is a very special day for the Sisters of Bon Secours and is commemorated both here in the United States and by our international sisters. Following the French Revolution, France was in a state of upheaval and devastation with widespread poverty, and 12 women living in Paris became aware of the need to care for the sick and dying. This group of women began to nurse the sick and dying in their homes day and night, demonstrating God's healing presence through compassionate care.

The group chose Josephine Potel as their leader, and, on January 24, 1824, made their final profession as the Sisters of Bon Secours in the Church of St. Sulpice in Paris. News of the group's spirituality and the "Good Help" they offered spread, and other young women joined the Congregation. As the Congregation spread throughout France, these spirit-filled women became known for their dedication to Christ and devotion to the sick and suffering of all classes and religions.

Today, the Sisters of Bon Secours throughout the world celebrate January 24 and remember these brave sisters and the rich heritage they gave us. Throughout Bon Secours Health System, in local systems around the country, there were celebrations involving a Mass and a celebratory event. At the Country Leadership Office and the Health System Office, both located in Marriottsville, January 24 was marked by having a service award luncheon to recognize long-term employees.



*Sisters of Bon Secours in Mariottsville celebrate long-term employees with a luncheon and service award ceremony. Jean Hoffman was honored for five years of service, and Debbie Jenkins and Shelby Fiem, who work on Marian Hall with our retired sisters, were honored for 10 years of service.*

*The Health System Office holds its service award ceremony on Founders' Day. Pictured (l. to r.) are Rich Statuto, president and CEO, BSHSI; Robin Ratchford, who received his 40-year service award pin; Sr. Anne Lutz, executive vice president of Sponsorship, BSHSI; and Skip Hubbard, senior vice president/ chief information officer, BSHSI.*



*Founders' Day was celebrated at Bon Secours Kentucky Health System with a special Mass. Pictured are Kevin Halter, CEO, and Marguerite Gilner, VP, Mission.*



*Congregation Leader Sr. Pat Eck (standing) celebrates Founders' Day in Ireland with Srs. Delores Russell, Lua Lordan and Teresa Ann.*



# GIVING WITNESS TO LIFE AS A SISTER

## Ongoing Vocation Formation Outreach

*Who are the Sisters of Bon Secours?*

*What does religious life entail?*

*Is religious life as a Sister of  
Bon Secours for me?*

As the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours looks to its future, the answers to these questions are a fundamental part of discerning a vocation to religious life with the Sisters of Bon Secours. During the last six months, the Vocation Office has been busy, from attending World Youth Day (WYD) in August to planning the International Vocation Formation Summit this past December to coordinating the inaugural meeting of the VIII (Vocations: Identify, Initiate, Invite) Team. These activities are part of an ongoing and coordinated outreach effort to help women learn more about the Sisters of Bon Secours and the call to religious life.

### *World Youth Day*

According to **Sr. Pat Dowling**, vocation director for the Sisters of Bon Secours, U.S.A., roughly two million young adults from around the world participated in the 2011 World Youth Day, which was held in Madrid, Spain, this past August. Sr. Pat, along with two Bon Secours sisters—Sr. Elena from Peru and Sr. Rosa from South Africa—were able to promote vocations and help young adults learn more about the Sisters of Bon Secours.

*“This event enabled us to convey our love for life as consecrated religious and to educate young people that it is still a valid, viable life choice today,” explains Sr. Pat. “It was exciting to see the enthusiasm of these young adults who gathered to celebrate their faith as Roman Catholics, to experience the Church in another way and to learn about options as they search for their own path in life.”*





This event also marked a significant milestone as it was the first event that the Bon Secours country vocation directors collaborated on internationally. “Our collaboration was a witness to the richness of global diversity that we have as an

international community,” says Sr. Pat. “Attending WYD was not only about reaching out and connecting with young adults and having contact with those potentially considering religious life, but also it was a pilgrimage that gave us the opportunity to participate and learn. And one of the most powerful lessons learned from WYD was the message of hope as we gave witness to our life choice as women religious and saw young adults from around the world unite through their faith in Jesus Christ.

