

*f*OCUS

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

FALL 2021



Sisters of
Bon Secours, USA

contents

“FAITH IN ACTION IS
LOVE, AND LOVE IN
ACTION IS SERVICE.
BY TRANSFORMING
THAT FAITH INTO LIVING
ACTS OF LOVE, WE PUT
OURSELVES IN CONTACT
WITH GOD HIMSELF,
WITH JESUS OUR LORD.”

— *Mother Teresa*

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DEAR FRIENDS

Sisters Exemplify Faith in Action.....	2
Caring for Creation and Advocacy.....	2
Award Ceremonies.....	2
Remembering Three Sisters.....	2

FEATURES

Sisters Commit to Sustainability.....	4
Ministry Volunteers Serve at Urban Farms.....	8
Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski and 50 Years of Friendship.....	12
Universal Ecological Conversion.....	14
Life as a Sister on Marian Hall.....	16

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Addressing Environmental Racism.....	18
--------------------------------------	----

SISTERS IN MINISTRY

Sr. Chris Webb.....	20
Sr. Winifred McCahill.....	21

VOCATION NEWS

Thoughts on Discernment.....	22
------------------------------	----

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Missionary Life: Democratic Republic of the Congo.....	24
Two Women Enter the Novitiate in Peru.....	27
Sr. John Celebrates Her 100th Birthday.....	28

AWARDS

Co-worker Recognition Awards.....	29
Josephine Potel Award.....	30

HEALTH SYSTEM NEWS

Man’s Best Friend Offers Comfort and Care.....	32
--	----

ASSOCIATE NEWS

Caring for Creation in Different Ways.....	34
--	----

LIVING OUR MISSION

Kathy Bond.....	37
Hamid Esfandiari.....	37

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

Meet Our New Ministry Volunteers.....	38
Faith in Action.....	39

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Young Adults Explore Synodality Together.....	40
---	----

RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER

Upcoming Overnight Retreats.....	42
Spiritual Nourishment and Blessings.....	43
Giving Tuesday.....	44
18 Months from Darkness to Light.....	45

AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Caring for Creation in Nature.....	46
Sr. Fran Gorsuch New Position.....	46
The Peabody Children’s Chorus Serenades Guests.....	47
Welcome New Staff.....	47
Thank You Retreat & Conference Center Staff.....	47
Sisters Help Nursing Students.....	47

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Good Ecological Practices Support Good Help.....	48
--	----

IN MEMORIAM

Sr. Mary Regina Flatley.....	50
Sr. Victoria Segura.....	51
Sr. Katherine Ann Durney.....	52

MINISTRY GRANTS

Ministry Grants Support Caring for Creation.....	54
Ministry Grants Awarded to Four Projects.....	56

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DEAR *friends*



Faith in Action, Caring for Creation

In this issue of *Focus*, we are seeing what it means to be a Bon Secours sister and a member of the Bon Secours Family as we explore our faith in action and our dedication to caring for all of creation. You will read about how the Sisters of Bon Secours and their ministries are implementing Pope Francis' Laudato Si' Action Platform, a worldwide multi-organization and multi-year commitment to take care of our Earth and be stewards of creation. You will also learn about the different ways we live our faith every day, including the fulfilling lives our retired sisters are living on Marian Hall.

Sisters of Bon Secours are committed women who collectively discuss and challenge what is going on in our world today, from social justice issues, such as human trafficking and gun control, to racism and ecology. Since our founding in 1824, our sisters have advocated for a more humane world. This focus, combined with our strong commitment to our faith, our relationship with God and our shared community life, is what helps define us as a Congregation of Women Religious.

Congratulations to our Employee Service Award winners, who we celebrated at our annual employee awards ceremony in September. At our employee engagement cookout, we awarded the Josephine Potel Award posthumously to Louis James Vanlandingham Jr. for his exemplary service to Bon Secours as a beloved member of the Retreat and Conference Center's housekeeping department. He is truly missed by all of us.

We also celebrated Sr. Fran Gorsuch, who has been named the chair of Region IV of the Leadership Council of Women Religious.

We all mourn the passing of three of our beloved sisters. Sr. Katherine Ann Durney was a part of our Congregation for 75 years and made so many wonderful contributions that will always be remembered. Our Past Provincial Sr. Mary Regina Flatley gave so much of herself to both the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, and the entire Congregation for over 70 years. Her wisdom and spirit will continue to live on in all of us.

Sr. Vicky Segura will be remembered throughout Virginia for her pioneering work in hospice care and by all of us for the many gifts she brought to our Congregation. They will all be missed and will always have a very special place in our hearts.

We are grateful to once again be celebrating Mass in our chapel. We are also pleased to be welcoming guests to our Retreat and Conference Center and hope you will take advantage of our schedule of inspirational programs and activities. The Retreat and Conference Center staff is also preparing for Giving Tuesday this November to raise funds for our ministries.

Our Associates have a new strategic plan that is designed to help each local group identify areas in which they would like to grow, from strengthening their sense of identity to growth, diversity, leadership and mission initiatives.

Several of us are preparing to take part in a Heritage Retreat to our Motherhouse in Paris this spring,

initiated by Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski. Others are looking forward to a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in February 2023. Additionally, the Congregation's Mid-term Assembly will be held this spring at Marriottsville.

As the holidays are soon approaching, I want to take this opportunity on behalf of all the sisters to wish each and every one of you a happy, healthy and blessed holiday season.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sr. Elaine Davia".

SR. ELAINE DAVIA
Area Leader
Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

Sisters of Bon Secours Commit to Seven- Sustainability in

Year Journey Toward the Spirit of Laudato Si'

If you were invited to participate in an extraordinary journey, one that would contribute to the transformation of our world, would you accept? Such an invitation has been extended to the universal Church, and the Sisters of Bon Secours have responded with a very enthusiastic **“YES!”**

by SR. MARY BETH HAMM, SSJ
*Coordinator: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation
Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours*

This fall, the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development launched a seven-year journey to sustainability in the spirit of Pope Francis' landmark encyclical *Laudato Si'* and invited the universal Church—families, parishes and dioceses, educational and health care institutions, organizations and Congregations of Women and Men Religious—to take concrete steps toward a sustainable future for our planet to fulfill the vision of *Laudato Si'*. All of us are collectively invited to embark on this common journey toward the realization of God's dream for our common home: that we, in the words of Bon Secours, “defend and care for all creation” and reverence all beings on this beautiful planet as members of God's beloved community.

Engaging *Laudato Si'* is not a new focus for the Congregation of Bon Secours. Since 2015, we have prayed with, reflected on, discussed and acted upon Pope Francis' encyclical. *Laudato Si'* has been a topic at several of our assemblies. In the spirit of *Laudato Si'*, the Congregation of Bon Secours made a commitment in 2020 to participate in the International Union of Superiors General of Catholic Religious Sisters' Sowing Hope for the Planet campaign by participating in Meatless Mondays, eliminating single-use plastics, decreasing water use and addressing fossil fuel use — intentional efforts to live out *Laudato Si'*.

Now we are poised to commit ourselves to respond to Pope Francis' invitation to embrace

The Creator of all calls us to practice a new way of living, one that is “good, true and beautiful.”

We commit to take action together because it is “urgent and necessary.”

— EXCERPTS FROM LAUDATO SI' #57, #205

“ecological conversion” in a deeper way, through our public commitment to embark on this seven-year mission toward sustainability. We will pack lightly for this journey. All we really need is a listening heart to hear deeply the cries of God’s poor people and the cries of Earth and the willingness to respond wholeheartedly in love and with Gospel hope to what we hear. Our destination is nothing short of personal and communal transformation toward the vision of integral ecology that Pope Francis describes so eloquently in Laudato Si’. He reminds us that:

“We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”

— *Laudato Si’* #139

Over these next seven years, the Congregation of Bon Secours hopes to be part of the critical mass needed to create a global paradigm shift which is nothing short of a transformation of our relationship with Earth and all who share our common home. In the coming year, with input from the Bon Secours Family, we will assess what we are already doing to address the goals of Laudato Si’, dream of what more could be possible, and design a plan that will enable us to more fully realize this vision of Pope Francis’ encyclical over the next seven years.



*We, Women of Healing, commit ourselves to:
defend and care for all creation and to
cry out with others against injustice and all that diminishes life on Earth.*
Sisters of Bon Secours Mission Focus

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris Laudato Si’ Action Platform Commitment Statement

In fidelity to this mission focus that has guided our Congregation choices since 2009 and desiring to live our healing charism more deeply, the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours Family joyfully embark on a seven-year journey with the universal Church toward integral ecology in the spirit of Laudato Si’.

Impelled by the Holy Spirit and renewed by the fire of our original call, we, women of audacious hope, commit ourselves to boldly live our charism of compassion, healing and liberation with those in our Bon Secours Family as we address the seven Laudato Si’ Action Platform goals: To respond to the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor,
Adopt a more sustainable lifestyle
Engage in and foster ecological education
Develop an ecological spirituality
Embrace ecological economics and
Advocate for public policies that protect our common home and all those who share it.

