

*f*OCUS

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

SPRING 2017



'TIL JUSTICE
 ROLLS IN MIGHTY
 STREAMS AND
 EV'RY HEART
 IS FREED,
 OUR CHARGE IS
 LIBERATING LOVE;
 GOOD HELP TO
 THOSE IN NEED!

*"O God, You Call Us
 Through the Years"*

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DEAR *friends*



Many of you know the words of our charism, Compassion, Healing and Liberation, but how often do you stop and reflect on just what the word “liberation” means and how the Sisters of Bon Secours, and those who work with us, incorporate liberation in all we do every day—both for others and for ourselves? In Catholic theology, one can find liberation defined as helping the poor and those oppressed and in need and liberating them from fear and worry. This of course has been at the very foundation of what Bon Secours has stood for since our Congregation was founded in 1824. As we think about liberation, however, it can also be very personal such as a break from the past that frees someone to love, to reflect, to pray and to build new relationships.

In this issue of *Focus*, we share with you some of the work of our sisters, Associates, Ministry Volunteers and co-workers in our health system and Retreat and Conference Center to help bring liberation to the underserved, the oppressed and the poor. We share the personal liberation of a cancer survivor and the role of liberation in hospice in Great Britain. We applaud the wonderful job that Sisters Academy

in Baltimore has done in liberating young girls and giving them a future to aspire to. We share with you the work being done in Richmond’s East End, the efforts in Virginia around human trafficking, and the role Bon Secours Baltimore Health System is playing in efforts to curtail violence in West Baltimore as well as the impact of our Ministry Grants program in the communities we serve. From our archives, you will read about St. Martin’s Day Nursery, the first day care center in Baltimore started by the Sisters of Bon Secours, which liberated women to be able to go back to work. We hope this issue will make you think about ways in which you can help liberate others and yourselves.

Congratulations are in order around the Congregation. First, Sr. Dorothy Brogan will be celebrating her 65th Jubilee. She has contributed so much to our Congregation and still plays an active role in ministry at the Bon Secours Cancer Center in Greenville, S.C. We also extend our best wishes to all the sisters internationally celebrating Jubilees this year. Congratulations also goes to Tim Cugle, supervisor of our Maintenance Department, who received

the Josephine Potel Award, which recognizes an employee of the Sisters of Bon Secours or the Retreat and Conference Center for excellent service and for embodying the spirit and charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours.

A sincere thank you to two very special long-time co-workers who have recently retired: Mary Herbert, special collections archivist, and Marie Truffer, assistant to the Associates and Volunteer Ministry programs. Both have been with us for many years and have made major contributions to those ministries. We wish them both well in their retirement and want them to know how much we have appreciated all they have done over the years. There is a new face in the Leadership Office these days, and I want to welcome my new executive assistant, Carol Jessee. Carol is no stranger to Bon Secours as she worked for many years for the health system before joining us in the Leadership Office.

My travels have recently taken me to Peru where we celebrated the final vows of Sr. Joana Castillo Segura, and in April, I went to Ireland for the Congregation’s Mid-Chapter

Assembly. The theme of the assembly was “Energized with Hope.” It is always a pleasure to spend time with our sisters in other countries and to experience the internationality of our rich and diverse Congregation.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Focus* and rejoice in the liberation that spring brings.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Rose Marie".

SR. ROSE MARIE JASINSKI
Leader, Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

HEALING, COMPASSION & Liberation

On the following pages,

we are pleased to share inspiring stories that demonstrate the true meaning of liberation, a part of the charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours. There are so many ways we can liberate ourselves and others to be able to live a more fulfilling life. The sisters and those who work with us, both nationally and internationally, are committed to helping to liberate those who are poor, the oppressed and the underserved. We also want people to strive to liberate themselves and others to be able to love, pray and live life to the fullest.



Bon Secours Richmond Health System helps to liberate people through

jobs, affordable housing and teaching new skills

A revitalization of Richmond's East End community is starting to take place. Businesses are filling vacant buildings, upscale restaurants are attracting new people to this historic district and to date, 41 residents have new jobs. All of this is happening in part because the Bon Secours Richmond Health System has provided seed money to businesses through grants of up to \$25,000. These grants, distributed over the past six years, have allowed 25 entrepreneurs and start-ups to open and expand businesses in the economically depressed East End neighborhood of Richmond. Working with project: HOMES, the Richmond Health System is committed to providing affordable housing and rental assistance, especially for low income individuals, families and the homeless. The Richmond Health System is rehabbing and repairing vacant properties, as well as properties in disrepair, to ensure they are in move-in condition. To date, 20 formerly homeless families have received housing. A large part of the affordable housing program is focused on education for first-time homebuyers and assistance with down payments. Once people move

in, project: HOMES and the Richmond Health System are committed to helping them stay in their new homes by assisting with repairs and ensuring tax rates are not increased—the goal is to enable people to age in place.

The Richmond Health System also supports Tricycle Gardens, which offers an Urban Agriculture Certification and Fellowship Program. This innovative approach to learning the business and practice of urban agriculture is recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). For the second year in a row, the Bon Secours Mission Fund has matched

USDA monies of \$100,000 to help fund Tricycle Gardens and enable them to develop and improve two urban farms. The first of these USDA-approved urban farms is located on two acres of land and produces 40,000 pounds of food a year. People who complete Tricycle Gardens' USDA-approved training program learn how to farm and many go on to buy and farm their own land, making them financially independent. A welcome side benefit of urban farming is that the initiative cleans up the land and creates a healthier and more wholesome environment for the entire community.



Bon Secours Baltimore Health System works to

stem violence in the community

Taking back the community by stemming the violence and unrest is an important goal of the Baltimore Health System. As Sr. Anne Lutz explains, “The Sisters of Bon Secours have always been committed to meeting the needs of the times—whether it was doing home nursing when they arrived in the United States in 1881, starting the first day nursery in the area in 1907 or opening a hospital in 1919. Today, the most important community need is to reverse the violence.” Bon Secours Baltimore believes teaching people the skills they need to succeed in life are key ingredients to creating a safer community.

Bon Secours Community Works, a division of the Bon Secours Baltimore Health System, offers many services to help the residents of local communities achieve a better future.

The Workforce Development program is a comprehensive initiative that helps participants develop careers through education and the teaching of life skills, including work ethics, anger management, conflict resolution, computer skills, driver education, tax preparation and finding employment. Courts often agree to drop all charges against first offenders who complete this intense program. Participants receive a fresh start along with the tools they need to compete in the world and reach their personal goals.

Another Bon Secours Community Works program, Behind the Walls, is a re-entry program for people who have been incarcerated that assists with housing, job training, employment, health care and social services. Participants generally begin the program six months prior to their

release date, but the program also supports recently released members of the community. Community Works partners with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers who work pro bono to help participants have their criminal records expunged so they can more easily secure employment and break the cycle of crime and violence. Behind the Walls is one of just 10 programs in the country to receive a grant from the Department of Labor. With this \$1.3 million grant, Bon Secours has helped 170 individuals successfully navigate the transition back into society.

Through its eviction prevention program, Bon Secours Community Works recognizes that having a place to live is another important component for keeping communities safe. Individuals who participate in Community Works' financial

literacy course and financial counseling can receive financial assistance to help them pay their rent and avoid being evicted.

As part of Bon Secours Baltimore's work to reduce gun violence, employees raised money to work with the police department on an initiative to buyback guns and remove them from the community. The project offered \$100 cash for any gun turned in, no questions asked. The first effort resulted in getting eight guns off the street.

We applaud Bon Secours Baltimore Health System for their efforts to liberate the West Baltimore community from violence.

Bon Secours works to

help victims of human trafficking

Bon Secours seeks to assist the victims of human trafficking. Every year, 600,000 to 800,000 people, mostly women, are trafficked across international borders; some are trafficked in central Virginia. Richmond is especially easy to reach, with multiple interstate highways leading to the area.

In January 2017, Bon Secours Richmond Health System and Safe Harbor opened the region's first dedicated shelter for adult female human trafficking victims and immediately welcomed 15 women. The Central Virginia Emergency Shelter for Human Trafficking Victims provides shelter, counseling, safety planning and case management in a single location. Bon Secours' expert forensic nurses address their medical needs, including emergency and primary medical care. Human trafficking victims referred by the city of Richmond and nearby counties live in the shelter. In partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the shelter will also house international victims of human trafficking.

In 2014, Bon Secours Hampton Roads Health System joined a regional coalition on human trafficking composed of Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters, community agencies, law enforcement and responders who serve as medical providers for adult victims of human trafficking. Bon Secours also established a 24/7 phone line staffed by nurses to accept medical referrals. With each call, an emergency care plan is set in motion. Bon Secours' staff offer free training to clinical providers on identifying, rescuing and caring for victims, as well as safety around suspected captors.



Student at Sisters Academy



Sisters Academy

liberates young women through education

Sisters Academy of Baltimore is an independent, tuition-free middle school for girls in grades 5-8, founded in the Catholic tradition and sponsored by the Sisters of Bon Secours along with the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, and School Sisters of Notre Dame. "The school educates girls of promise from families of limited economic means, particularly those living in southwest Baltimore. The students attending Sisters Academy, who come from some of the poorest neighborhoods in Baltimore City, would not otherwise have access to an engaging and challenging middle school education," says Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski, Country Leader, USA.

"Our mission is to empower our students to become agents of transformation in their families, communities, and society," says Sr. Delia Dowling, SSND, President, Sisters Academy of Baltimore.