### ***International Vocation Formation Summit***

The sense of hope for the future continued at the International Vocation Formation Summit held in Maryland in December. The 18 sisters and two associates, who came from four countries, were tasked with five specific items to address:

1. Developing a Congregation-wide vocation plan
2. Looking at how to better accompany new members in formation across the Congregation
3. Identifying a structure for an international program for second-year novices and for temporarily professed sisters
4. Building relationships with sisters in vocation and formation ministries within the Congregation
5. Analyzing religious life today in the context of inviting, welcoming and accompanying new members into the Congregation

*“The summit was very successful,” says Sr. Pat. “Summit participants felt energized and left with a common vision for vocation and formation. Plans are currently under review by the Congregation and Country Leadership teams. These plans were shared with the sisters at the mid-term Congregation Assembly in Dublin in April.”*

However, for Sr. Pat, the success of the summit went beyond plans and goals. “There was a sense of unity and solidarity as we came together to work on common goals. We found much in common in our vocation and formation experiences, even in the midst of our global diversity. We definitely were energized as we came together to envision our future, which gives us great hope.”



## **Team VIII**

Through each of the activities that the Vocation and Formation offices have been involved in during recent months, the overarching theme is the need to invite and welcome new members to the Congregation. While this is a role that Sr. Pat acknowledges each sister must play, she has formed a team of eight sisters, the VIII Team, who are specifically charged with expanding vocation efforts by identifying and inviting women to consider a vocation as a Sister of Bon Secours.



The VIII Team members (Srs. Dorothy Brogan, Bernie Claps, Pat Dowling, Fran Gorsuch, Peggy Mathewson, Vicky Segura, Alice Talone and Chris Webb) held their inaugural meeting in February. During this meeting, they talked about their role as a team, expressed their hopes to promote vocations, and brainstormed ways in which to invite women to consider a vocation and learn more about the Sisters of Bon Secours. Each member of the team will develop and nurture personal relationships with individuals considering a vocation as well as animate sisters and others to participate in outreach initiatives.

*“We, as a team, are excited and enthusiastic to make a difference,” says Sr. Pat. “We want to get people fired up about the Sisters of Bon Secours to plant seeds in others to personally invite others to consider religious life as a Sister of Bon Secours.”*

The team outlined five specific ways to plant seeds for the future: 1.) praying for an increase in vocations, 2.) working with the local parish to create a vocation committee that would include parishioners, 3.) participating in new employee orientations, 4.) welcoming groups visiting the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours, and 5.) revisiting associates and co-workers to discuss ways in which they can help promote vocations.

*“Making a personal connection with women who may be considering a call to consecrated religious life is a key to the future of the Sisters of Bon Secours, and we invite all those connected with Bon Secours to participate in this effort,” stresses Sr. Pat.*

***If you would like to help others learn about the Sisters of Bon Secours and the life of women religious or if you would like to talk to Sr. Pat Dowling to understand if you are called to religious life, please contact CBSVocations@bshsi.org or 410-442-3172. You also can visit [www.BonSecoursVocations.org](http://www.BonSecoursVocations.org).***

# Come & See *Bon Secours* the Sisters of

Come & See weekends are for single, Catholic women who want to explore the possibility of religious life: come and be with sisters, receive input on our life, have time for reflection on your call and be with other women who are also exploring their call.

## 2012 Come and See Weekend Dates:

June 8–10  
October 19–21

For more information, visit [BonSecoursVocations.org](http://BonSecoursVocations.org). Our website features a new video, **A Mission of Hope and Healing in South Africa**, that details the ministry of the sisters in Limpopo, South Africa, where they continue to work with HIV/AIDS patients, women in need, refugees and orphans. Join us on Sisters Chat to explore religious life; times are listed on our homepage. You can also access a variety of social media outlets of which the Sisters of Bon Secours are a part. Join us online:

[www.facebook.com/BonSecoursVocations](http://www.facebook.com/BonSecoursVocations)  
<http://twitter.com/patthenun>  
<http://youtube.com/user/cbsvocations>



## Sisters of Bon Secours' *2012 Project Good Help Program* August 2–8, Marriottsville, MD

For single Catholic women, ages 19–35, with a willingness to serve those in need as volunteers in Baltimore City. Come share your gifts; build relationships with the families, children and elderly you serve; work as a team in a community garden, drop-in center for women, family support/learning center, soup kitchen and senior housing. Each day will also be bathed in prayer and reflection as you share this experience working with sisters and learn how you can apply it to your life.