Through our participation in the Laudato Si’ Action Platform, the Congregation of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours Family are walking a “path to renewal” together with all people of good will who love and care for our common home, Mother Earth.

*Public Commitment
October 4, 2021*

Urban Farms Resonate WITH *Bon Secours* *Ministry Volunteers*

URBAN FARMING BECAME AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE LIVES OF OUR BON SECOURS MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS DURING THE '20-'21 VOLUNTEER YEAR WHEN OUTDOOR AND REMOTE SERVICE WERE IMPLEMENTED TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE.

The farm work speaks to the importance of caring for the land and food sustainability in our cities. Bon Secours Urban Farm and Shalom Farms address food insecurity and subsequent unfortunate health outcomes by harvesting and distributing fresh produce and through community-focused programs about nutrition.

Sitting on what was previously 14 vacant lots in West Baltimore, Maryland, Bon Secours Urban Farm is dedicated to improving health outcomes through community gardening, food distribution, nutrition education and a mobile farmer's market. The fresh produce grown on the farm is distributed to the community through Bon Secours Community Works' Community-Supported Agriculture Program.

"Being able to serve at Bon Secours Urban Farm has really opened my eyes to the injustices of food insecurity and the importance of having access to nutritious foods. It is great to learn so much about growing healthy foods and the many ways to cook and use the crops in different recipes. I can really see how much Bon Secours cares about the community they serve through the love that is poured into the farm," says Kelly Flynn, BSVM '20-'21.

Ministry Volunteers
Kelly Flynn (l) and
Brion Harris (r).



Ministry Volunteers
work in the urban garden
at Shalom Farms in Richmond, Virginia.



Colin Smith, director of Strategy and Economic Development for Bon Secours Community Works, explains how Bon Secours Community Works' Food Access and Urban Farm Program utilizes a three-fold approach to food access: production, distribution and education. He says, "In the production phase, we grow fresh vegetables on our quarter acre urban farm, located across the street from our main community center in West Baltimore. In the distribution phase, the food is harvested and distributed to food-insecure families in West Baltimore through our weekly delivery program and our Mobile Market, which sets up at strategic locations throughout the community. And finally, in the education phase, we know that it is not enough to just provide access to healthy food, so we also host nutritional cooking courses on how to prepare the produce that we deliver to families." ▶



Ministry Volunteers, BSVM '20-'21, (l to r) Brion Harris, Kelly Flynn and Sara Snowden work at the Bon Secours Urban Farm in Baltimore, Maryland.

Shalom Farms, located outside of Richmond, Virginia, began in 2008 through the United Methodist Urban Ministries of Richmond to meet the need for urban food justice work to be expanded in the area. The mission of Shalom Farms is to provide Richmond residents with more access to healthy food, empowering them to live healthier lives. Bon Secours Mercy Health is a major investor in the work and has partnered with Shalom Farms to create a variety of programs to increase access to healthy food for Richmond residents.

Serving at farms in both Baltimore and Richmond gave Ministry Volunteers an opportunity to practice the sisters' commitment as stated in their mission

focus statement: "to defend and care for all of creation." The farm work helps build community between workers, connects volunteers to the Earth, and opens space for new encounters with God.

“ I THINK FOOD JUSTICE IS A JUMPING-OFF POINT FOR US TO THINK ABOUT OTHER FORMS OF JUSTICE. I ADMIRE HOW SHALOM FARMS IS ABLE TO BRING NUTRITIOUS FOODS TO ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF RICHMOND.”

— MIKAYLA HAEFELE, BSVM '20-'21



Ministry Volunteer, Sara Snowden, BSVM '20-'21.

Mikalya explains how she met Christ in service on the farm: "On the last day at the farm, I got to help roll up fabric, which meant I had to work in this great, big, open field behind the vegetables. The sun was shining, and the sky was a vast expanse of blue, and the wind was blowing. Out there, rolling up the fabric with other Bon Secours Ministry Volunteers, I felt like I was meeting Christ in service. There was just something about the soft rays of light on my face and the way the wind whipped around the field to fill all our lungs with fresh air that just gave me this sense of peace in that moment, as if God had created that beautiful day just for us to enjoy it. That day was like God was smiling down on each of us."



Mikalya Haefele, BSVM '20-'21, lives out the Sisters of Bon Secours mission "to defend and care for all of creation."

SHALOM FARMS

In watermelon fields, I felt a pull
Towards something beyond myself.
At first the feeling was quiet and dull.
Then all at once I felt alive
As we were weeding each row, side to side.
But this time it wasn't the plants
That awoke my searching soul. It was the
Smiling face of Anna; the chat
With Crystal and David, working down the rows
That made my heart feel peace, at home.
The farm is an earthy place, but it makes
My thoughts abstract. I can't describe
How I feel inside as strangers become friends.
All it takes is time, and a few
Tools from the shed, for community to
Bloom from time shared in garden beds.

— MIKAYLA HAEFELE, BSVM '20-'21



◀ Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski with a co-worker at St. Mary's Hospital, circa 1970s.

50 YEARS of

Friendship

THERE ARE SO MANY WONDERFUL STORIES OF THE LONG-TERM IMPACT THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS HAVE ON PEOPLE THEY HAVE PROVIDED GOOD HELP TO OVER THE YEARS AND THE WONDERFUL RELATIONSHIPS THEY HAVE FORMED. WE WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU ONE STORY THAT CONGREGATION LEADER SR. ROSE MARIE JASINSKI RECENTLY SHARED.

Fifty years ago, Sr. Rose Marie was working as a nurse at St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, when she met a 19-year-old man trying to get into the Army who had come to the hospital because there was something suspicious on his pre-enlistment physical. Unfortunately, he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease, which in those days did not have a good recovery rate. The young man, whose name is Edwin "Butch" Travers, went through grueling treatments for years, but he did eventually recover. During this time, Sr. Rose Marie developed a relationship with Butch and his family and kept in touch with them over the years. In fact, their relationship meant so much to him and made such an impact on his life that she was invited to his wedding in the 1990s. Just a few years ago, Butch asked Sr. Rose Marie to join him and his wife for dinner when they visited Baltimore. They still keep in touch periodically, and in July, on the 50th anniversary of their first meeting, Sr. Rose Marie received the following email from Butch, which shared his latest battle with cancer:

It is hard to believe it has been 50 years since meeting at St. Mary's Hospital in July 1971. Hope all is well with you. My health is stable with the doctor not really knowing what to do. Blood work has been stable, and nothing is growing one year later. Sorry we met under cancer and now 50 years later are still having to deal with it. Hope you are having a good summer and life is good. Take Care, Be Safe and May God Bless.

In a recent conversation with Butch, he said, "Sr. Rose Marie was easy to talk to, and I remember all those years ago at St. Mary's how very kind and friendly she was. We just struck up a friendship at a time when my life was not looking very good. She was there to lend an ear, and we talked about everything, not specifically my medical issues. She made a lasting impression on me, and we have kept in touch over the years. I was honored to have her at my wedding."

For Sr. Rose Marie, this is truly a celebration of friendship. "I am touched he remembered the date and the year we met. His email was also a celebration of how far we have come in medical advances that



▲ Edwin "Butch" Travers on his wedding day, circa 1990s.

◀ Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski at St. Mary's Hospital, circa 1970s.

are saving lives and making his remarkable recovery possible; and even now, his continued drive to overcome another cancer," she says.

" I AM GRATEFUL TO HAVE PLAYED EVEN A SMALL PART IN HIS LIFE AND TO HAVE MADE AN IMPACT THAT IS STILL REMEMBERED 50 YEARS LATER. FOR THESE AND MANY REASONS, BUTCH HOLDS A SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART AND MEMORY. THIS STORY GIVES A VERY SPECIAL MEANING TO THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS GIVING GOOD HELP TO THOSE IN NEED."

— SR. ROSE MARIE
Congregation Leader

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR Universal Ecological Conversion

In the spirit of Bon Secours, we invite our Bon Secours Family to consider joining us in the global movement toward sustainability. Significant changes in values and behaviors are needed to make the transition to a sustainable planet. Recycling, composting and reducing energy consumption are some of the practices that have been adopted at our Marriottsville campus to protect our ecosystem and preserve natural resources for future generations.

“Historically, the Sisters of Bon Secours have been on a journey of ecological conversion for many years,” says Kevin Cassidy, director of operations for the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center. “The heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system was converted from a universal system to one that allows each room to be managed individually and turned off when not in use. A new interior lighting system was installed that included switching to LED lighting and recycling the old fluorescent lamps and ballast materials.”

It was estimated that the new lighting system would reduce energy consumption by 114,911.6 KWH per year — the equivalent of planting 32,877 acres of trees per year or the removal of 18,303 cars from the road per year. Building engineer for the Retreat and Conference Center Hamid Esfandiari notes, “These estimates are typically very conservative, and the actual savings may be even greater, especially when calculating in the savings associated with maintenance and upkeep costs.”



◀ For Food Service Manager Giovanni Faudale, composting is a part of his daily work routine.