Sisters Academy provides a way of liberating girls through a holistic education at a critical time of life. They are challenged to pursue excellence and develop leadership within a caring community. "Students learn to think for themselves and come to realize they have the potential to make a better life," says Sr. Rose Marie. As a congregational sponsor, the Sisters of Bon Secours place their name and charisma behind the school's mission as they help to prepare strong, healthy young women for the future.

As one of four co-sponsoring religious congregations, Sisters of Bon Secours serve on the Board of Members, appoint

a representative on the Board of Directors, commit resources and promote, support, influence and nurture the Academy. The Sisters of Bon Secours provide annual financial support and participate in special events, such as Sponsor Appreciation Day. Since the school's opening in 2004, Sr. Alice Talone has represented the Congregation on the Board of Members. "This school is so impressive," says Sr. Alice. "It is wonderful to see the students' progress, not only in academics, but also in terms of respect, poise, self-confidence and intellectual curiosity."

With 20 girls per grade, Sisters Academy students are known well by their teachers and staff and grow close to one another. As they advance academically, they are presented with opportunities to explore their interests, to form their personal sense of identity and to define their personal goals in preparation for high school. "Now in our 13th year, we are seeing results in the lives of our graduates," says Sr. Delia. Of the first five classes to graduate from Sisters Academy, 100 percent have received their high school diploma. Over 85 percent of the graduates attend private or selective public high schools. Last year, the school achieved another significant milestone when some of the alumnae from the first graduating class became college graduates. "We were founded with the vision that our graduates will become well-educated, self-assured, spiritual and committed young women," says Sr. Delia, "We are proud of our students' success."



New business opens in Richmond



Multicultural prayer service

Liberation from Cancer

Lynn Woodman, an Associate of the Sisters of Bon Secours, is celebrating a year of being cancer-free after undergoing treatment for stage one breast cancer at St. Francis Cancer Treatment Center in Greenville, S.C. “I worked for the Bon Secours Health System in Baltimore for 23 years before moving to Greenville in 2004, so naturally, St. Francis was my first choice for health care,” says Lynn. “I went for my annual mammogram expecting nothing to come of it, but then they took a biopsy, and I had to go back again for the results. Becky, the RN who greeted me, took me to a consulting room while she got the doctor. As she was leaving the room, she looked back at me and could read the terror on my face. She came back over to me and said, ‘I can’t make you wait another second. It was positive.’ It was remarkably kind of her.”

Ironically, Lynn had toured the St. Francis Cancer Center when it first opened. “I never expected to be there as a patient!” Lynn’s treatment required a lumpectomy and both chemo and radiation. “My oncologist and RN navigator were kind, forthcoming, concerned and supportive. The St. Francis staff was everything a patient could want, from the woman in the lab who called me by name, even when I hadn’t seen her for six months, to the billing staff. I could always reach my RN or someone on call if I had a need. At no time was I treated like a number or made to feel I was just another patient in a long line.” Lynn went to the St. Francis gym for rehab where her “coach” customized an exercise program for her, and radiation was scheduled at another location that was more convenient, which is rarely an option with most treatment facilities. “This is not the only time the sisters have been there for me,” says Lynn. “They have always been Good Help.”

MINISTRY GRANT PROGRAM SUPPORTS

GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES

The Sisters of Bon Secours Ministry Grant Program supports grassroots initiatives that align with the sisters' mission of giving service to and helping to liberate the poor and underserved. Each year, the sisters allocate \$150,000 to be given in grants. Tom Butler, director of Mission Services at Bon Secours Health System and chair of the Ministry Grants program, explains that grant requests come from programs in communities where our sisters work or that are served by Bon Secours Health System and from organizations who know about the work of the Sisters of Bon Secours. The Ministry Grants Committee meets twice a year to award grants and, in addition to Tom Butler, other members of the committee include Sr. Elaine Davia, Sr. Bernadette Claps, Betty Norman, a former Bon Secours Baltimore employee and current program director for Risk Control Services for Glatfelter Insurance Group, and Ross Darrow, director, Treasury Services for Bon Secours Health System.

Guidelines the committee follows in making their decisions on awarding grants include how well the project meets an unmet or underserved need in the community; whether the money will help the poor in the community; whether the project is furthering holistic health; and whether the project has the potential to be self-supporting and sustainable after the grant money is expended. Additionally, the committee looks to see if there are other sources of funding. After thorough evaluation of all grant proposals submitted, the committee makes its recommendation to Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski and the Leadership Council of the Sisters of Bon Secours.

IN THE JANUARY GRANTING CYCLE, THE FOLLOWING GRANTS WERE APPROVED:

Bon Secours Baltimore Career Development Program: Community-Based Re-Entry Success Training ————— **\$26,000**

The core of Bon Secours Community Works' Re-Entry Success Program for ex-offenders is its "TYRO" training for men and "SHERO" training for women programs. Both programs are based on the best-practice curriculum from the Ridge Project, an Ohio non-profit. Led by certified facilitators, TYRO and SHERO are intensive life skills and job readiness classes intended to help returning citizens build key societal navigation skills, gain personal insights and build self-sufficiency to break the cycle of incarceration. The program also includes mentoring and post-graduation supports.

Bon Secours DePaul Health Foundation East Ocean View Spanish-Speaking Outreach ——— **\$15,700**

The goal of a Spanish-speaking outreach effort is to help build a self-sustaining, healthier East Ocean View neighborhood in Norfolk, Va., through direct involvement, rallying the community and partnering with others. There is an increasing Spanish-speaking population within the community that the Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center has been unequipped to serve. Through this outreach effort the staff will begin to introduce mentorship support to some of the ongoing initiatives and programs, leaving a "skills legacy" for those who will be involved in the ongoing operation of community transformation.

Grassroots Education on the Death Penalty in Virginia ————— **\$25,000**

This project focuses on the severe mental illness death penalty exemption in Virginia. If successful, the project would result in exempting people with severe mental illness (SMI) from being punished for capital murder with a death sentence. Virginia Death Penalty (VADP) is seeking funds to educate the public about the diminished capacity of people with SMI who are charged with capital murder. The project will enable VADP to hire a field organizer to educate local religious, civic and business leaders within key legislative districts across Virginia.

Feeding the Poor in Tuscaloosa ——— **\$18,065**

The food bank in Tuscaloosa, Ala., works with a community of Hispanic and African-American residents of one of the poorest communities in the nation. It serves an average of 125 families per month. The Ministry Grant will help cover the expenses and insurance of the Catholic community of Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart who manage the food bank.

Richmond Youth Peace Project ————— **\$7,000**

The Richmond Youth Peace Project in Virginia was launched in 2004 following the murder of a local high school student. The Richmond Youth Peace Project encourages young people to learn and apply techniques of nonviolent conflict resolution to reduce the level of youth violence in Richmond. Additionally, the program gives teenagers tools and opportunities to make their voices heard for community change.

MUSIC LIFTS SPIRITS & EASES PAIN



SR. BERNADETTE KWASNA
Volunteer at St. Christopher's Hospice, London, and a Soul Midwife

As I am sitting at my kitchen table writing this article, I have the radio on, tuned to my favorite UK radio station, Classic FM. They are playing Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. As I listen to the music, I continue to reflect on the importance of music in my life and how important music can be to help us through those difficult and painful times in our lives. Listening to or playing music and singing or chanting, especially for those who are terminally ill, often lifts one's spirit and can help ease pain. It is a sacramental to the Divine.

Recently, I was assisting at a music therapy session at the hospice where I am a volunteer. There were several things that really struck me as I looked around the group of about twelve people. First, the group was composed of not only patients, but also their caregivers and their family. There was no need to be self-conscious about the playing or singing; it was more about relaxing and having fun. And we did have fun—the smiles on people's faces said it all. During the session, one of the things we were encouraged to do was to share our first memories of music. One lady shared how church music has been an inspiration in her life not only as a child, but also now. Another lady, who had been a church organist, shared how she found boxes and boxes of sheet music recently in her house, and the memory she had of all the weddings at which she had played.

In an age of high technological advances in medicine, it can be easy to forget the importance of sound, touch, color, smell and other gentle techniques, which can be employed to ease people's pain and suffering, to see and minister to the whole person, and to be a presence of liberation to those in need!

"Where words fail, music speaks."

— Hans Christian Andersen



S R . D O R O T H Y B R O G A N

C E L E B R A T E S

65th

Jubilee

Sr. Dorothy Brogan first met the Sisters of Bon Secours when she was a Guild Girl at St. Francis Country Home, a nursing home run by the sisters in Darby, Pa., after having moved with her parents, sister and two brothers to Philadelphia.

While contemplating a vocation, she really got to know the friendly, down-to-earth Sisters of Bon Secours and came to love their charism of caring for the sick and dying. Sr. Dorothy feels her desire for the religious life was always with her, but grew over time, and she entered the Congregation as she was turning 20.

During the course of her long nursing career, Sr. Dorothy has cared for cancer patients, worked in a clinic in Ecuador and served as a hospice chaplain. Today she is a chaplain with cancer patients.

In 1992, Sr. Dorothy went to the Sisters of Bon Secours Mission in the mountainous region of Ecuador to minister to the poor. After returning from Ecuador in 2000, 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 moved from Florida to South Carolina and became hospice chaplain in the Bon Secours St. Francis Health System in Greenville and subsequently chaplain with the Palliative Care and Home Care teams. Today, Sr. Dorothy ministers as a chaplain with patients and families that come to the Bon Secours Cancer Center, an outpatient cancer treatment center in Greenville, a position she has held since the Center opened two years ago.