Visit [www.BonSecoursVocations.org/Project-Good-Help](http://www.BonSecoursVocations.org/Project-Good-Help) to download the PDF application. Call Sr. Fran Gorsuch at 201-791-3593 for more information.

## *Pray with Us*

The Sisters of Bon Secours recently published its 2012 prayer book. Contact [CBSVocations@bshsi.org](mailto:CBSVocations@bshsi.org) or 877-742-0277 if you are interested in receiving a copy via mail. Copies of the prayer book also are available in brochure racks throughout the Marriottsville campus.

You can also download copies of the 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 prayer books on our website; visit [www.BonSecoursVocations.org](http://www.BonSecoursVocations.org) and select the prayer book you would like to see.



# LIVING OUR MISSION



**Tate Hamblen** is the unit secretary and monitor technician for the Cardiovascular Stepdown Unit at Bon Secours St. Francis–Downtown in Greenville, S.C. He joined Bon Secours Health System 14 years ago as the unit secretary for the Intensive Care Unit at St. Francis. Tate has been instrumental in the implementation of new standards of care for patients, which has contributed to an increase in patient satisfaction scores on his unit.

*“The mission of Bon Secours allows me to be myself, while being with patients I care for. It supports my beliefs of compassionate care, respecting all, and providing excellent and quality care to all those in need. I have grown spiritually and emotionally by caring for a diverse group of patients with their unique attributes, personalities and needs. I hope to continue this mission for many years!”*

**Rose Kurtz** has served as the manager of guest services at the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours in Marriottsville, Md., for the last three years. She oversees the welcome center staff and works in cooperation with both the food and beverage and housekeeping/maintenance departments to assure guests are taken care of during their stay at the center. Prior to working at the retreat and conference center, Rose was the parish business manager at St. Anthony’s Catholic Church in Baltimore, Md.



*“The sisters’ mission of revealing God’s compassion, healing and liberation to all whom we meet and serve means a lot to me. I have had many opportunities to be healing hospitality to those in need. Working at the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours, I feel empowered to do whatever is necessary to provide ‘Good Help.’ It could mean giving someone a hug who starts crying after you have helped them get their luggage to their room or sitting with someone who was in a car accident the night before and has no family with them. The greatest compliment I received from a guest who I assisted was that she saw the face of Jesus in me by my actions. It is during the times when I am able to show compassion to our guests that I feel like I was in the right place at the right time to do God’s will.”*

**Robin Ratchford** is vice president of enterprise application services for Bon Secours Health System. He joined the health system 40 years ago as a dietary clerk for Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond, Va. In the last four decades, Robin has held the positions of manager of medical units, clinical systems analyst and director of Lawson Systems integration, among other positions.



*“I have been privileged during the past 40 years to personally participate in the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours within our organization. From the start of my career with Bon Secours, the sisters sought to bring healing to the whole person. Their holistic vision of a patient as body, mind and spirit as well as their continued mission to extend ‘Good Help to Those in Need’ inspires me on a daily basis. I also have appreciated the opportunity to grow in our organization with the support of the sisters and management. For these opportunities I am very grateful. In addition, seeing sisters and lay personnel care for patients in our facilities is very special to me. The mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours has touched my life and is making a difference in our communities on a daily basis!”*



**Vicki Wolbert** is the facilities lead for the Health System Office in Marriottsville, Md. She has served the Bon Secours Health System for the last 12 years. In her position, she helps with the administrative and operational functions of the buildings, including maintaining buildings and equipment, replenishing kitchen and office supplies, coordinating shipping and mailing services and setting up conference rooms, among her other duties.

*“Some of us lack the talents to make a difference in this world, but, by being a part of this community, I have been given the privilege of serving those who serve others. I’m blessed with the opportunity to work for a company where the bottom line isn’t about the stockholders, but about the people in need they can serve. The history of the sisters and their continuing daily examples of humility, caring and love touch me every day.”*

# ASSOCIATES

## *Attend Dublin Assembly*

A special assembly of the Sisters of Bon Secours was held in Dublin, Ireland, at the Emmaus House, from April 14–16, 2012. The theme of these meetings was entitled, “Were Not our Hearts on Fire?” At these meetings, the sisters explored how the Congregation’s structural changes, implemented since the Chapter in Rome two years ago, have been experienced, as well as how the sisters have begun living out the new Mission Focus Statement.