Kevin says, “We try to incorporate sustainability into all that we do.” He offers some examples: “Five-gallon water bottle drinking stations have been eliminated and replaced with piped-in water from onsite wells, and for many years, our housekeeping department has been making its own biodegradable cleaning solutions. We have also stopped using plastic trash can liners except at the larger collection sites and reuse them when possible.”

Most single-use plastics have been replaced with reusable utensils and cups, paper straws and cardboard containers. Kevin emphasizes, “When plastic items cannot be avoided, we look for biodegradable options.” He knows these efforts are working: “We have seen a dramatic reduction in how often we need our trash to be picked up, from twice a week to once a week.”

More recently, recycling and composting stations have been installed in key areas. “Our goal is to divert trash and food waste from landfills, reducing atmospheric carbon and strengthening our local food system,” explains Food Service Manager Giovanni “Gio” Faudale. Most of the food served at Marriottsville is locally sourced and sustainable.



Local farmer Bonnie Hartman picks up non-protein food scraps from the Marriottsville campus kitchen and feeds it to her livestock.

“We try not to have much waste,” he continues. “We have two composting processes. Non-protein food scraps are saved and donated to a local farm, and the rest of our food waste is collected by a local composting company and converted into high-quality soil products.”

Gio says guests and staff are excited to be participating in these initiatives:

“We all care and are doing our part. Sustainability is a ministry-wide effort.”

“ THIS ENCYCLICAL IS AIMED AT EVERYONE. LET US PRAY THAT EVERYONE CAN RECEIVE ITS MESSAGE AND GROW IN RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE COMMON HOME THAT GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO US.”

— POPE FRANCIS
Laudato Si’



Life as a Sister on Marian Hall

SR. KATHLEEN MORONEY WAS JUST SETTLING INTO RETIREMENT ON MARIAN HALL WHEN THE PANDEMIC STRUCK. MARIAN HALL IS THE RETIREMENT HOME FOR THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS, ON THE MARRIOTTSVILLE CAMPUS IN MARYLAND. ALTHOUGH RETIRED LIFE IS NOT HAPPENING QUITE HOW SR. KATHLEEN IMAGINED, SHE HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE, AND NOW IS NO DIFFERENT.

“STAYING POSITIVE REALLY KEEPS ME GOING. IT GIVES ME PEACE AND TRANQUILITY AND EMPOWERS ME TO A BETTER LIFE.”

— SR. KATHLEEN MORONEY



Sr. Kathleen Moroney proudly displays her U.S. citizenship certificate.

Sr. Kathleen moved from Greenville, South Carolina, two years ago, where she was a chaplain for the Bon Secours St. Francis Health System. She entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in Cork, Ireland, in 1950 and started her nursing career at age 23. She fell in love with the United States when she came to study clinical pastoral education. She joined the United States Province in 1995 and became a United States citizen in 2017. Sr. Kathleen practiced nursing for 30 years and enjoyed a 24-year career as a chaplain. She continues to give the Eucharist to the sisters on Marian Hall who are unable to attend Mass.

Sr. Kathleen Moroney celebrates becoming a U.S. citizen.

“All of my life up to retirement had been focused on taking care of other people,” she explains. “I was looking forward to the freedom of fewer responsibilities and having time to explore some of the untapped God-given gifts I did not use or have time for when I was working.”

She cites her Irish sense of humor as one God-given gift she had long stowed away but now freely shares. She also plays the piano, writes poetry and loves to read and crochet. She first began crocheting to stay awake during the 2-5 a.m. shifts as a nurse, and she regards it as relaxation therapy. Last winter, children in need weighed heavily on her heart, and she crocheted 100 brightly colored caps and donated them to students at Cristo Rey Richmond High School in Richmond, Virginia.



Sr. Kathleen Moroney models a brightly colored cap she crocheted and donated to students at Cristo Rey Richmond High School.

A self-proclaimed extrovert, Sr. Kathleen has found ways to bring more social activities and fun to Marian Hall. Every Friday afternoon, the sisters on Marian Hall hold a prayer circle. Sr. Kathleen initiated a happy hour to immediately follow that has encouraged more sisters to participate and socialize afterward. She is happy to report the weekly happy hour is quite popular, and Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski and Area Leader Sr. Elaine Davia, along with several other sisters, regularly attend.

“If you do not have something in mind that you want to do once you’re retired, it can be very lonely, especially with COVID-19 restrictions,” says Sr. Kathleen. “Having a happy hour is really about companionship and conversation and staying connected to each other and the Congregation.” Sr. Kathleen looks forward to the end of the pandemic when she can be more social, go out to dinner with other sisters and have more opportunities to explore and share her many gifts.

Rising to the Challenge of Addressing Environmental Racism

To mark Laudato Si' week last May, the Bon Secours Family was invited to participate in the Ignatian 21-Day Environmental Challenge with a focus on the relationship between environmental and racial justice. Through the leadership of Sr. Pat Eck, and in collaboration with the Ignatian Solidarity Network and the Bon Secours Mercy Health System, this challenge was also made available to all employees of the health system through the online Be Well program, attracting over 700 participants. What an eye-opener this challenge was for all who participated.

For 21 days we entered into the complex work of understanding the connections between environmental injustices that disproportionately impact Black and Indigenous people and other people of color (BIPOC).

Daily emails that included short articles, podcasts, videos and other resources invited us to consider the environmental injustices that BIPOC experience related to land, water and air. Sadly, we learned that it is not by chance that most environmental hazards in the United States and globally are in communities where BIPOC live as well as in low-income communities.

Over the course of three weeks, we explored topics such as Indigenous land rights, the disproportionate impact of air pollution on BIPOC, water scarcity and lack of access to clean drinking water and how the policy of redlining has created urban heat islands, adversely

Climate justice and human dignity are intricately connected and "a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment..."
— Laudato Si' #49

*by SR. MARY BETH HAMM, SSJ
Coordinator: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation
Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours*

affecting the health of our sisters and brothers of color.

One topic that captured the attention of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation USA Team was the practice of land acknowledgements. For those of us who live in places where colonization existed, we must embrace the fact that the holy ground on which we stand was stolen from Indigenous people. Land acknowledgements are a first step in owning this truth. They are formal statements, often spoken at the beginning of meetings or events, that name the people native to the land and uplift their stewardship of and relationship to their traditional territories. As we reflected on this reality, we became aware that our land in the Marriottsville area, that is so expertly

tended by our wonderful grounds crew, was first lovingly tended by our Indigenous ancestors and connects us deeply to them.

At the conclusion of the 21-Day Challenge we were invited to ask God for the strength and hope to continue to engage in learning, prayer and action for environmental justice. As we do this, we also invite you, our readers, to join us, Women of Healing, in our mission to defend and care for all creation and to cry out with others against injustice, especially the disease of racism and all that diminishes life on Earth.

Environmental Racism

is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of color.

Environmental Justice

is the movement's response to environmental racism.

Redlining:

the practice of outlining areas with sizable Black populations in red ink on maps as a warning to mortgage lenders, effectively isolating Black people in areas that would receive lower levels of investment than areas where their white counterparts lived.

Sr. Chris Webb *Knows the Importance of Listening*

SR. CHRIS WEBB IS A CERTIFIED STAFF CHAPLAIN AND HAS WORKED AT BON SECOURS FACILITIES IN THE NORFOLK-PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA, AREA SINCE 2009. SHE HAS BEEN A BELOVED PRESENCE AT THE DEPAUL MEDICAL CENTER AND THE ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES PROVINCE PLACE OF DEPAUL AND PROVINCE PLACE OF MARYVIEW.



In addition to her formal chaplaincy training, Sr. Chris says she was taught well by the late Sr. Mary Gemma Neville on how to be compassionate and listen. When asked what her role is in these facilities, the first thing she says is that her role is to be present and listen. Patients and residents have often told her, “You are the only one who looks at us when we talk to you.” Sr. Chris believes that she and all the Bon Secours sisters represent the iconic presence of God wherever they minister.

Sr. Chris cites an example of a resident with dementia who needed to be moved from living with his wife to a different unit of the assisted living facility. Sr. Chris was present to listen and talk to both him and his wife and reassure each of them that the other one was doing well. Her support was invaluable to them.

Sr. Chris also helps with activities in the assisted living facilities, reading scripture and having discussions with the residents, singing with them and even exploring a butterfly theme, emphasizing the stages of a butterfly’s life and how it emerges from its cocoon. She has residents blow bubbles into the air to pass on their wishes and wisdom gathered over the years.

Working with staff, Sr. Chris provides a compassionate ear, offering them support, especially during these difficult COVID-19 times. She continuously shows them that she cares about their well-being. Sr. Chris is always willing to lend a hand at any of the area’s Bon Secours facilities, and nurses often call her when they need a memorial service or if a crisis arises.

This fall, both Province Place of DePaul and Province Place of Maryview were sold and are no longer part of Bon Secours Mercy Health. Sr. Chris is about to embark on the next phase of her ministry. She is exploring different opportunities in the area, but she knows that no matter what she does, it will be helping people. She is especially interested in feeding the hungry, working with the homeless and getting more involved in social justice and Black Lives Matter causes.