From 1976-80, Sr. Dorothy was vocation director for the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, and in 1981, Sr. Dorothy became a pastoral associate in Richmond, Va. 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 also 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.

"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 has served as president of Bon Secours St. Francis Health System Foundation as well as on the local health system's ethics committee. "The charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours is so needed today as older people are disregarded — we do what we can by sharing our gifts to care for the sick and the dying. 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."

CONGREGATION OF

SISTERS OF BON SECOURS OF PARIS

2017 Jubilees

70 YEARS

Sr. Marie Blandine DeFrance Vendome, France
 Sr. Anna Patricia Duigan Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Marie Joseph Rivard Vendome, France

65 YEARS

Sr. Dorothy Brogan Greenville, S.C. United States
 Sr. Mary de Lourdes Curtin Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Ita Keane Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Mary Oliver McSweeney Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Mary Anselm Whelton Tralee, Ireland

60 YEARS

Sr. Anne Madeleine Fortin Paris, France
 Sr. Liliias Clare Kane Glasgow, Great Britain
 Sr. Catriona Maire Leonard Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Anne McCarthy Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Mary Jacinta McGrath Dublin, Ireland
 Sr. Mary Bosco Murray Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Mary Benedict O'Leary Cork, Ireland

50 YEARS

Sr. Maureen Condon Cork, Ireland
 Sr. Odile Royer Arras, France
 Sr. Marcelle Roquet Paris, France



Country Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski presents Josephine Potel Award to Tim Cugle

Tim Cugle

RECEIVES
 JOSEPHINE POTEL
 AWARD

Tim Cugle, supervisor of the Maintenance Department, has received the third annual Sr. Josephine Potel Award, one of the highest honors given to an employee of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, or the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center. This award recognizes an employee who has demonstrated excellent service and embodies the spirit of the Sisters of Bon Secours, living their charism of compassion, healing and liberation.

Tim truly loves working for the Sisters of Bon Secours. "I feel I have been truly blessed to have the opportunity to work here," Tim says. "I enjoy the ability to help others in any way that I can and finding solutions to problems that may arise in order to best serve our mission here in Marriottsville." Tim is consistently kind and respectful and treats his fellow co-workers like family. He is known for checking in on someone when he senses something might be wrong, and he

goes above and beyond his job responsibilities to offer assistance any time someone needs help.

Married for 42 years, Tim is a devoted husband with three children and five grandchildren. His co-workers speak to his daily demonstration of caring and helping others in both his personal and professional life. In addition to a 44-year career with the Bureau of Highways of Howard County, he was a volunteer firefighter for seven years. He does woodworking in his spare time, building and repairing furniture. He is generous with his time and talents and regularly offers his services free of charge. He looks out for his elderly neighbors, helping them with odd jobs around their homes and clearing their driveways during winter storms. We congratulate Tim and thank him for his dedication to carrying out the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours and being "Good Help to Those in Need."

LIBERATING ONESELF

is a key to

DISCERNING LIFE CHOICES

SR. PAT DOWLING
Vocation Director

Isn't there a sense of liberation when we finally know what we want to do with our life? This is one of the feelings that a person experiences at a heart-felt level, as well as others, such as joy, anticipation, peace and excitement. This liberation frees us to begin the needed steps to realize our dreams, our life's purpose.

Often, as a vocation director I'm asked the questions, "How do you know if you are called to be a sister, to religious life? How do you know if it is right for you?" These are very good questions. Any person who seriously wants to know the answers will need to spend time looking at it in various ways and allowing God to be part of the conversation—this is known as discernment.

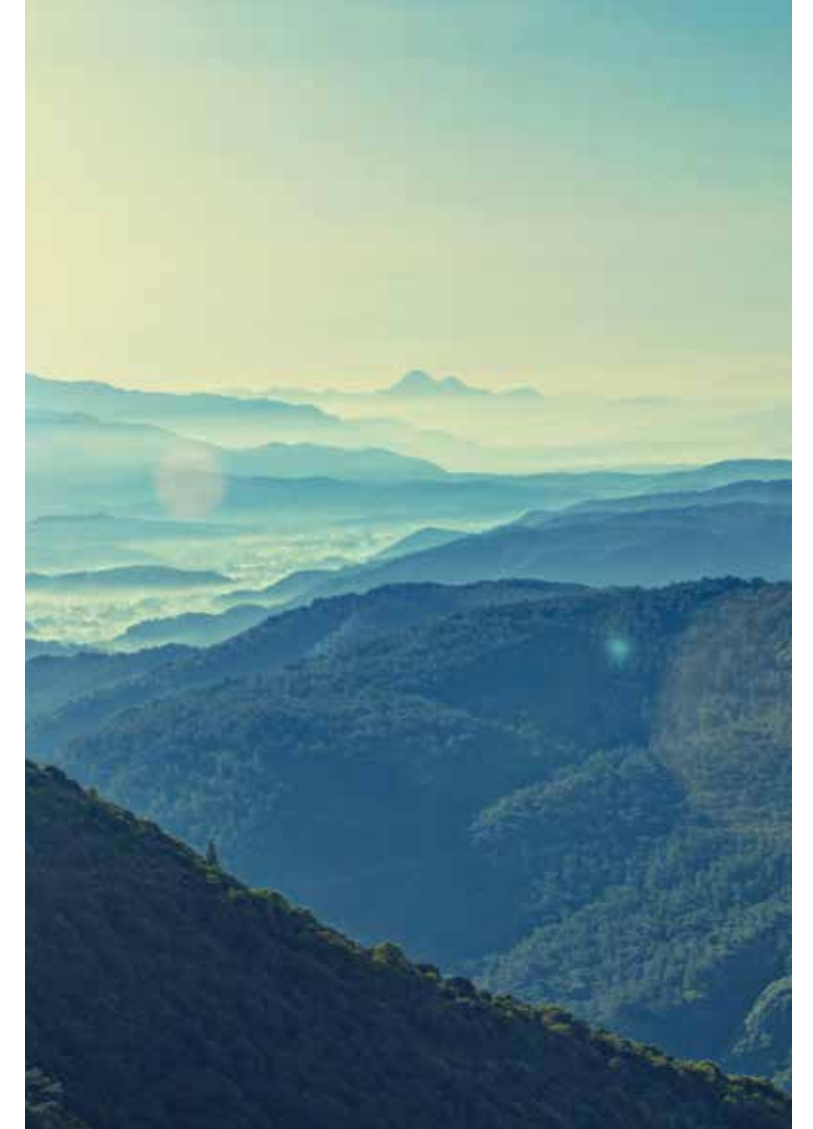
When the thought of becoming a sister first arises within us, or when someone invites us to consider being a sister, there could be a variety of initial reactions such as, "Who, me? I'm not worthy. I couldn't live that life. I'm not holy enough. I'm too adventurous. I thought I was going to get married and have a family." It may even feel like a deer frozen in a car's headlights. These thoughts and possible feelings of flight, dread, fear and doubt are not foreign to many for whom this question is raised.

For more information on discerning life's choices and one's vocation in life, contact Sr. Pat Dowling, vocation director for Sisters of Bon Secours. Also, consider going to a Come and See weekend to learn more about the life of a sister and how they discerned their vocation.

*CBSVocations@bshsi.org.
410-442-3171*

Yet, if the thought or invitation is there, maybe it's God's way of getting our attention and asking us to take a look at the possibility. Usually after the initial reaction, the question gets raised, "How open am I to considering the possibility of being a sister?" Openness is the key—no matter what the ultimate decision is. So, what can get in the way of openness and freedom? Holding onto anything too tightly—even good things—home, family, friends, work. It's hard, but God may surprise you and what awaits is something new and wonderful. Clutter, noise, and the busy-ness in our lives can also block us from being open—all the things we have to do and the constant sense of being "on call," answering emails, messaging or streaming content on the internet. How liberating it is to have the stillness and quiet so necessary for discernment.

A good place to start is to talk with a vocation director in order to learn about sisters and their lives, about how to sift through one's own deepest desires and how to understand if God's call is in concert with one's deepest desires. It takes patience, time and trust in God—that God wants our happiness. I frequently hear, "I just need to figure out God's will, God's life plan for me." Father Walter Cizek, SJ, a Jesuit from Pennsylvania, who lived and worked in Russia during WWII, saw God's will in a more earthy way: "The plain and simple truth is that God's will is what God actually wills to send us each day, in the circumstances, places, people and problems. The temptation is to look beyond these things, precisely because they are so constant, so petty, so humdrum and routine and seek to discover instead some other and nobler will of God that better fits our notion of what His will should be."



Sr. Anne Marie Mack, Country Leader at the time I was weighing ministry options after returning from several years in Ecuador, asked me, "What's the worst that could happen?" after I shared a vision of working with women caught in poverty in West Baltimore. Having never done this before, I couldn't guarantee success. "Failure," I replied. Sr. Anne Marie then said, "If that's the worst, then go for it." She was right. Almost 20 years later this work of God still continues to be a beacon of hope for women in West Baltimore.

Finding what gives deep joy, knowing what you are good at and what your skills and talents are, answering the question to whether your decision leads to serving others and what the greater need is, as well as other questions to guide your discernment, will help in understanding what you are called to do with your life.

COME & SEE *the* SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

Come and See Vocation Weekends are for single, Catholic women ages 18-48, who wonder about religious life as a Catholic sister and are searching to understand their vocation in life. Spend time with sisters and listen, share, pray and reflect on God's voice within the quiet of your heart.