This was an exciting opportunity for associates to be part of the conversation about recent changes and future plans for the Congregation. Each country was invited to send two associate representatives to participate in the assembly. Representing the associates from the United States was Finola Steiner, an associate with a Lifetime Commitment from Richmond, Va., and Amy Kulesa, director of the United States Associates, from Maryland.

“It’s been a great blessing for me to be an associate,” says Finola. “I try to follow the sisters’ mission of giving ‘Good Help to Those in Need®’ and their values. My hope for the sisters and associates is that they will continue to serve others with their compassion, to spread the charism of Bon Secours, and also have more vocations. I am honored to have the opportunity to go to Ireland for this assembly.”

There was ample time, during and between meetings, for sisters and associates to spend time together and renew their bonds of friendship. The associates looked forward to a special meeting reserved just for them and the liaison sisters, who work closely with the associates. Reports of each group’s experiences and activities were shared, so that there could be a cross-pollination of creative ideas to take home to local groups. Each country’s associate group has a unique “flavor” and brought something to share to enrich the whole gathering.

“It was a great privilege to be able to be a part of these meetings,” says Amy Kulesa. “We thank the sisters for including the Bon Secours associates in such a special way by inviting us to participate in the discussions and sharing what took place at the assembly.”



# HEARTS WIDE OPEN

*by Sarah Ceponis, Bon Secours Ministry Volunteer*



Nine months ago during my graduation weekend, I sat in an audience of students committed to post-graduate service and listened as a speaker shared with us her thoughts on our coming year. Though not all her words stuck that day, I do remember those she borrowed from renowned Irish poet Seamus Heaney. From his poem “Postscript,” she read: “You are neither here nor there/ A hurry through which known and strange things pass/As big soft buffetings come at the car sideways/And catch the heart off guard and blow it open.”

For me and my three roommates in the Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry program (Katie McDonald, Maureen McElligott and Brittney Weisner), we are living Heaney’s poetry this year. We are “neither here nor there” not in a scattered sense, but in the sense that we occupy two worlds at once. Half our hearts—our upbringings, our families, many friends—lie in comfortable suburbs hundreds of miles and infinite degrees of difference away. The other halves of our hearts have become deeply rooted in a whole new world: that of Southwest Baltimore. We have found in this place, under decaying facades—the littered sidewalks, the boarded-up buildings—a vibrant community, a spirited population, a place at once able to push our boundaries and also able to pull us completely in.

Again and again, we have found ourselves surprised, one might say, by the “big soft buffetings” we encounter in our workplaces. An emergency room patient recently told Katie, upon hearing she only worked there until July, “Well, I’ll have to come back a lot before then.” And every few weeks, Maureen comes home bearing two or three puzzles as gifts; an elderly woman she serves has almost nothing, but somehow comes up with something to give. When a hospital health fair had leftover decorations, Brittney traveled to patient rooms handing them out, and even an old man, gravely ill in bed, said yes, he would love a red heart balloon. At the Family Support Center a few weeks ago, I stood and watched a barely 3 year old comfort her tiny, crying baby sister, saying: “Ji’Yah, don’t cry. You’re ok. Mommy’s in class. I’m here now. I love you—really. Don’t cry.”

Moments like these—of irony and puzzles, of red balloons and unconditional love—dazzle us. They are things we might have deemed strange in our old world, but these things are now fitting and known in our new world, now known in our hearts. For us volunteers, if the landscape of our past is “there,” and the streets of our present “here,” we truly do reside in an in-between this year. It is not hazy or disorienting; the edge of a canyon between two worlds is a perfect place to find fresh air.

When the 6 year old I babysat asked me, before I left for Baltimore, what “doing service” was, I told him a definition in the simplest terms I could think of: “It’s holding hands with someone you don’t know.” Now I would tell him it is that and much more. It is surrendering your heart. To borrow the words of Seamus Heaney, “It is letting your heart be caught off guard and blown open.”

*Sarah Ceponis is doing her volunteer ministry year working at Bon Secours Family Support Center in the child development room with children ages 2 months to 4 years old. Two of the other ministry volunteers work at Bon Secours Hospital, and the fourth volunteer is a community health worker with TeleHeart. All are doing their ministry volunteer year in Baltimore.*

REFLECT. REGROUP.