Walking around her neighborhood with her Jack Russell dog, she enjoys just talking to people and being a presence to listen. She is truly committed to caring for all of God’s creations and living out her faith every day.

Sr. Winifred McCahill *Gives Good Help to Those in Need Every Day*

SR. WINIFRED McCAHILL HAS BEEN A FAMILIAR FIGURE IN THE PARISH OF ST. DUNSTAN’S BOURNE END IN ENGLAND AND ITS SURROUNDING VILLAGES FOR THE PAST 21 YEARS. SHE TRULY EMBODIES GIVING GOOD HELP TO THOSE IN NEED AS SHE MINISTERS TO ALL OF GOD’S CREATIONS AND LIVES BON SECOURS’ CHARISM EVERY DAY.

Wherever the need is, you will find Sr. Winifred. It may be visiting the elderly and homebound who need a friendly ear to listen, or somebody to pray with or bring communion, or just someone to be sure they are seeing a doctor if there is a health concern. Sr. Winifred’s nursing background often allows her to recognize medical conditions that are going untreated.

One day a week, Sr. Winifred volunteers in the local hospital chaplaincy program visiting patients and praying with them. Sr. Winifred can also be seen visiting people in nursing homes, independent living facilities and day centers. Everyone has a different story to tell, and Sr. Winifred is there to augment the work of the busy staff. She tells us people welcome the confidentiality they have in talking to a sister.

As part of her parish work, Sr. Winifred visits the dying and prays with them and follows up with the family after the funeral. She visits families of children who are being baptized and welcomes new families to the church, introducing them to other young families. She supports young parents and especially works with families who have children with autism.

Sr. Winifred is a true ambassador for the Church, welcoming outside groups who use the Church’s social hall and helping with the day-to-day administration of the Church by

seeing that everything is prepared for services and looking after the sacristy.

Sr. Winifred lives in a bungalow attached to the Church. She does not have a car and

walks everywhere, giving her the opportunity to meet people of every age, gender, ethnicity and religion each day. Many people are just eager to have a chat or share their problems and, in many cases, their joys. “I truly feel like an apostle of the streets,” she says.

As we listen to Sr. Winifred’s story, it takes us back to the roots of the Sisters of Bon Secours, when sisters were familiar sights on the streets of their cities and villages bringing nursing care and support into the homes of those in need.

“It is an extremely rewarding life for me to be able to impact so many lives of all denominations and for people to know there is someone who they can turn to. Listening is the most important thing I can do for the people I serve.”

— SR. WINIFRED McCAHILL



Have You Ever Sifted Flour?

by SR. FRAN GORSUCH
*Vocation Director
 Sisters of Bon Secours, USA*

It was fun as a little kid to use a flour sifter to try to get it into the bowl but “accidentally” get the white stuff all over the table and yourself. Sifting really is the art of taking something that is somewhat packed and making it airier.

Discernment is akin to sifting. You might think of it as making room for the Spirit in decision-making. Discernment is a process whereby a person tries to hold themselves lightly and listen to the whispering and sometimes bellowing of the God who loves us! Often the process of discernment involves a choice between two or more things — often both or all of them good things. If the choice were between good and evil, it would be a whole lot easier. Today, for some women, the choice is between being a vowed member of a religious community, a sister, or committed as a Christian laywoman, perhaps single, perhaps married. I have the profound privilege as vocation director for the Sisters of Bon Secours to accompany women on this journey of sifting, of discernment.

Let me share a few of the thoughts on discernment three of the women recently shared with me:

“ I am discerning with the Sisters of Bon Secours because I believe that they exemplify the charism of healing, compassion and liberation to people in need. In my discernment, I am discovering that there is a community of like-minded individuals with the idea of being ambassadors for God through serving others.”

“ I am discerning with the Sisters of Bon Secours because of the attraction I developed after reading their mission statement and charism. I was also inspired by their action-oriented ministry of presence and profound conviction to preach Jesus by reproducing him through sharing the message of Hope and Good Help to those in need with profound conviction.”

“ In my discernment with the Sisters of Bon Secours, I am discovering that a close relationship with Jesus is rewarding. I currently see changes in my everyday life since discerning. I am more calm in stressful situations.”

So, the next time you make a cake, or cookies or brownies, even if you are not sifting the flour, say a prayer for the women who are in the process of discernment with the Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States, Peru, Kenya and in the Congo.

2021 COME & BE WEEKEND

We are hosting a **COME AND BE Virtual Discernment Retreat December 3-5, 2021**, for single Catholic women between the ages of 20-39. Please email **Sr. Fran Gorsuch** at fran_gorsuch@bshsi.org for information.

IF YOU ARE A SINGLE WOMAN aged 20-39, Catholic and curious about what it means to be a sister today, contact Sr. Fran Gorsuch at CBSVocations@bshsi.org or **410-442-3171**.

 @FranTheNun
 @SrsBonSecours

 facebook.com/
 BonSecoursVocations

 youtube.com/
 cbsvocations

Life *as a* Missionary

Most of us will never experience life as a missionary. Our thoughts and imaginations about missionary work may range from a great adventure to sacrifice or idealizing it. Yet, most individuals who become missionaries will say it is a calling nudging them to “go out into all the world and share the Good News with everyone.” — Mark 16:15

Since arriving in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on January 24, 2021, Srs. Jacqueline Rebour of France and Santos Nelida Romero Vasquez of Peru have been establishing our new mission in Kinshasa. Aside from setting up a new residence to accommodate 12 women, experiencing and learning the Congolese culture and its complexities have been a priority for living in the Congo. And, like all missionaries, they have built and maintained a learner’s attitude in adjusting to cultural norms and customs. An unexpected gift from our six years of visiting the Congo and the wonderful friends we developed is that our work led to Congolese Srs. Mireille Mundieme and Patience Ngubu beginning a three-year process to transfer to Bon Secours. Living with our sisters since March 19, they have been instrumental in helping Srs. Jacqueline and Nelida learn the local culture and set up the house.

Though French is the national language of the DRC, there are a total of 242 languages, and four are also considered national languages: Kituba, Lingala, Tshiluba and Swahili. Fortunately, Sr. Jacqueline naturally speaks French. Our sisters are also gaining a working knowledge of the local language and picking up words in Lingala and other dialects.

Aspiring missionaries often ask what it takes to be a missionary. Words that most often characterize a missionary are humility, flexibility, perseverance, lifelong learning, resilience, courage, compassion, loving, initiating and passion about God. Imagine all the necessary things one has to learn and do upon arriving to live in a new country. Now imagine, within six months upon arrival, also welcoming guests into a home where you have barely settled.

(continued on page 26)

by SR. PAT DOWLING
 Congregation Vocation Coordinator
 Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris

in the Democratic Republic *of the* Congo



Aspirants Rufina and Ruth make tomato sauce at the Sisters of Bon Secours’ house in Kinshasa.

The Sisters of Bon Secours Open Their Hearts *and* Home



▲ Sr. Pat Dowling (center) with aspirants (l to r): Clarisse, Ruth, Stephanie and Geraldine.

With open hearts, our four sisters opened their home and community for a three-month, live-in experience to eight young Congolese women aspiring to be Sisters of Bon Secours. Some of these young women have been in contact with us for four or five years and have been eagerly awaiting our arrival. Our small community grew overnight to 12, with a lively group of young Congolese eager to learn and experience our life as Sisters of Bon Secours. Organizing life and formation for eight young women may seem like a daunting task to some, yet it brings life, joy and camaraderie, with aspirants anticipating a way of life to be of service together to people in need in the spirit of Bon Secours.

While there is much to do and learn, with time, Bon Secours will become more firmly rooted in the culture and life of the Congo. How Bon Secours will be enculturated and incarnated will unfold as we become part of the Church and life there. Each day in Kinshasa dawns with new opportunities, waiting for us to learn about the diverse Congolese culture, experiences steeped in rich traditions, and how best we can accompany our brothers and sisters in life. Spending six weeks in Kinshasa with our sisters, assisting them as needed, has shown me that when generous hearts respond to God's call, all things are made possible, and we are enriched by graced moments of the unexpected.



Sr. Santos Nelida Romero Vasquez of Peru (center) shares her culture and celebrates Peru's Independence Day with aspirants.



Sisters in Peru celebrate two women entering the Novitiate.