Come with your questions and desires for a place to share and discover God's call in your life. For more information, contact Sr. Pat Dowling at 410-442-3172 or email us at CBSVocations@bshsi.org. Also, check our website for dates and times of our chat room discussions.

2017 COME & SEE
WEEKENDS

July 14-16, 2017 • October 27-29, 2017

Visit our websites at BonSecoursVocations.org and LifeAsASister.org



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Imagine a Sister's Life



Mary Beth and John Keenan with Bon Secours Country Leader in Peru, Sister Rosalinda Pajueo Urenas, in the Cathedral in Trujillo

GOD'S GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

NICHOLAS STEIN
*Director of Young
Adult Ministry*

The Sisters of Bon Secours live their lives in support of the needs of others. The community serves those needs in our hospitals, clinics and residential programs, on the streets, and in villages and shelters in seven countries. The sisters also speak out with others worldwide for social justice. A full plate to be sure, but a life filled with compassion, healing and liberation for others as God wants these for us.

Now we are blessed with the gifts of our Bon Secours Young Adult groups that have formed in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. Recently, a young married couple from the Virginia group asked us for an opportunity to serve others and live in community with the sisters abroad. I would like to introduce this couple to you!

Mary Beth and John Keenan live in Blacksburg, Va., and met while attending Virginia Tech on a campus ministry service immersion trip to Ohio during spring break. They began a friendship rooted in faith, service and community. Mary Beth graduated with a Bachelor of Science in human development in 2015. Upon graduating from Virginia Tech, she had the opportunity to serve with AmeriCorps VISTA in a full-time volunteer position, coordinating a preschool literacy program. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in library and information science, following her passion for children's literacy. John graduated with a degree in civil engineering and has since earned his professional engineering license. He works as a professional design engineer in transportation and water resources. He will begin pursuing his master's degree in the fall, studying water resources engineering.

Mary Beth and John married in September 2015 and continue to live out their call and explore their faith through parish life at Saint Mary's Parish in Blacksburg, Va., and through the Bon Secours Young Adult group. Mary Beth says faith and service will always remain an integral part of their lives. They believe we are all brothers and sisters in Christ and that we each have something to offer and learn from one another. To them, service is rooted in walking in solidarity with another

and allowing that person to walk alongside you. As they move forward in their life together, grounded in their faith and both pursuing their professional careers, they keep feeling God's call to engage in an international service immersion. Now, with the support of Bon Secours Country Leader in Peru, Sister Rosalinda Pajueo Urenas, that call is realized. Mary Beth and John lived with our sisters in the mountains in Haucho, Peru, for two months during March and April 2017.

Through the sisters, they built a sense of community around them. They lived in solidarity with the people in the village, building relationships with them and responding to the environmental and human needs they face each day. They had the opportunity to collect and document information on the condition of the water, creating a report of the status and suggesting possible ways to improve upon their current water systems. They interviewed people of all ages as to how they live out their daily lives in order to deepen their understanding of Peruvian life. Mary Beth and John discussed sanitation needs with community leaders. Youth leaders were encouraged and empowered through their efforts to take an active role in improving the quality of life for their community.

Mary Beth and John are grateful and excited to have this opportunity with the Sisters of Bon Secours to combine their professional experiences and their desire to serve others by walking with them. They kept a journal of their time in Peru, and we will share their journey with you as they immerse themselves in knowing and loving their brothers and sisters in Haucho. We are truly blessed to have them journey with us.

One of the premier ways that Bon Secours Young Adults help to liberate young people is by providing safe, welcoming spaces in time and place for reflection, soul-searching, prayer and conscience-listening. We are a proud partner of Charis Ministries, a Jesuit retreat ministry for people in their 20s and 30s, and we work hard to provide quality spiritual retreat programming in overnight and one-day formats. We also provide retreats designed to further the sharing of the charism, or gifts of the Holy Spirit, given to the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours and through them shared with young adults from many different walks of life.

Here are the highlights of what we will be offering this year.

For more information, contact Nicholas Stein at Nicholas_Stein@bshsi.org or to register, visit us at www.bonsecoursyoungadults.org.

THE PENTECOST VIGIL: AN EXPERIENCE OF THE SPIRIT

June 3, 7 p.m. – Marriottsville, Md.

The Greek word for Pentecost means “fiftieth,” and in early Christianity, it referred to the entire 50 days of Easter. The roots of Pentecost can be found in the Jewish Festival of Weeks (Shavuot), the 50-day celebration following Passover. Early Christians reinterpreted the Jewish festival as a commemoration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. We invite you to a full extended experience of the Pentecost Vigil starting at 7 p.m. Free and open to all.

BON SECOURS CHARISM WEEKEND: “COMPASSION”

August 4-6 – Bon Secours Townley IV Farm, Amherst, Va.

Join the Bon Secours Young Adult community as we take a deep, prolonged look at the role of compassion in our life, in our work, and in our desire to be of “good help.” We will begin on Friday at 5 p.m. and end on Sunday by 2 p.m. Activities will include presentations, small group sharing, individual reflection, recreational activities and lots of relaxation. Cost: \$40 and includes meals.



THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS, A CHARIS MINISTRIES RETREAT

September 16 – St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Baltimore, Md.

This one-day experience is an introduction to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). The Spiritual Exercises were written as a way to bring people into a deeper relationship with Christ and have proven to do so for 400 years. Ignatian Spirituality invites us to encounter God in the practical, real experiences of our daily lives. Based on the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the 15th-century patron saint of retreats, it promotes an understanding of God as an active, loving, and constant presence in our lives. In community with others, we respond to God’s love and come to know God through the world around us. Cost: \$20 and includes three meals.

“FOR THE LEAST,” A CHARIS MINISTRIES RETREAT

November 10-12 – Marriottsville, Md.

Are you looking to reflect upon how you respond to Pope Francis’ call to serve? Have you had a service experience where you have encountered injustice or those living on the margins? Join with others who are passionate about issues of justice. Encounter the gospel and Catholic social teaching by reflecting on your own experiences of service. Grow in your commitment to respond to the gospel call in your daily life. This two-night retreat will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday and conclude by 2 p.m. on Sunday. Cost: \$100 and includes room and meals.

BON SECOURS CHARISM WEEKEND: “HEALING”

January 19-21, 2018 – Bon Secours Townley IV Farm, Amherst, Va.

Join the Bon Secours Young Adult community as we take a deep, prolonged look at the role of healing in our life, in our work, and in our desire to be of “good help.” We will begin on Friday at 5 p.m. and end on Sunday by 2 p.m. Activities will include presentations, small group sharing, individual reflection, recreational activities and lots of relaxation. Cost: \$40 and includes meals.

THE PROCESS OF

discernment

SR. ELAINE DAVIA
Formation Director

Vocation Director Sr. Pat Dowling has shared information with us about the discernment process. In this issue, I would like to explain the continuing process of discernment that occurs after a woman is accepted into and enters the Congregation of Bon Secours.

In the early years before the profession of final vows, this preparation time was called “Initial Formation.” Discernment is a life-long process, whether discerning if one’s vocation is to be a consecrated woman Religious, or subsequently, how one lives life as a consecrated woman. After entrance into the Congregation, any discernment is done within the context of communal living and communal decision making.

The first stage of Initial Formation is as a Candidate. The main task of this phase of Formation is a time of adjustment and letting go. The Candidate often experiences grief, insecurity, and maybe even a sense of sadness, even while really wanting to live a Religious lifestyle. While following her call, she is at the same time leaving her previous life, work, home and lifestyle. Often, these normal transitional feelings can be confusing to the Candidate, making her, and even the community, wonder if she truly has a vocation to Religious life. It is important to discern if the stress is just normal transitional feelings or truly a non-fit with Religious communal life. In Bon Secours’ Initial Formation program, we provide help for the Candidate, as well as the sister(s) she lives with, in the form of professional facilitation to help her and the community understand and maneuver through this transition. Communal life has its share of stresses, even for

professed members, and a Candidate’s ability to manage stress in a healthy, creative way is an essential skill looked at during this time.

Another task of candidacy is learning to integrate into our community and our spiritual and ministerial life. The women who go through the pre-entrance discernment process, who apply and are accepted, have wonderful spiritual, work and personal lives pre-entrance. Candidacy is a time to discern if putting these together in the context and commitment to communal life are life-giving for the Candidate and the community. When it does not work and the Candidate leaves, hopefully she will take new gifts learned while with us back to her life as a lay woman and leave some of her spirit with us.