*Recharge.*



Spring is a time to renew and recharge, and the Bon Secours Spiritual Center has done just that! On April 26, an exciting event took place; with much anticipation, 1525 Marriottsville Road is now known as the **Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours**. The evening of celebration included good food, fellowship, entertainment and tours of the facility. The unveiling of the revised logo and website marked the official launch of the new identity and focus of the center. An updated sign marks the driveway, announcing upcoming events and inviting passersby to visit.

This change did not happen overnight. The planning started in January of 2011 under the direction of Larry Kaskel, director of Operations. With an eye on expanding the business model, careful consideration was given to how to broaden the center's exposure to new guests while still maintaining the peacefulness that all feel as they drive up the hill to the Retreat and Conference Center. A new logo and tag line, *Reflect. Regroup. Recharge.*, captures the opportunities available to guests as they experience a retreat, seminar, board meeting or professional development days. New brochures convey the opportunities for groups looking to plan a business conference or workshop and for groups looking to host a spiritual retreat.

The Retreat and Conference Center expanded its range of services this past spring, conducting continuing education classes for social workers and funeral directors. With approval from the state boards for industries, the offerings assisted those professionals in obtaining educational credits needed to maintain their state licensure. The center looks to continue this endeavor with these professional groups as well as expand its offerings to others.



The Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours is looking forward to hosting two national speakers in 2012: Edwina Gateley will present “Mystics, Rebels, and Prophets: Women Who Have Gone Before Us and Walk With Us Today” from August 12–18, and Joyce Rupp, SM, will present “Institute of Compassionate Presence” from September 23–27. To register for these events, visit [www.RCCBonSecours.com](http://www.RCCBonSecours.com) or call 410-442-3120.



## BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM'S COMMITMENT TO HEALTHIER EMPLOYEES: IT ALL ADDS UP

Almost two years ago, Bon Secours Health System (BSHSI) embarked on an initiative to develop a long-term plan for improved employee health care. The initiative was driven by impending changes resulting from the newly adopted federal health reforms set to take effect in 2014, and by rapidly escalating health care costs facing both employees and BSHSI. "We knew we had to do something," explains Laura Ostroff, vice president for BSHSI's benefits and human resources information system.

Representatives from across local Bon Secours systems convened to develop the new strategy. Early on in the process, it became obvious that Bon Secours' employee health status was below the national norm. Further, their work showed that for every one percent of costs reduced, BSHSI could save \$5 million to be redeployed to other critical parts of the Strategic Quality Plan.

Healthier employees would not only help save this money, but also enhance the quality of life for employees as well as helping BSHSI take the lead in bringing health and healing to our patients and communities. As a result, the "Healthy Me, Healthy You" employee wellness initiative was born.

### **"Healthy Me, Healthy You" is Born**

The concept first rolled out in March 2011 with the first Commitment Day, where all employees were asked to make a commitment to better health. It was quickly followed by a Personal Health Assessment (PHA) last spring, which was available to all employees to "Know Your Numbers." More than 90 percent of BSHSI employees who enrolled in the BSHSI health plan completed their PHA, encouraged by an \$800 credit in their health care coverage costs. This allowed BSHSI, for the first time, to see aggregated data about the health of employees and to begin to pinpoint where best to place resources.

The findings were startling but provided a good place to start. According to the PHA, more than half of all BSHSI employees are overweight with almost half reporting a sedentary lifestyle. One third of BSHSI employees are hypertensive, one quarter have high cholesterol, and 16 percent reported high stress levels.

The scope of the initiative quickly broadened with the appointment of John Bowe as the health system's director of employee health and wellness, followed by the creation of an Employee Health and Well-being Committee. The committee, with representatives from across the health system, is charged with leveraging BSHSI initiatives and resources to shape the organization's agenda for creating a culture of employee health and well-being.



## Aggregate Employee Health Profile Drives Initiatives

Furthermore, every local Bon Secours health system received an aggregated profile of their employees' health based on the PHA findings. Each was charged with developing a three-year, board-approved plan for improving their employees' health, based on the findings. Short-term incentives were put in place, and employee wellness measures were added to the overall monthly performance dashboards in order to ensure active involvement by all.