Two Women Enter the Novitiate in Peru

by Sr. SANDRA LEÓN VALLADOLID
Sisters of Bon Secours, Peru

The religious vocation is the gift of God, who asks for an answer of faith. Like a seed, whose growth depends on the land in which it falls and on diligent care, thus the religious vocation depends on the person who receives it, on those who direct it, and on the Holy Spirit who ensures its growth. — *Matthew 13:8*

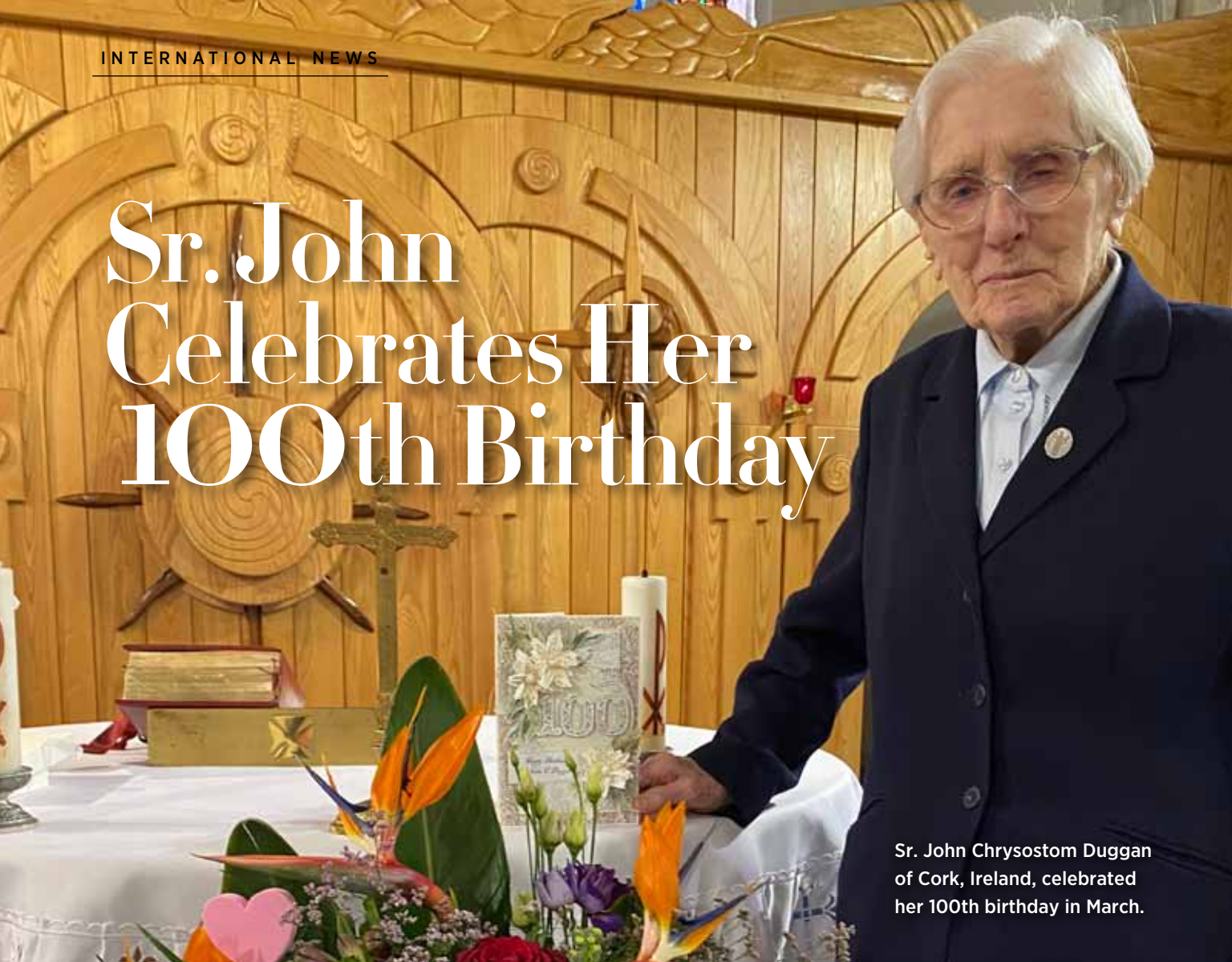
We thank our good God for our vocation to religious life in Bon Secours, and we are especially thankful for our two new novices: Miris Mi Ricopa Pizango and Celinda Guerrero Olivera, who continue to give a generous response to the call of God in their lives.

Walking with Jesus through prayer opens our ears, transforms our hearts and invites us to respond to the needs of others.

On Sunday, August 15, the day of the Assumption of our Mother the Virgin Mary, an important feast day for the Church, Miris Mi and Celinda took a step further in following Jesus, deepening their relationship with Him and reflecting on the grace and responsibility of their personal consecration to Him, as they enter the stage of the Novitiate. With great joy, we accompany these young women on their journey.

Currently, these two women are living in the Betel community in Lima, Peru, and receiving their religious formation through the Conference of Religious of Peru.

Sr. John Celebrates Her 100th Birthday



Sr. John Chrysostom Duggan of Cork, Ireland, celebrated her 100th birthday in March.

The Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, congratulate Sr. John Chrysostom Duggan of Cork, Ireland, on her 100th birthday. Sr. John is the first person in living memory to celebrate a 100th birthday in the Bon Secours Convent Cork. A celebratory Mass and luncheon were held on March 4, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, Sr. John could not receive visitors. Many people left greetings and gifts for her at the convent door.

Sisters from across communities in Ireland and Great Britain participated in a Zoom call to express their gratitude and thanks to Sr. John. Many of these sisters have been

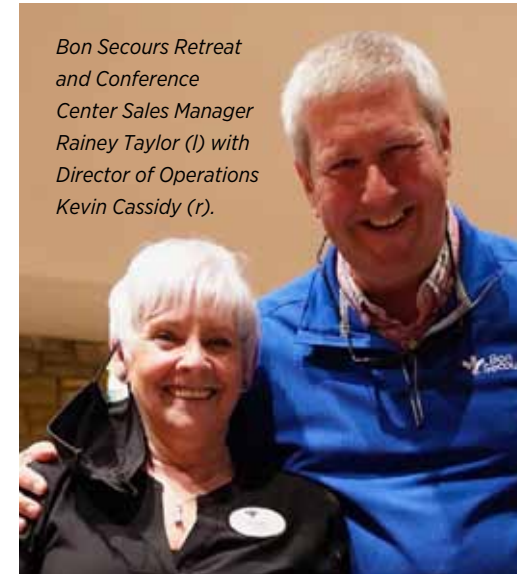
mentored by Sr. John in their formation and nursing training over the years. Special guest Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski joined the call to congratulate Sr. John on her special day. A highlight of Sr. John's celebration was a Zoom call with her two siblings, Sr. Isobel, a Dominican sister, in Galway, Ireland, and Sr. Agnes, a Sister of Nevers, in the United Kingdom.

Sr. John is in good health, up and about each day, and independent and active in community activities. She enjoyed the festivities and expressed her gratitude to God and the Sisters of Bon Secours for all the blessings she has received throughout her life.

SISTERS OF BON SECOURS *Recognize Co-workers*

WE CONGRATULATE OUR COLLEAGUES FOR THEIR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE.

These employees were recognized on Employment Engagement Day on September 30 at the Sisters of Bon Secours Co-worker Recognition event in Marriottsville.



Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center Sales Manager Rainey Taylor (l) with Director of Operations Kevin Cassidy (r).



Sisters of Bon Secours Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Coordinator Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ (l), with Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski (r).

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

JUL MORPURGO MONK

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

PATRICIA BAILEY

15 YEARS OF SERVICE

NIGISTI ABREHA
ROBIN GUNDERSEN
DELLA MCINTYRE
SHERRY NELSON
RAINEY TAYLOR

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

ADOLPHINA HENRIQUES
CAROL JESSEE
JENNIFER MURPHY

5 YEARS OF SERVICE

PATRICIA SULLIVAN
MICHAEL DUNN
SR. MARY BETH HAMM
OLIVIA STEBACK
HENOK TAMRAT
SHERRY VIEWEG

THE Josephine Potel Award



The family of Louis James Vanlandingham Jr., attended the Bon Secours Employee Engagement Event and accepted the Josephine Potel Award on his behalf.

All he ever did, and wanted to do, was help people. There was no job too big or too small. Whether you asked him specifically or not, Louis was coming to the rescue. If he could not fix it, he would put the call out to someone he knew could get the job done. He was respectful and very well respected. He never met a stranger. He knew and loved everybody. He had a vacant home and opened it to people down on their luck so they did not have to live on the streets.

Louis was the glue that held the family together. He loved his family. He was always visiting family and kept in touch with family members across the globe. In 1989, Louis received his greatest gift when his daughter, Avemaria, was born. He was so incredibly proud of her. She then gave him his right-hand man, his grandson Tristan, who loved riding in the truck with his Pop-Pop and eating all the groceries. Louis met and married the love of his life, Iris, on June 26, 2010.

Louis' family hopes his co-workers know how important they were to him. Louis held numerous jobs over the years and always talked about how much he enjoyed working at Bon Secours, saying, "This is the best job I've ever had. They really care about their people." He absolutely loved and adored the sisters and his co-workers, and they loved him. They called him Sunshine, and the Sisters of Bon Secours even took him on a heritage trip to the Motherhouse in Paris.

“WE GAVE LOUIS THE JOSEPHINE POTEL AWARD POSTHUMOUSLY FOR TRULY EXEMPLIFYING THE VALUES OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS AND THE SPIRIT AND MEANING OF THIS AWARD, AND WE WERE HONORED TO PRESENT THE AWARD TO HIS FAMILY.”