Once the Candidate has completed an initial orientation, which is four to six weeks long, the Candidate moves into a local community. She will begin a ministry in her profession with full participation in the life of the Congregation. In her local community, the sisters and the Candidate will work out prayer and communal times together, household responsibilities and schedules. A Candidate has several integration dates per month during which she reflects on her newly growing life in Bon Secours, participates in weekend classes and learns about the history, spirit and charism of the Congregation of Bon Secours. She also participates in inter-Congregational programs with others who are in Initial Formation and participates

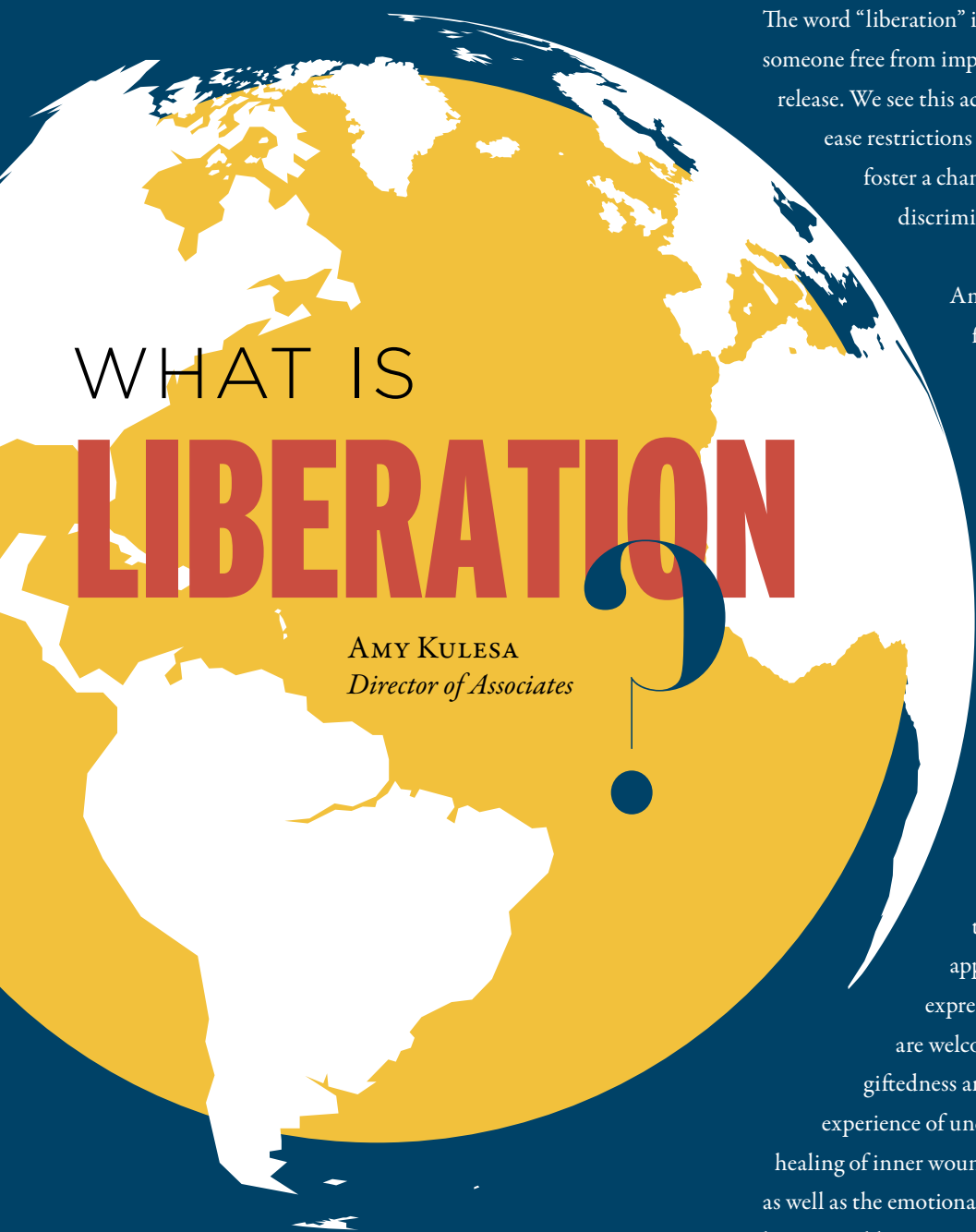
through Skype in international classes with women in Initial Formation in other countries where Bon Secours is located.

Because we are an international Congregation, the Candidate will also begin classes in one of the languages spoken by the Congregation—French, Spanish or English.

During candidacy, there are formal review processes done periodically to help the Candidate and her community determine if living this way of life is life-giving for her and for the Congregation. These reviews also help define processes and topics needed to be added to her Formation program.

Candidacy can take up to two years. All the while, the woman is growing in deeper knowledge of and feeling a sense of love and belonging to the Congregation. In scriptures at the time of Jesus’ baptism, the Holy Spirit came over him with the words “this is my beloved son in whom I am pleased.” Growth in becoming a member of the Congregation is rather like this, as the Candidate begins to hear people say things like “You will make a good Sister of Bon Secours” or “You really fit in well.” And at the same time, the Candidate hears in her heart, “Come my beloved” and “I have called you by name, you are mine” from Isaiah. In a future article, we will share the next phase of the Initial Formation process, the Novitiate.

I have called you by name, you are mine.



WHAT IS LIBERATION

AMY KULESA
Director of Associates

The word “liberation” is defined as the act of setting someone free from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression; release. We see this across the world, when governments ease restrictions on human freedoms and leaders foster a change in consciousness regarding discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.

Among the three Bon Secours mission-focused words Compassion, Healing and Liberation, liberation can be more challenging to define and understand in the context of our ministries. We may wonder, “What kind of liberation am I offering?” But healing and compassion really are channels to liberation, paths to the goal of a wholistic freeing of the human person into who they are called to be. We are relational beings, and so compassion is like bread for the soul. We need to belong, to be assured that we are loved and appreciated. Community is an integral expression of this need, a place where we are welcomed as we are, in all our frailty, giftedness and brokenness. Often enough this experience of unconditional belonging affects the healing of inner wounds. Healing of our physical bodies, as well as the emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of our humanity, liberates us from what binds us from living fully and joyfully. “The glory of God is [the human being] fully alive . . . the life of a [human being] is the vision of God,” said St. Irenaeus.

Bon Secours takes a wholistic view of what healing and freedom mean for a human being in the context of their overall environment and community. Personal health and well-being are impacted by environmental factors and societal patterns of institutionalized injustice.

Here are some beautiful examples of liberating love shared by Associates from across the U.S.:

Associates have generously donated funds and time over the past three years to provide easy-to-assemble water filters in impoverished areas of Peru where the Peruvian Sisters of Bon Secours serve. Clean water, a foundation for health, is now available for families, who can share filtered water with their neighbors, multiplying the gift.

Associates in the Hampton Roads, Va., area, and Greenville, S.C., are active in raising awareness and providing training for health system personnel in combatting human trafficking in their area. Hampton Roads’ Mission Leaders Pam Phillips and Francie Golden and Greenville Mission Leader Donna Meyer have promoted efforts to assist emergency room personnel, case managers, and OB/GYN health professionals in recognizing signs of a victim of trafficking and how to respond, since one in four victims will seek medical care while in captivity. Bon Secours is also the medical provider for rescued persons. This is supporting liberation in one of its most distressing and urgent forms, freeing people from modern-day slavery.

The Baltimore Associates have recently begun an outreach to individuals re-acclimating to society after a period of incarceration. Supporting the Baltimore-area Re-Entry Program, through Bon Secours Community

Works, the Associates are offering social “game nights” to those who wish to gather for some informal community and laughter. This offering of community love and support is an integral aspect of healing for individuals as they make changes to free themselves from the results of past choices and lifestyle patterns that bound them in destructive pathways. Liberation can mean hope for a new day filled with life-affirming possibilities that weren’t dreamt of in the past.

Bon Secours Associates continue to collaborate with the sisters and their co-workers and friends to be a supportive presence and to be agents of liberation to those suffering in mind, body or spirit. Whether offering medical assistance, palliative care, pastoral care, language interpretation to patients, bereavement support or serving as caregivers to family and friends or providing support for those struggling with substance abuse, feeding the hungry or visiting those in prison, Associates make a personal commitment to relieve suffering in all its forms among those whom they serve and thus share in the multifaceted Bon Secours liberating outreach of healing and compassion.

liberation

noun

1. the act of setting someone free from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression; release.

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY NEWS

"At the heart of our charism is a commitment to bring God's Compassion, Healing and Liberation to all of creation and to people in need."

—Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

Bon Secours Ministry Volunteers commit to a year of service within their neighborhood in West Baltimore and within their community of volunteers. Through this lifestyle of service, to some extent, the Ministry Volunteers experience and observe the effect of social injustice on the lives of people who have been excluded and made vulnerable. As they move through this year of service, the volunteers are asked to study and to reflect deeply on the unjust social structures that create and perpetuate poverty. This combination of service and reflection leads the Ministry Volunteers to a deeper understanding of how they are truly connected and related to their neighbors through God's love. While volunteers are struck by their neighbors' suffering and learn to suffer with their neighbors, it is through both offering and receiving compassion and healing that the Ministry Volunteers share in liberation with those they serve.

At the end of their year of service, we witness each community of volunteers leave Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry (BSVM) with a personal understanding of their deep connection to their brothers and sisters in West Baltimore. This new understanding is the heart of the BSVM's mission of "transformation through service with others." In her reflection, Meghan Krueger writes how her service with BSVM gave her the depth "to serve in the vulnerable way that requires the 'giver' to acknowledge his or her own brokenness and dependence on those deemed 'in need.'" This transformation that Meghan describes speaks to the liberation that Ministry Volunteers receive.

In addition to Meghan Krueger, BSVM 2014-2015, who now works as a nurse at Health Care for the Homeless, we asked two other BSVM alums to reflect on how the compassion and healing they encountered during their time with BSVM continues to allow them to share in liberation with others. Allison Bombard, BSVM 2008-2009, now serves as a social worker, and Adesola (Yeti) Haugabrook, BSVM 2013-2014, presently works in the field of public health. The gratitude of these BSVM alums to the Sisters of Bon Secours shines through as they express how the sisters' charism continues to be an integral part of their lives.