In addition, an employee Accountable Care Organization (ACO) has been created to address diabetes and hypertension in Virginia. In South Carolina, progress continues on a diabetes pilot with Michelin, and there is a renewed focus on disease management for employees with chronic disease.

How are employees responding? They are beginning to commit to better health and share their successes. Leslie Alexander, manager, managed care at Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital, part of the Bon Secours Kentucky Health System, attended the hospital's wellness fair in April 2011, where she learned about the new points-counting system that Weight Watchers offers. In the February issue of BSHSI's Good Choices newsletter, Leslie reported she has lost 33 pounds as of mid-January and is on target to lose 17 more. "My body mass index (BMI) is now 28, compared to 32 last April," says Leslie. "My good cholesterol (HDL) is up 16 points, and my total cholesterol/HDL ration has improved 3.6 points, going from 8.4 to 4.8."

## Healthy Me, Healthy You is Expanding

Last month, BSHSI celebrated its second annual Commitment Day, "It All Adds Up," encouraging employees to recommit or commit for the first time to taking small steps that add to better health. Tips for finding time and eating healthier on the job were also shared.

So what's ahead? In the next year, plans are taking shape for more incentives for healthier lifestyles built into the employee health plan, improvements in nutrition in the cafeteria and vending machines, a focus on encouraging all employees to have a primary care physician, and efforts to provide additional employee activities throughout the year.

*"We are just beginning to scratch the surface of what we can do," says John Bowe. "We are learning from the PHA data and listening to what employees want in order to keep up the momentum on this initiative. We are in it for the long haul."*





# *Ministry Grant Fund Awards*

## *\$87,500 in Grants*

The Sisters of Bon Secours Ministry Grant Fund awarded \$87,500 in grants to Access Carroll, Inc.; Family Support Center; Healthy Families Building Health Communities; and Healing Hearts.

**Access Carroll, Inc.**, a patient-centered medical home that provides free primary health care and adjunct medical services to uninsured and low-income residents of Carroll County, Md., received \$25,000. Because Access Carroll is a health care home, rather than an episodic health care provider, it enables patients to receive consistent and timely health care services. This funding will help extend the care being offered to a dramatically increasing number of patients.

**Bon Secours Baltimore Health System's Family Support Center** is a child-centered, family focused program that promotes strong, healthy families for young parents and children from birth through three years old who live in high-risk neighborhoods. The typical profile of the young mothers they serve is 16 years or older, who has dropped out of school, has a child under age four, and has little or no employment history. In partnership with Operation ReachOut Southwest, the Family Support Center addresses the community's desire to provide parents of young children the opportunity to attain self-sufficiency through a series of family focused services. This program received a \$30,000 grant.

***Bon Secours Richmond Health Care Foundation's  
Healthy Families Building Healthy Communities***

is a partnership between Bon Secours Richmond Mission Services and Hillard House, a transitional housing program for homeless women and children located in Richmond's East End. Working with other community partners, the goal is to provide expert-guided, community-based nutrition counseling, exercise equipment and six hours of mental health services weekly to this vulnerable population. The program was funded for \$25,000.

***Healing Hearts***, a program of the Newport News Department of Human Services in Virginia, is designed to attend to the grief and loss issues experienced by children who have entered the foster care system. The structure of the program is a group therapy model centered on art activities specifically designed to deal with a child's grieving. Healing Hearts believes that every child in foster care deserves the opportunity to grieve their loss in a safe, loving environment. This program aimed at one of the most vulnerable populations, children, was funded for \$7,500.



## SR. MARY MAGDALEN CONDRY: A TRIBUTE TO HER LIFE



The Sisters of Bon Secours have been blessed by the many contributions of the sisters who came before them and who they have shared their lives with. Below is a tribute to *Sr. Mary Magdalen Condry*, who died on April 21, 2011 at the age of 81; this includes excerpts from the eulogy delivered by Sr. Elaine Davia, who lived with Sr. Magdalen during the last five years of her life. Sr. Mary Magdalen left a heritage by which we will all remember her.

### *Many of us remember "Magdalen's Mannerisms":*


- "Don't be getting into my private life"
- "That's the way she is"
- "My husband will pay you later"
- "I tried" (the quote she said would be put on her grave stone)

Without hesitation, Sr. Magdalen could jump into a poem or limerick, recited in a lilting Irish accent. She could come up with a verse from a song to fit a particular occasion perfectly, and she would use unique words to describe an ordinary situation, like when she told her doctor that the swelling in her ankles was imperceptible.