— SR. ELAINE DAVIA
Area Leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours

GIVEN POSTHUMOUSLY TO Louis James Vanlandingham Jr.

DECEMBER 29, 1964 – FEBRUARY 19, 2021

THE JOSEPHINE POTEL AWARD RECOGNIZES AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAS DEMONSTRATED EXCELLENT SERVICE AND CONSISTENTLY BEEN GOOD HELP TO THOSE IN NEED. THE RECIPIENT OF THIS AWARD EMBODIES THE SPIRIT OF “COMPASSION, HEALING AND LIBERATION” AND GUIDES THEIR HOME AND WORK LIFE WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE CHARISM OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS.

There are few more deserving than Louis James Vanlandingham Jr., whose life was cut short way too soon at the age of 56. He worked in housekeeping at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center and is described by family, friends and co-workers as having been a loving, caring and kindhearted man who was deeply committed in his faith. He had the biggest, brightest and most affectionate smile. He was a jokester who kept everyone laughing, and he had a big heart.



A pet therapy team gets ready to bring joy to patients and staff.

Man's Best Friend Offers Comfort and Care

BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH

PROVIDES HIGH-QUALITY CARE IN MANY WAYS. WHETHER IT IS A STATE-OF-THE-ART MRI MACHINE, A SPECIFIC MEDICATION, A DOCTOR'S DIAGNOSIS OR A NURSE'S COMPASSIONATE PRESENCE, BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH PRIDES ITSELF ON GIVING PATIENTS THE BEST CARE POSSIBLE.

However, some of the best care doesn't always come from a man-made machine or a health care provider; it comes from man's best friend, a therapy dog.

Susie Jeter, volunteer services coordinator for Bon Secours St. Francis in Greenville, South Carolina, oversees a partnership with Paws 2 Care that facilitates visits from therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers. Jeter says therapy dogs are not your average house pet. They receive high-quality grooming and hygiene care to meet hospital safety protocols. A therapy dog and its volunteer handler go through extensive training with Paws 2 Care to learn how to interact with patients and staff. Once the training is complete, the dog and its handler become members of the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, certifying their ability to provide care as a pet therapy team.

A patient's hospital experience can be filled with the challenges that a disease or injury brings. With those challenges come a wide range of emotions that a patient, with the assistance of a health care professional, must manage. Many of those emotions can be eased by a visit from a therapy dog. Some patients find the simple presence of a dog to be therapeutic. Others fully embrace the dog through petting, giving treats and reminding the dog that they are, in fact, a very good boy.

A therapy dog brings smiles to hospital staff.



“THERE IS SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT AN ANIMAL THAT PROVIDES AN INDESCRIBABLE LIFT TO OUR PATIENTS.”
— SUSIE JETER

Therapy dogs also bring joy to hospital staff who deal with life, death and everything in-between on a daily basis. Jeter says many of the staff keep treats on hand to spoil their helpers.

Sometimes there are difficult moments, when providing health care weighs heavily on the hearts of staff members. Jeter recalls a time when staff at the Bon Secours St. Francis Cancer Center lost a patient with whom they had developed a deep relationship. A therapy dog was sent to the facility to spend time with grieving staff members. “The therapy dog really lifted up their spirits while they were going through a very tough time,” says Jeter.

Pet therapy visits have been suspended during COVID-19. The therapy dogs are truly missed, and everyone eagerly awaits their return.

by AMY KULESA
Director, Bon Secours Associates

Care for Creation in Different Ways

IN THIS ISSUE OF *FOCUS*, WE SHARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM OF THREE OF OUR ASSOCIATES: Johnny Phillips of Norfolk, Virginia, Lynn Moran of Baltimore, Maryland, and Bonnie Duvall of Richmond, Virginia. **Johnny** is a beekeeper in his retirement and shares his thoughts about the essential presence of pollinators. **Lynn**, as a city dweller, shares how she has found nature to be a healing balm during the pandemic. **Bonnie**, a member of the Bon Secours U.S. Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee, shares her story of how she increased her involvement in ecological advocacy. They each have special areas of interest in which they have exercised their “care for all creation” as members of the Bon Secours Family.

Pollinator Awareness by Johnny Phillips

In biology, we learned pollination is required for many plant species to fully develop and reproduce. A substantial list of our vegetables, fruit and nuts (about one in three bites in our diet) is pollinated by bees. Sadly, more than one-half of the bees found in nature are in decline. In America, feral honeybee hives, abundant when granddad was a beekeeper, are now almost nonexistent.

What happened? Our modern agricultural technology developed highly effective insecticides which can render a queen honeybee sterile even

when a single contaminated worker returns to the hive. With the expansion of worldwide agriculture imports, destructive bee microbes and mites, previously only found in North Africa and Asia, are now prevalent everywhere.

Bees are among a number of potential pollinators such as wind, butterflies, wasps, spiders, flies, lizards, birds and other animals. But by far, bees are the most prolific and efficient pollinators; preserving and protecting them is more important than ever before.



Norfolk Associate Johnny Phillips (r) shares the art of beekeeping with his grandson Camden (l).

We can easily take action to help bees. You don't have to be a beekeeper like me; we can all help the bee environment by simply obtaining an inexpensive Mason bee house to hang in your yard. These can be found at almost any plant nursery or hardware store and only require annual cleanout attention. (Mason bees are superefficient pollinators.) Read and comply with labels on insecticides used for gardening and lawncare; do not use neonicotinoid products; and use organic insect control if possible. If your yard needs to be sprayed for mosquitos, use garlic-based products, now commonly available. Plant nectar-producing flowers and vegetables that will attract bees and strengthen hives. Dandelions and white clover found in most lawns are also full of nectar. If a bee infestation becomes a problem, contact the nearest bee club, and they will remove the bees for free. Please do not call an exterminator.

Finally, be a pushy pollinator advocate and educator. Our future food supply may depend upon your effort.

Reflection on Nature's Healing Presence by Lynn Moran



Baltimore Associate Lynn Moran experiences joy while volunteering at the Bon Secours Urban Garden.

Oftentimes the words flowing from the Scripture, “We are in, but not of, this world,” are cause for long pause, a deep breath and a search for their deeper meaning. Hearing these words from John's Gospel (17:16) stirs a notion of division between this world and the mystery awaiting us.

While the pandemic rumbles on, many of us have turned toward our friends and neighbors and even toward our own hearts in a deeper way, in finding some comfort. Since the pandemic put

a halt to many volunteer services, the great outdoors seemed like a healthy and viable way for me to get moving again.

It was while volunteering at the Bon Secours Urban Garden and readying a plot for planting, standing on the Earth in a state of surrender, that I, this child of God, stood selfless and spiritually naked in the sun's eye and experienced a joyful moment: being not of this world and joyful for being in it.

The Associates explore ways we can come together in service. One such opportunity in Maryland is the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC), an organization of partner congregations dreaming with their eyes open. IPC provides learning opportunities through its Faithful Green Leaders Training Program to help participants acquire the knowledge, skills, tools and support to lead their communities in raising awareness and restoring the waters of the Chesapeake region.

My Journey to Ecological Advocacy by Bonnie Duvall

My story begins many years ago while attending Earth Day at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where I first became aware of a movement toward ecological awareness and stewardship. I'd grown up with my grandparents, who instilled in me a very different lifestyle from many — composting, recycling, reusing and growing our own food — nothing was wasted.

Fast forward fifty years or so to witness Greta Thunberg speaking to the United Nations in 2019. I was ashamed of myself. I was Greta at one point in the distant past, and while my own lifestyle was in alignment with care of our precious Earth, I felt I had not done enough to “spread the good news” or try to influence others toward a more sustainable future. I resolved at that moment to become more educated and share what I knew with others.

Fortunately, I have the Bon Secours Associates and Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation networks in my life, filled with loving friends who also wish to learn and grow. I've been fortunate to find fertile ground in their minds and hearts to share what I have spent a lifetime living. I am a member of several organizations, including the Xerces Society, World Wildlife Federation and Master Gardeners, all of whom provide excellent educational materials in addition to supporting the environment. I readily share relevant and interesting articles and materials to support others' education.

After the death of George Floyd, I was determined to become more educated about the struggles



Richmond Associate Bonnie Duvall continues to learn and readily shares educational materials to support environmental awareness.

of African Americans in the South. I guess that's why learning is so important, so that we can understand the struggles of others and offer our love and support to overcome whatever obstacles are erected and educate others.

I feel blessed to be affiliated with the sisters and Associates of Bon Secours, where I've been able to ask difficult questions and receive candid answers. I've found a home with the Bon Secours' charism, where compassion and love in action show a kinder path to help overcome the world's challenges.

Kathy Bond

serves as the senior executive assistant for the Congregation of Bon Secours of Paris. She has worked with the Sisters of Bon Secours for 20 years, beginning with the Mission and Sponsorship Department of Bon Secours Health System and then transitioning to the International Congregation Office. Kathy currently supports Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski as well as Congregation Treasurer Sr. Pat Eck. Additionally, she is the recording secretary for the Congregation Team and works in the Archives of the International Congregation Office.