"If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." —Lila Watson

This quote has stuck with me ever since hearing it for the first time in a seminar preceding a service learning trip. Before my time with BSVM, I didn't have the depth of understanding for what it meant to truly serve; to serve in the vulnerable way that requires the "giver" to acknowledge his or her own brokenness and dependence on those deemed "in need." I believe the current understanding and appreciation I have for the concept of liberation, especially as it relates to compassion and healing, will be one of my greatest assets as I begin my career as a nurse.

During my volunteer year, my community hosted an admired priest for dinner, Fr. Sam. While sharing the meal, the concept and concern over burnout in the field of various helping professions was discussed. Fr. Sam said that during his time as a priest, he worked with many people who were suffering and in challenging circumstances. He learned that to try to fix people or change them would only lead to frustration and discouragement.

On the contrary, by humbling himself to his limitations and recognizing that his role was, in a pure and powerful way, to accompany and support people on their journeys, he remained hopeful. In a culture where it seems everyone wants to "change the world" or "make a difference," Fr. Sam's response was unexpected. At the same time, it was revolutionary for me, and I'll never forget it.

With regard to healing and compassion in the context of nursing care, it might be first assumed that liberation applies to the patient's freedom from suffering. I have come to understand that it goes far beyond that. Liberation for patients realistically does not always look like being healed or cured. There is peace in recognizing that I am not meant to fix patients. I can provide them liberation in the form of relief from pain, anxiety, and loneliness through medicine, tender care, accompaniment and advocacy. From a nurse's perspective, letting go of the expectation to cure and acknowledging what is in my control to affect is indeed liberating.

I find it helpful to see how I, the care provider, experience liberation. In this context, liberation refers to freedom from unrealistic expectation and a surrender of

control. It will be through the acceptance of my own limitations as a care provider, and the appreciation for the small victories of each patient, that I will be able to be a more compassionate nurse. The liberation of both my patients and myself is truly bound together; patient and provider are meant to work as a team. Through an embrace of the words of Lila Watson and the wisdom of Fr. Sam, I will allow myself and others to remain free from the bonds of burnout that seem so common in fields of service like nursing.



**Meghan
KRUEGER**

BSVM 2014-2015

Allison BOMBARD

BSVM 2008-2009



As a BSVM volunteer, I served at the Bon Secours Family Support Center. One of the mothers had five children and was joining the program for her third time, trying to earn her GED. I asked her what kept her coming back. She responded that she knew she would be supported and that she would not be judged for not finishing the first two times. I think of this often and strive to provide a similar sanctuary for the families and individuals I serve in my daily work as a social worker. I hope to provide a place of compassion, healing and, ultimately, liberation.

From my experience with BSVM, I remind myself often that kindness is extremely important to my daily work. Kindness creates an environment in which people may experience liberation. As I work in a myriad of settings and with a broad range of populations, I try to make every person I meet my main focus in that moment. I try to treat them with compassion and understanding. I have heard many times that people want to feel that their needs are heard and that they have a say in their services, care and healing. It is a liberating experience for people to feel empowered and to have a voice in their care.



As a BSVM, I saw experiences of liberation as a result of the compassionate and healing works of the Sisters of Bon Secours and staff at Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital. As they served the patients and

empathized with their sickness or their circumstance, the sisters and staff at the hospital provided patients with tools for healing and recovery. These were simple, yet empowering, acts of love. They resulted in freedom

Adesola (Yeti) HAUGABROOK

BSVM 2013-2014

—freedom for the patient to continue to walk out their life in purpose with the support, resources and kindness they received. It was inspiring to witness the liberating relationships the staff and sisters formed with their patients through the compassionate healing services they provided.

I personally experienced liberation as a volunteer in so many ways. One instance that comes to mind was at my service site at Bon Secours Hospital in the Outcomes Management Department. I was given the task to go into high-risk patients' rooms to assist in screening so that the Case Management and Care Transition teams could then support patients with resources. Each time I asked the sensitive question, "Do you have HIV?" I was very hesitant and completely avoided eye contact with the patient. One day I was able to ask the question and look my patient in the eye. For some reason, seeing my patient in that moment triggered the instinct for me to offer compassion rather than judgment or fear. When the patient answered "yes," and I was able to continue to compassionately

assist this patient with access to medication and services, I felt there was an immediate release of freedom. I felt free to go forth and ask every patient the more sensitive questions on the assessment. In that moment, I also believed that the patient felt free from the stigma of being seen as different.

Since leaving BSVM, this perception of liberation has helped me to embrace difficult situations and has also led me to be interested in a career serving communities through the field of public health. My perception of liberation is that it can be a result of compassion and healing and that it happens in community with others. Every time I saw liberation in patients, in my housemates, or co-workers, it was always something I observed in community with others. I hope that I can always remember the power of compassion to generate liberation and to facilitate healing the way that I experienced it with BSVM.

TWO
SPECIAL PEOPLE
Retire

For over 13 years, Mary Herbert has been working with Archivist Sr. Mary Shimo as the Special Collection Archivist for the Sisters of Bon Secours. She started her career as an archivist while at school interning with the education department of a museum, followed by a position at the Maryland Historical Society, where she became Director of the Archives.

When family issues made it necessary to look for a part-time job, Mary heard about the position at the Sisters of Bon Secours and never looked back. She and Sr. Mary Shimo were a great fit from day one, and Mary Herbert looks back over the last 13 years as a true blessing. She believes that God directed her to the Sisters of Bon Secours.

Of her many accomplishments working in the archives, Mary is most proud of the intellectual control of the collection she achieved. Her folder level inventory of the boxes and boxes of material makes them so much more retrievable. Today, when someone requests an image or a document, it can be scanned and sent



SR. MARY SHIMO (l.) WITH MARY HERBERT (r.)
Special Collection Archivist

to them and the preservation copy can be reused. Scanning allows the original document to be protected in as pristine condition as possible. The world of scanning and email has truly changed the way archivists function today.

Another project that Mary was especially pleased to have worked on was taking 27 lists of sisters that ministered in the United States over the years and melding them into one file. As part of this project, she attempted to locate as many of the sisters' surnames (last names) as possible. With a trip to the Motherhouse in Paris and with assistance from Sr. Nancy Glynn in France, Sr. Caitriona Leonard in Ireland, and census records, quite a few last names of our early sisters,

who were known only by their congregational first names, were located.

"Working with the sisters has been a blessing and an inspiration. I will be moving to Myrtle Beach, S.C., and am already planning to become a part of the Bon Secours Charleston Associates," says Mary.

"Mary has been a wonderful asset to the Sisters of Bon Secours and to all of our Leadership. She readily, gently and professionally shared her knowledge with us. She is an amazing woman, who has shared her life with us as friend, Associate and co-worker. Her living legacy continues in our minds and hearts," says Sr. Mary Shimo.

Marie Truffer began working for the Sisters of Bon Secours in February 1992 as the administrative assistant for the Associates Program. She had three young boys and loved the idea of working part-time and appreciated that the job offered flexible hours. "The Volunteer Ministry Program started in 1998, and, over time, I then became the administrative assistant for that program too, and my position became full-time," says Marie. "My boys were older by then, and my job grew with them."

"I have met so many wonderful people over these years—sisters, Associates, volunteers, co-workers and guests," says Marie. "There are many Associates who seem like family, some I have

known for more than 20 years—they are in it for the long haul—and they are such a caring group of women and men. I know they would help me if I ever needed it," she says. "On the other end of the spectrum, the volunteers come with such enthusiasm and youth and a positive 'I can change the world' attitude. Some stay in touch, others not so much. I always enjoy when, out of the blue, I hear from one of them. There are some I will never forget," she says. "I am thankful for the opportunity to have worked high atop the hill, where I have enjoyed the changing of the season, beautiful sunsets, the Associate Tree outside my window, and many good conversations with caring people."

Marie is looking forward to retirement and the freedom to "pick up and go no matter what day of the week it is." She has two grandchildren nearby and brothers and sisters all within a two-hour radius that she plans to see regularly. She is planning trips to visit her son in Chicago and her sister in Hawaii. Also, on Marie's "to-do" list is working on her garden and trips to the harbor when the tall ships come into Baltimore. Marie will continue living in Maryland and remain in contact with her friends at the Sisters of Bon Secours. "Twenty-five years! I hadn't planned to stay so long," laughs Marie. "The friendly hellos, bright smiles, hallway chit chat and the compassionate words from co-workers have made it a great place to work."

We thank Marie for her dedication and wish her good luck and happiness in her retirement.



MARIE TRUFFER, *Administrative Assistant*

CELEBRATING VALENTINE'S DAY & ST. PATRICK'S DAY

"Nothing glows brighter than the heart awakened to the light of love that lives within it."

—GUY FINLEY



The Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center was pleased to hold two festive events this winter. The annual Valentine's event was led by Fr. Joe Muth of St. Matthew Catholic Church in Baltimore. Fr. Joe celebrated mass and held a vow renewal ceremony. Guests were then treated to a delicious dinner as a talented jazz duo played in the background. Fr. Joe closed the evening with a presentation about the wide variety of marriage customs that he has experienced in his parish, where families represent 45 countries. The couples left inspired and were reminded to tell their own marriage story, not only to others, but to each other.

The Center also hosted a special St. Patrick's Day concert on March 17. Members of the Freedom Philharmonic music group entertained a chapel of attendees with wonderful Irish string music. There were also traditional Irish dancers, who demonstrated their incredible footwork and shared a few moves with brave members of the audience. Many of the guests also opted to attend the Irish dinner before the concert where they enjoyed a delicious meal of traditional Irish fare. It was a fun, festive way to celebrate. Sláinte!