With her sense of humor, unassuming nature and memory loss of recent years, one could miss her deep thought process. She wouldn't say much at our community discussions, but when she did the comment was right on target and reflected her insight and clarity about the topic. We had many conversations that reflected her thoughtful insights and demonstrated openness to different ideas.

She had a philosophy about life that people are basically good and doing the best they can, and, if not, there must be an important reason why not. In her lighthearted and positive approach to life, she was also realistic and aware of evil. She prayed often for the many worrisome problems in our world today and would spend hours just sitting in prayer. Many of us know that if we had a prayer wish, we could go to Sr. Magdalen and she would say one or more rosaries for the cause.

Sr. Mary Magdalen, born Mary Louise 81 years ago on December 30, 1930, spent most of her early education in a boarding school taught by French-speaking sisters. She was always close to her family and loved visiting them in Saugus, Mass. She was so surprised and delighted when she heard some of her family were coming to her jubilee celebration a couple of years ago. She entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in 1949 at the age of 19. Because she spoke French, soon after making her first vows in 1952, she was sent to France



to work as a licensed practical nurse in various Bon Secours ministries. She made her final vows while in France on September 25, 1957.

She returned to Baltimore in 1960 to complete studies to become a registered nurse (R.N.), graduating from Bon Secours School of Nursing in 1963. She worked as a registered nurse in Darby and City Line, Penn.; at Regina Cleri in Boston, Mass.; and Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Mass. Her most recent years of ministry were 20 years at Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore, where she volunteered as an R.N. in outpatient surgery and as a sister-chaplain. She spoke of these 20 years of ministry as her favorite and maintained friendships with many people from the hospital after her retirement.

She retired in 2008 to have more time to pray and read. After retiring, she began going to the Ellicott City Senior Center three afternoons a week, which she called her “work days.” She also spent many hours assisting in the Vocation Office with secretarial work. These new activities gave stability and meaning to her retirement years. Service and helping others were strong characteristics of Sr. Magdalen.

She was grateful for everything, but most especially for being a Sister of Bon Secours and said this many, many times. She was never in a position of leadership or power and didn’t like a lot of attention focused on her, yet her influence on people was far reaching and will be long remembered.

She enjoyed life and loved doing anything that meant being with people: eating a good meal; hiking; helping in the garden; and being around her Sisters of Bon Secours, family and friends. She loved a good book about real-life people and anything that had to do with spiritual life.

Her notes, stories and poems provided reminders that guided Sr. Magdalen to be the woman she was. Reflected in them are service, forgiveness, gratitude, and a deep personal love for and faith in Jesus and Mary his mother.

One of these poems, author unknown, was:

*Mid all the traffic of the ways—  
Turmoils without, within—  
Make in my heart a quiet place,  
And come and dwell there-in:*

*A little place of mystic grace,  
Of self and sin swept bare,  
Where I may look upon Thy face,  
And talk with Thee in prayer.*



# Around the Congregation



*Sr. Alice Talone* was selected by her high school, Villa Maria Academy in Malvern, PA to receive the Teresa Madison Award to be presented to her at the Annual Spring Alumnae Luncheon. Sr. Alice, immediate past president of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, is currently ministering to the poor in West Baltimore as a parish nurse.



*Sr. Fran Gorsuch* will receive the Advocate Award at the Hands of Hope Gala in Nyack, New York from One to One Learning Inc. when the organization celebrates its 15th Anniversary in May. Sr. Fran is Director of Community Initiatives at Good Samaritan Hospital, where she helps expand the borders of Bon Secours Charity's mission interests and cultivates relationships within the community.

We congratulate both Sr. Alice and Sr. Fran on receiving these prestigious awards.

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## CONGRATULATIONS

to the Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing in Richmond, which was named **number one in the country** for the number of students passing their nursing licensing exam the first time.

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# *Sr. Chris Webb* TAKES FINAL VOWS

Sr. Chris Webb celebrates with family, friends and the Congregation after taking her final vows in Marriottsville, Md., on November 12, 2011.



# focus

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours



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