“I have stayed connected to God and my family during COVID-19 by keeping faith. I was given a plaque by Sr. Pat Eck at the beginning of the COVID-19 shutdown that hung on her office wall for many years. Every time I walked out of her office, I would see it, and it would resonate with me. It has the words from Psalm 46:10 engraved: “Be still and know that I am.” This Psalm is a comfort to me, and I now have it hanging above my desk in my home office.”

Hamid Esfandiari

has served as the building engineer at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center for 17 years. He oversees capital projects and provides services to help increase the life expectancy of critical equipment and infrastructure at the sisters' Marriottsville property, focusing on efficiency, cost savings and long-term solutions. One of his favorite projects has been the recent addition of the second elevator and how it ties in with the exterior of the building while supporting the center's daily activities and functions.

“I am very blessed to be a small part of the sisters' Good Help mission. Living a life of compassion is an infinite journey and learning to be Good Help has significantly improved my spiritual life. COVID-19 has provided an opportunity to learn and practice compassion, grace and gratitude in all aspects of life. When life during COVID-19 becomes overwhelming, we should share our resources with those in need and try to focus on what we have and be thankful for our abilities, our jobs and employers, friends, family, neighbors, health care providers and so much more.”



Welcome **2021-2022** *Bon Secours Ministry Volunteers*

For this service year, all of our ministry volunteers have been placed in Richmond, Virginia.



CAROLINE KIRK

University of Virginia
Hometown: Tallahassee, Florida



PATRICK KOLLMAN

University of Notre Dame
Hometown: Ann Arbor, Michigan



MICHAEL NEWCOME

University of Notre Dame
Hometown: St. Paul, Minnesota



ANDREW PAIK

University of Notre Dame
Hometown: Diamond Bar, California



ALLISON STARESINIC

University of Notre Dame
Hometown: Gibsonia, Pennsylvania



MARIO SULTAN

Florida Institute of Technology
Hometown: Palm Bay, Florida



◀ Brion Harris, BSVM '20-'21, (I)
helps a student on her computer.

Sara Snowden, BSVM '20-'21, (front)
joins students at the whiteboard. ▼



FAITH *in* ACTION



◀ Kelly Flynn, BSVM '20-'21, (I)
is ready to breakdown math problems.

When schools reopened last spring, Bon Secours Ministry Volunteers were excited to be back in person. They were serving at Sisters Academy in Baltimore, Maryland, and Cristo Rey Richmond High School, in Richmond, Virginia, and they were finally meeting face-to-face with the students and staff they had been helping online all year. After months of supporting virtual learning and finding new and creative ways to Be Good Help, the normalcy of being in a classroom felt like a blessing.

The volunteers were pleased to discover the relationships they had cultivated virtually only grew stronger, and they were able to experience more fully Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry's mission to live compassionately, receive and offer healing and share in liberation.

Young Adults EXPLORE Synodality Together

by NICHOLAS STEIN
Program Manager
Bon Secours Young Adults

BON SECOURS YOUNG ADULTS HOSTED A VIRTUAL ENGLISH-SPEAKING, INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER FOR PEOPLE FROM ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, IRELAND AND GREAT BRITAIN ENTITLED “SYNODALITY—A PATH TO THE FUTURE.”

Joined by special guest presenter, Sr. Nathalie Becquart, XMCJ, the undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican, more than 50 participants spent the day exploring what it means to journey together as a people of God and to create a more synodal, or together, community and Church.

A Call to Participation

Pope Francis has called on the Church to embark on a multiyear journey to explore synodality under the direction of the Vatican Synod of Bishops, culminating in a Synod Assembly in October 2023.

Sr. Nathalie invited the Bon Secours Family to intentionally participate in the synodal journey. One of the main take-aways from her presentation was the notion that this process hopes to move us from our common vision and understanding of the hierarchical, pyramid Church to the synodal Church. As Sr. Nathalie elaborated, “With Pope Francis,



Pope Francis joins hands in solidarity with young people.

synodality now means ‘not some of the bishops some of the time but all of the Church all of the time.’”

Sr. Nathalie called on everyone to get involved in the process at the local level and to encourage friends, family and community members to do the same. No matter where we find ourselves, we all can be people of prayer.

The Importance of Encounter

The tectonic shifts in communication and relationships that we have all experienced since the start of the pandemic have only reinforced the vital importance of encountering each other in honest and life-giving ways. As a ministry, Bon Secours Young Adults shifted quickly to virtual encounters in the early days of the pandemic, offering retreats, personal check-ins and small, faith-sharing groups via Zoom and other technologies. In the first year of our new realities, we saw that these offerings expanded our networks of friends and participants and our ability to be Bon Secours without traveling to in-person locations.

In year two, as we have worked on various Congregation initiatives, the opportunity for an international encounter presented itself as a way to continue to build relationships without borders among young adults and other members of the Bon Secours Family. Opening this space has led to new and unexpected conversations and understandings. With a question as simple as: “How are you active in your community?” the voiced realities of our brothers and sisters shed new light on our own realities and ways of looking at the world.

These encounters with each other, guided by the Holy Spirit, beckon us to deeper relationships, greater solidarity and the ability to truly journey together. While many of us long for reconnection in non-virtual spaces, these new lifelines and opportunities will hopefully continue to be a sacred space of listening, dialogue and prayer.

For Young Adult Ministry information, follow us on Instagram and Facebook: @bonsecouryoungadults.



The Prayer of the Synod: *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus*

SISTERS OF BON SECOURS, USA

Attributed to St. Isidore of Seville (560-636), this prayer has been traditionally used at councils and synods for hundreds of years. This version was specifically designed for the Church’s synodal journey from 2021 to 2023.

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.
Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.
All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever.

AMEN.

2021-2022

UPCOMING Overnight Retreats

2021

Angel Messages, Meditations, Stories & Prayers

Guided by Maureen Conroy, RSM
Evening retreat with overnight option

Friday, December 3, 2021

Love is the Greatest Healer

Guided by Maureen Conroy, RSM
Day retreat with overnight option

Saturday, December 4, 2021

2022

Making All Things New

Guided by Paul Gallagher

Friday-Sunday, January 7-9

Winter Directed Retreat

Guided by Pamela Jablon, SSND

Friday-Monday, January 14-17

Please visit rccbonsecours.com for details and other retreat options that are not listed here. Register for retreats online at rccbonsecours.com or call 410-442-3120.

2022

Winter Directed Retreat

Guided by Fr. Michael Schlepner

Friday-Thursday, January 14-20

Breakthrough: Discerning God's Will in my Life

Guided by Fr. Nicholas Amato

Thursday-Sunday, February 24-27

The Lenten Summons to Green Our Lives

Guided by Chris Koellhoffer, IHM

Friday-Sunday, March 4-6

At the Water's Edge: The Sacred Space of Transition

Guided by Debra Donnelly-Barton

Friday-Sunday, March 11-13

The Way of the Franciscans: A Lenten Journey

Guided by Daniel Horan, OFM

Friday-Sunday, March 25-27

 **Bon Secours**
Retreat & Conference Center

Retreat participants enjoy outdoor yoga.

REOPENING BRINGS *Spiritual Nourishment* & *Blessings*

Guests are thrilled to be back at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center. The center was closed for four months during COVID-19 and began cautiously reopening in mid-July 2020. Protocols have been revised several times as the center follows the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and adheres to the safety standards set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the state of Maryland.

“It was a slow start at first, but our reopening has run very smoothly. There has been very little interruption to our retreats,” says Jennifer Murphy, manager of retreats and events for the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center.

“GUESTS ARE EXCITED TO HAVE A SAFE PLACE TO VISIT AND RECEIVE THE SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT THEY DESPERATELY NEED.”

— JENNIFER MURPHY

Many guests chose the center as the first public place they visited during COVID-19 restrictions. “Guests have shared that although they were hesitant or even anxious before

Area Leader
Sr. Elaine Davia makes a collage at the Women's Wellness Retreat.



arriving, their fears were alleviated from the moment they checked in,” says Jennifer. “Face-to-face interaction, even from a safe distance, is something everyone is craving right now. Connecting with a presenter, spiritual director or another guest cannot be replicated virtually.”

A blog was started on the Retreat and Conference Center's website to engage guests and help bridge the gap during the COVID-19 closure. Many of the center's gifted staff and presenters contributed, and while the frequency of posts has been scaled back now that the center is open, the blog will remain as another tool for connecting with guests near and far.

“The staff deeply appreciate the faith of the sisters to keep the center going during these challenging times,” states Jennifer. She describes a renewed sense of appreciation for the guests once again filling the halls. “As much as the guests receive when they visit, the staff also receive blessings from their presence and their energy in the halls, in the meeting rooms and on our grounds.”