INCREASING AWARENESS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

The Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center was pleased to collaborate with the Sisters of Bon Secours Peace and Justice office to present three free events to increase awareness of important social justice issues. The Eye Openers Film Series was organized by Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ, Congregational coordinator: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for the



Sisters of Bon Secours. The first film *Not My Life* was shown in March and educated about human trafficking. Viewers learned about a world where millions of children are exploited every day. The second film, shown April 7, screened the documentary *Before the Flood*, which presented vital information about climate change and actions we can take to protect the earth. The final film in the series, *Making a Killing: Guns, Greed and the NRA*, is being shown on May 12. Each of the Eye Openers events are free to the public and take place at the Retreat and Conference Center from 6:45-9:00 p.m. Please register in advance by visiting RCCBonSecours.com/Events or by calling 410-442-3120.

"In the place of stillness, rises potential. From the place of potential, emerges possibility. Where there is possibility, there is choice. And where there is choice, there is freedom!"

—GABRIELLE GODDARD

UPCOMING OVERNIGHT SUMMER RETREATS & EVENTS:

The Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center offers a full schedule of spiritually enriching retreats this summer. In addition to the multiple overnight retreats, ranging from two nights to seven nights, there are also many day retreats available. Please visit our website at www.RCCBonSecours.com for a complete schedule and details about each retreat and presenter. You can also contact the Welcome Center at 410-442-3120. We hope to see you this summer.

June Directed Retreat with Spiritual Directors Sr. Bernadette Claps, Fr. Robert Hamm, SJ, and Ginny Novak
Sunday, June 18 – Saturday, June 24

7-Night Vacation Retreat self-guided personal retreat
Sunday, July 2 – Sunday, July 9

4-Night Vacation Retreat self-guided personal retreat
Wednesday, July 5 – Sunday, July 9

Miryam, Mother of the Word Incarnate with Sr. Mary Ellen O'Dea, OP
Sunday, July 9 – Saturday, July 15

Directed Retreat, Long Weekend with Spiritual Directors Fr. Phil Cover and Joy Aker
Friday, July 14 – Monday, July 17

Deepening Personal Prayer with Fr. Richard Hauser, SJ, FTL, Ph.D.
Friday, July 21 – Sunday, July 23

Demystifying Religion with Gordon Creamer
Friday, August 4 – Sunday, August 6

Introduction to the Practice of Spiritual Direction led by Sr. Bernadette Claps and Kathy Brown
Sunday, June 4 – Friday, June 9

Friends Overnight Retreat with Fr. Harry Geib, SSJ
Tuesday, June 6 – Thursday, June 8

Living with an Awakened Heart, Women's Retreat with Paula Jilanis
Friday, June 9 – Sunday, June 11

August Directed Retreat with Spiritual Directors Sr. Gail DeMaria, CSJP, Sr. Pamela Jablon, SSND and Rev. Stephen Wade
Sunday, August 6 – Saturday, August 12

Stages of Spiritual Development with Fr. Nicholas Amato
Sunday, August 13 – Saturday, August 19

Mindfulness and Centering Prayer with Marcia McMullin
Friday, August 18 – Sunday, August 20

Seeking Wholeness: Catholicity, Cosmology and Consciousness with Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF
Overnight Option— Friday, June 2 – Saturday, June 3
Day Retreat – Saturday, June 3

The Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center is proud to announce this special retreat day with Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF. Explore the meaning of Catholicity in its relation to cosmos and consciousness and explore how a renewed understanding of Catholicity can empower a new world. You won't want to miss it.

CAMILLE GRIPPON



"I am continually blessed to work in the presence of the Sisters of Bon Secours in the USA and in Peru and to work alongside so many colleagues that embody the Congregational values of: compassion, healing and liberation. Working to serve those most in need has been my life and professional commitment, and I am proud to work for an organization that is equally committed to protecting the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. I am very fortunate to collaborate closely with individuals, communities and partners trying to effect sustainable change for themselves, their environment and their children. At Bon Secours, we seek to be 'good help' in all we do through respect, compassion, justice, integrity, quality, innovation, stewardship and growth, and I am happy that I can do a small part to elevate human dignity in my role."

Camille Grippon is the Director of Ecology and Global Ministries at the Bon Secours Health System Office. Since 2012, she has been responsible for leading system-wide initiatives related to ecological stewardship and international efforts, including healthcare delivery, emergency relief and public health programs in developing countries.

LARRY PITTS



Larry Pitts is a 2016 recipient of the Bon Secours Dedicated Service Award. Larry was born at St. Francis Hospital when the facility was operated by the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor. He returned to work at St. Francis Health System in 1996 as the Director of Human Resources and continued in this role when the St. Francis Health System was transferred to the Bon Secours Health System in 2000.

"I am blessed to be able to work in the Bon Secours Health System, where I can share my faith in Jesus Christ and provide "Good Help to Those in Need." I truly enjoy working with the sisters in the local system and the Health System Office in Marriottsville, Md. I am proud to be associated with a Christ-centered facility that provides state-of-the-art care to anyone who needs medical attention regardless of their ability to pay. I greatly enjoy working with the staff, physicians and community leaders to offer medical care to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our patients. The sisters have always set the standards for our care and compassion and that is demonstrated daily by our providers and support staff. Many of our employees come to work in our facilities because we are based on a Christ-centered mission and because of our ability to pray with our patients. All of this is made possible by our faithful Sisters of Bon Secours."

JOANNE CAHOON



Joanne Cahoon owns In-Spirited, LLC, and provides retreats, spiritual direction, professional coaching, consulting, mentoring and formation for individuals and groups. For many years she worked for the Archdiocese of Baltimore and came to know the then "Bon Secours Spiritual Center" as a beautiful site for training and retreats. Since 2010, she has met with those she sees for spiritual direction primarily at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, and over the years, facilitated a number of retreats there. Since 2015, she has coordinated the monthly Quiet Morning event at the Center, which draws individuals for shared quiet and prayer on the third Tuesday morning of every month.

"Although I am not an employee of Bon Secours, my work and the mission outlined in the Bon Secours charism are very compatible—making visible God's love and providing 'good help' and support for wholeness as well as healing. These Bon Secours imperatives are hallmarks of much of the work that I am privileged to do as well, in the name of Jesus. The Spiritual Center — now, Retreat and Conference Center — has been part of the fabric of my ministerial experience for over 30 years. It's fitting that my ministry journey has led me to a privileged collaboration with a way of living discipleship, the Bon Secours charism, which so well expresses an essential need for today's world."

Through my interactions over the years with a number of Bon Secours employees, as well as a few of the sisters, I have been impressed with the hospitality and openness that is embodied in these women and men who live 'good help' through their work and their way of relating.

I am thrilled to invite those I see for spiritual direction to the Center's location in Marriottsville, Md. The facility itself is very comfortable but, even more, there is richness to the natural setting and attention given to the help and whole-ing that letting creation speak through flowers/trees/paths/ponds provides. A number of those I meet with communicate their appreciation of this place that feels like shelter and refuge. Those who attend the Quiet Morning events will often thank me for the time and space for peace and reflection, but the gratitude belongs to the Bon Secours Sisters, a community whose commitment to maintaining the Center makes a true difference in lives.

I too find a home-space at the Center, not only for the ministry I engage in there, but in relationships and a space to pray and breathe. I believe it to be an expression of God's grace to have landed in such a worthwhile relationship with

the mission and vision of the Bon Secours charism, especially embodied at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center."

COMPASSION
HEALING
&
LIBERATION

Energized with

HOPE

Vivificadas con Esperanza • Dynamisées par l'Espérance

In April, there was a Congregational Assembly in Dublin, Ireland, open to all of the sisters, and about 100 sisters participated. The theme was "Energized with Hope." The sisters were joined by a number of associates and young adult ministers. "We were fortunate to have three presenters for our meeting," says Sr. Pat Eck, Congregation Leader. "Sr. Pat Farrell, OSF, spoke on the topic of *Simplicity of Lifestyle and Radical Availability*. This comes directly from our commitment made at our chapter of 2014. Also, following from our chapter was a continuing conversation with

Archbishop Barreto on *From the Joy of the Gospel to Laudato Si.*" The assembly concluded on the last day by deepening the commitments made at the 2014 chapter, *Continuing the Journey to Justice* with Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, coordinator of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee. "This gathering was an opportunity to review where we are with our commitments and to dream and envision how we desire our future. As always, it was fun to be together and share our hopes and dreams. This was more of a sharing gathering, rather than a work meeting," says Sr. Pat Eck.

The Sisters of Bon Secours' new website is now updated and live, and we invite you to visit us at bonsecours.us to see all of the additions, pictures and links. On the site you will find a connection to all of our ministries and the new Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Committee pages. There's also a link to this most recent issue of Focus. A committee of ministry leaders worked tirelessly for months making sure the pages were up to date and attractive. We look forward to hearing your comments and feedback. Please forward any comments to RoseMarie_Jasinski@bshsi.org.

SR. DOROTHY BROGAN

Sr. Dorothy Brogan had the privilege of attending the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.



SHANNON CURRAN

Shannon Curran, director, Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry, was a presenter at the 39th Annual National Conference on Faith-Based Service sponsored by Catholic Volunteer Network in November 2016 in Los Angeles, Calif. Shannon spoke on *Practicing God's Justice with Volunteer Safety and Security*. The workshop explored how applying

mission turns risks of safety and security into opportunities to practice God's justice.



