



 **Bon Secours**
Bon Secours Ministries



Bon Secours Ministries
Advocacy 2018



In light of this deeply held conviction, we are compelled to work toward a more just and humane world where the dignity of all persons is respected and an environment is created that allows for the full flourishing of all Earth's creatures.

“We have to realize that a true ecological approach ... must integrate questions of justice so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”²

We, Bon Secours Ministries, stand firmly in the Bon Secours tradition that proclaims ***“the struggle for a more humane world is not an option; it is an integral part of spreading the Gospel.”¹***

Therefore, in keeping with Catholic Social Teaching and the charism of Bon Secours, we stand in solidarity with those who seek the common good and the protection of all persons, particularly those who are marginalized, by advocating in the following areas, including but not limited to:



JUSTICE

Respect for all persons and communities is grounded in an affirmation of the fundamental right to full and authentic living. The mandate of justice requires us to ensure that those rights are made available, promoted, and protected. Equal access to opportunities for human flourishing, free from discrimination, are essential to a just society.

One area of focus is **immigration reform**. Our immigration system is not working, and it's time we enact fair and humane immigration reform that keeps families united and protects refugees and other vulnerable migrants. Immigration reform with a roadmap to citizenship is the right thing to do for migrants and refugees and the right choice for our nation's lawmakers.

We commit ourselves to actively work to promote immigration reform that results in attainable citizenship.



CULTURE OF NON VIOLENCE

Violence in all its forms and expressions is an affront to the dignity of persons and the integrity of creation. There are many forms of violence that damage the social fabric and compromise the safety of individuals and communities, such as domestic violence, bullying, and workplace intimidation and violence. Additionally, there are extreme acts of violence, such as domestic terrorism, that threaten the common good and civil society.

One area of focus is **gun violence**. Gun violence poses a risk to the safety of all persons at home, at school, at work, and in our communities. Sensible gun legislation is needed because all persons have the right to live free from the threat of gun violence. Gun legislation should require universal background checks for all purchases of guns, and limit access to high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines. Additionally, access to mental health care and other services for those in need, with a focus on preventive approaches to violence, is essential.

We commit ourselves to actively work to promote sensible and responsible gun legislation and regulation that results in safer communities.

Another area of focus is **human trafficking**. Human trafficking has been identified as the fastest growing criminal industry in the world. It is second only to drug trafficking in profitability. Human trafficking shows contempt for the inherent dignity of the human person and involves the exploitation of both adults and children. Trafficking includes sexual exploitation, forced labor, debt bondage, child marriage, forced servitude and the removal of organs.

We commit ourselves to actively work against all forms of human trafficking and promote appropriate education and preventive actions.





HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

Our Catholic tradition consistently affirms that all persons have basic rights that must be defended in order to live in ways that are meaningful and contribute to the larger society. Among those rights is the right to access comprehensive, high quality health care and mental health services that promote and maintain health, prevent and manage disease, reduce unnecessary disability and premature death, and achieve health equity for all.

One area of focus is expanding **access to health care** particularly the Medicaid program. Medicaid is a significant part of health care reform and provides access to health care for people at lower income levels who are historically unserved and underserved. There are ongoing threats to the coverage gains that were achieved through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) – in the Medicaid program and the insurance marketplace exchanges. Any reduction in overall coverage and benefits could lead to compromised health care and increase the number of uninsured individuals. Ensuring access to health care must address the needs of the whole person including the adequate provision of mental health services.

We commit ourselves to work to protect and expand access to health care coverage.



CARE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

The mandate in the biblical narratives of creation is to be good stewards of God's creation in order to live in mutually enhancing ways on Earth. The last century has seen a dramatic affront to the care of creation with increased pollution, deforestation, climate change, and disregard for the protection of creation as a shared good. Increasing attempts to privatize resources has added to the burden of clean, accessible, and safe earth resources.

One area of focus is **water**. Water is a sacred gift that connects all life and access to clean water is a basic human right. We affirm that freshwater is a shared legacy, a public trust and a collective responsibility. Therefore, the value of the earth's freshwater as a resource for the common good takes priority over any possible commercial value.

We commit ourselves to actively work to promote policies and practices that protect freshwater as a sustainable, renewable resource and to ensure universal access to sufficient, affordable, safe water for all people, especially the most vulnerable.

Furthermore, we direct Bon Secours Health System to develop and implement action plans that address the concerns and areas of focus raised in this resolution.

Together, we can work towards a future filled with hope.

1 Congregation of Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris, Constitutions, n. 7

2 Pope Francis, Laudato Si, n. 49