CAROL JESSEE

We welcome Carol Jessee, the new executive assistant supporting Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski and the Leadership Office of the Sisters of Bon Secours USA. Carol has been an administrative assistant for over 28 years and is not a newcomer to Bon Secours. She has been project coordinator for the Bon Secours Health System since 2010. As a project coordinator, she provided administrative support to the Mission Department, Advocacy & Government Relations, Commitment & Social Investments and Ecology & Global Ministries. Carol loves to exercise, swim, teach at her church and spend time with her three children and husband.



SR. JOANA CASTILLO SEGURA

Congregation Leader Sr. Pat Eck shares details on the celebration of final vows professed by Sr. Joana Castillo Segura in Peru. "We were fortunate that all of the Congregation Team and many of Sr. Joana's family were able to be present to celebrate with the sisters in Peru and with Sr. Joana as she professed her perpetual vows." Sr. Joana is ministering in Huancayo as the Principal of Fe en Alegria School. The Archbishop of Huancayo, Bishop Pedro Barreto, was the main celebrant of the liturgy. Many of Sr. Joana's friends, family and co-workers joined her for the solemn ceremony and then everyone participated in a great celebration of her commitment. "It is clear our Sisters in Peru know how to celebrate," says Sr. Pat.

What has CHANGED Since *1907?*

DAVID McALLISTER
Special Collections Archivist

SR. MARY SHIMO
Archivist

In 1907, the Sisters of Bon Secours opened a unique and much needed day care program in Baltimore. On the grounds of the convent at the corner of Fayette and Payson Streets, which became the hospital in 1919, the sisters erected and ran the St. Martin's Day Nursery to care for local children as their mothers worked. The Day Nursery freed poor mothers from the labor of child care and enabled them to take jobs that helped support their families.

In the early decades of the 20th century, urban mothers were often stuck between the "rock" of caring for their children and the "hard place" of needing to work for daily necessities. Sometimes tragic events necessitated this: an injury at work that left a husband crippled or without a limb or his death by disease or industrial accident. The railroads were notorious in this latter account. Sometimes, the loss of the husband's job made a mother's job necessary for family survival.

The preservation of the family unit was indeed at stake when poor mothers sought paid labor. Since the 1850s, state and city judges had the authority to remove children from the custody of their parents based on the child's welfare. Poverty

was the most often cited reason for removing children to orphanages and almshouses. In 1909, a Presidential Conference advocated "poverty alone should not be grounds for removing children from families." Yet this endorsement did not carry the weight of law, and as social workers investigated child welfare in Baltimore in the coming decades, poverty remained a cause for removing custody from parents.

Take, for example, the situation that faced Sadie in 1915. At the same time she was ill and needed an operation, her husband lost his job. Her four children were removed to an almshouse. Or take what happened to the widow Ruth, whose children were taken away from her. Even though she was "most anxious to have the children returned... each time such a plan was made, her earnings were entirely inadequate to do so."

Experiences like Sadie's and Ruth's made the St. Martin's Day Nursery so vital to local women. When faced with starvation or giving up one's children to an orphanage, shelter or adoption, the Sisters of Bon Secours gave women the freedom

to find another path, a place to keep their young children safe and loved while they worked.

The Day Nursery was the brainchild of Fr. Thomas Broydrick, the pastor of St. Martin's Church and Mother St. Urban Tierney, Mother Superior for the Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States. In 1906, Fr. Broydrick identified the need for a dedicated facility to watch the children of working women. "Quite the bravest thing in the world is mother-love battling for its young," he wrote. "But it reaches its highest form and expression in the little woman in black, who suddenly, bereaved and helpless, finds herself called upon to face a cold and cheerless world, and to battle with her feeble hands for the means to feed and clothe the children who lovingly cling to her skirts." Mother St. Urban readily agreed. In two separate agreements signed in 1907, the parish allowed the sisters to retain ownership of the building and conduct day-to-day operations of the Day Nursery without interference by Fr. Broydrick or his successors. The sisters staffed the Day Nursery as an act of charity and refused payment from the church for their services. The parish agreed to fund the construction of the building, although even with this,

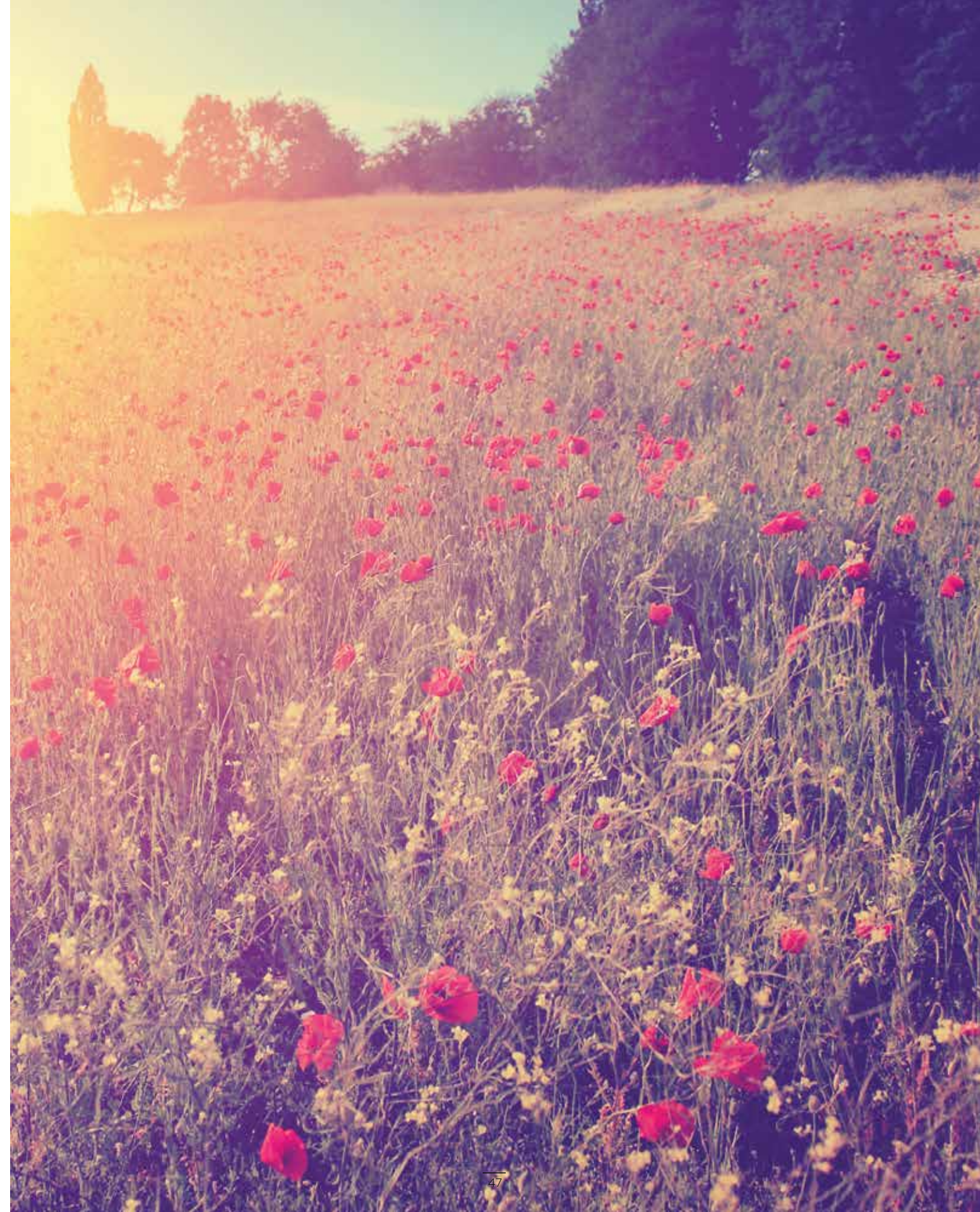


Mother St. Urban pitched in, begging contributions from her friends and having them hold benefits for the nursery.

Opened on September 8, 1907, the St. Martin's Day Nursery was an unqualified success. The Day Nursery accepted children over the age of six months regardless of religious affiliation. Starting at seven in the morning, mothers or older siblings could bring children to the two-story, 12-room Day Nursery. There, sisters fed, clothed, nursed, educated and played with them. The goal was to provide a safe and loving environment, unlike orphanages and almshouses. Fr. Broydrick insisted, for example, that the outfits for the girls have "flowers on the bonnets and ribbons on the dresses" and that the boys have "blouses of different colors. No matter what," he said, "don't let them look like institution children."

The sisters insisted on feeding the children nutritious meals. Sr. St. Gabriel, who ran the Day Nursery when it opened, and Sr. St. Kyran, who often helped out, and even Mother St. Urban herself, ran from business to business collecting contributions of food from local proprietors. They were, as Mother St. Urban expressed it, "the beggars for the poor." For younger students, the sisters offered religious instruction, while school-aged children attended St. Martin's parochial school and returned to the Nursery after classes. Sick children were tended by the sisters, and when the hospital opened in 1919, were cared for free of charge. There were 17 children enrolled when the Day Nursery opened, but it soon filled to capacity. By 1915, the Day Nursery was so popular that the parish and the sisters raised the funds and built an addition. With the additional space, an average of 65 children a day attended the Nursery. St. Martin's Day Nursery served the community until 1958 when it closed.

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In the early
decades of the
20th century,
urban mothers
were often
stuck between
the “rock” of
caring for their
children and the
“hard place”
of needing to
work for daily
necessities.



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