Bon Secours Ministries

PARTICIPATE IN Giving Tuesday

LAST YEAR WAS NOT EASY. THE MINISTRIES OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS HAD TO RECONFIGURE, RE-STRATEGIZE AND REIMAGINE HOW TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY.

by TESSA NEWTON
Marketing Manager/
Sales Associate
Bon Secours Retreat
and Conference Center

The Retreat and Conference Center was especially impacted, having to close for four months and then operate at greatly reduced capacity for many more. Out of those challenges, came the idea to host a Giving Tuesday fundraiser to recoup some of what was lost during that time.

A small team of Marriottsville staff began brainstorming, and a virtual gala was born. With a goal of \$19,700 — a nod to the sisters' 197th anniversary — and our very own Bon Secours emcee, Andrea Springer, we exceeded our goal by over \$10,000. Beyond the incredible financial generosity, we were blessed to see how deeply our community loves and appreciates the work that we do year after year. It was humbling

and gave us the boost to continue moving forward in the uncharted waters of the pandemic.

With the success of the inaugural fundraiser in 2020, we have decided to hold another Giving Tuesday fundraiser in 2021— this time to benefit all of the sisters' ministries: Vocations, Associates, Young Adults, Volunteers as well as the Retreat and Conference Center. It will be an opportunity for the sisters' ministries to reach a wider audience and share their work and all the ways they are Good Help to Those in Need. Each ministry works diligently to live the Gospel within their communities, and we believe their work is enriching the lives of those they meet. This fundraiser will allow them to continue serving those in need spiritually, physically and mentally.

Keep an eye on your inbox and mailbox for more information on our Giving Tuesday fundraiser on November 30. In the meantime, if you would like to make a donation to a specific ministry or to the Sisters of Bon Secours directly, visit bonsecours.us/donate.



18 MONTHS from Darkness to Light

by FR. NICHOLAS AMATO

Try sitting in a darkened room for 10 minutes. What comes to mind? Does the darkness produce stress or calm? Are your thoughts positive or negative? Now try to do that for 18 months. That was a bit of the experience for me as I was restricted in coming out of my apartment in the retirement community in which I live.

In the first three or four weeks of the lockdown, I realized that every day seemed to be the same. I even lost track of what day it was. I began to feel tight, restricted, confined and lonely. It was as if my life outside of my bedroom, living room and kitchen no longer existed.

At one point early on, I thought of St. Paul and St. John of the Cross and their solitary confinement and how the light broke through their darkness. For Paul it became a pulpit

from which he sang God's praises and wrote the sacred scriptures. For John it became the place of some of his most eloquent poetry. What was it to be for me?

From my own confinement, I began celebrating the weekends with Zoom parties with family and friends. Sunday became the day of Mass at the dining room table, preparing meatballs and spaghetti, and watching a Netflix movie. I began to look forward to the weekends.

As restrictions began to lift and the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center reopened in stages, Mass in a public space with the sisters and a few guests present became a weekly feast. Life was beginning to feel normal. Light was overcoming darkness. I was grateful that the transition began even in the confinement.

CONGREGATION

AROUND THE



Japanese Maple

Caring for Creation



Canada Geese

▲ The Sisters of Bon Secours enjoy and care for this rare 109-year-old Japanese Maple tree on their Marriottsville campus.

◀ Canada Geese are frequent and welcome visitors at the Marriottsville campus.



CONGRATULATIONS

Vocation Director **SR. FRAN GORSUCH** has been named the chair of Region IV of the Leadership Council of Women Religious.



The Peabody Children's Chorus sang outdoors at the Marriottsville campus for their guests and our sisters during the pandemic.

Peabody Children's Chorus Serenades Guests and Sisters



WELCOME

◀ **SR. DOROTHY BROGAN** has joined the Baltimore-Ellicott City cluster of sisters remotely, while she continues to live and minister in Greenville, South Carolina.


KATHY DAVIS ▶ has come full circle. She was the first lay director of the Associates and is now back working with Sr. Fran Gorsuch in Vocations.





THANK YOU

Kevin Cassidy, director of operations for Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, held a party this fall to thank **MARRIOTTVILLE STAFF** for going the extra mile during COVID-19.

CONNECT WITH US ON ALL OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS:

 [Instagram.com/SistersofBonSecoursUSA](https://www.instagram.com/SistersofBonSecoursUSA)

 [Facebook.com/BonSecoursVocations](https://www.facebook.com/BonSecoursVocations)

 [@SrsBonSecours](https://twitter.com/SrsBonSecours)



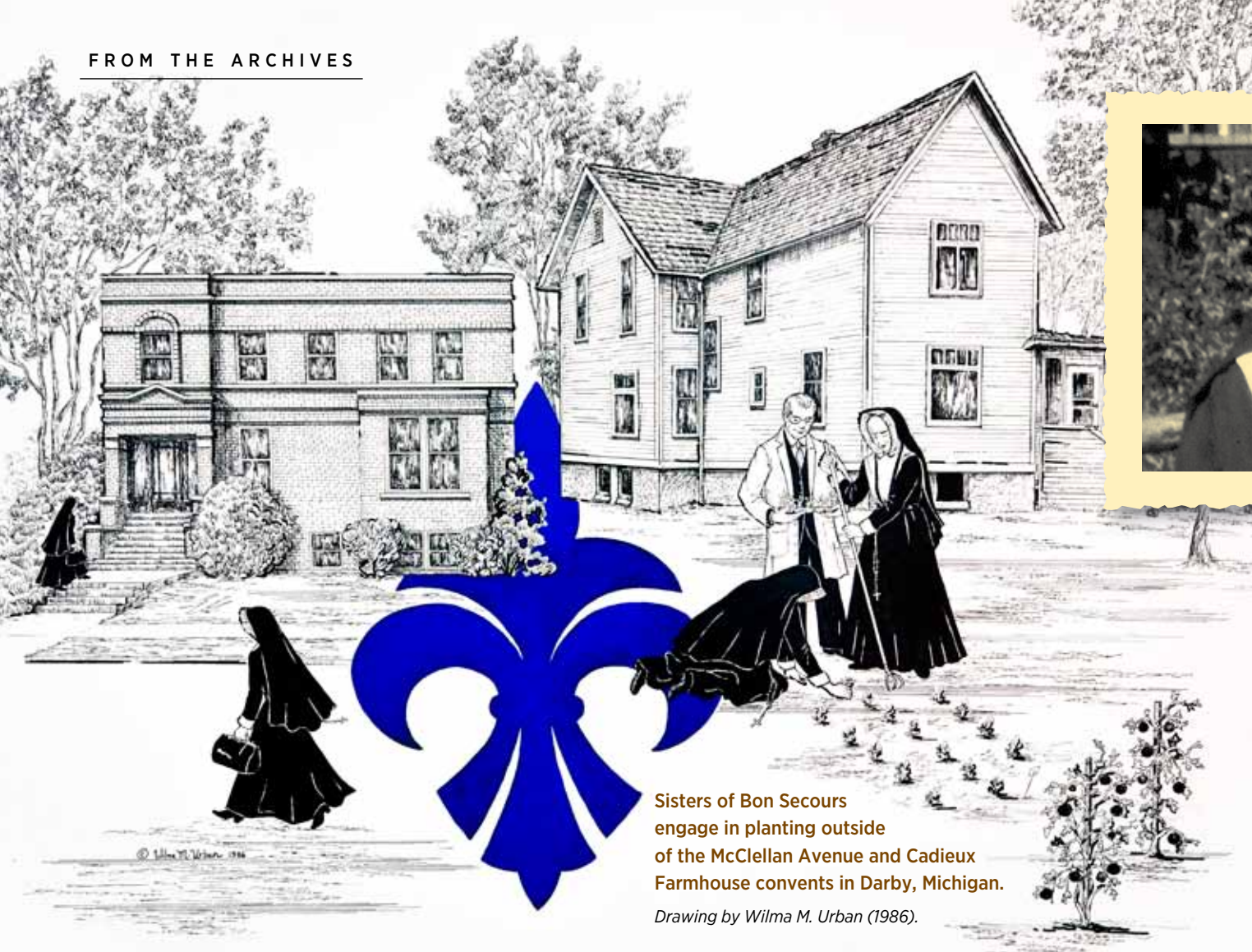
Angel Brooks



Ashley Young

SISTERS HELP NURSING STUDENTS

The Sisters of Bon Secours were pleased to award scholarships to two nursing students who attended the Bon Secours School of Nursing in Richmond.



Sisters of Bon Secours engage in planting outside of the McClellan Avenue and Cadieux Farmhouse convents in Darby, Michigan.

Drawing by Wilma M. Urban (1986).

Photo Credit: All images courtesy of the archives of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA.

Good Ecological Practices Support Good Help

by JENIFER KIRIN
Special Collections Archivist

SINCE THEIR ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1881, THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS HAVE BEEN ACTING IN ECOLOGICALLY CONSCIOUS WAYS. THEIR STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES IS STRONGLY ALIGNED WITH THEIR VOW OF POVERTY AND THEIR DETERMINATION TO SERVE THE SICK AND POOR.



◀ Sr. Mary of the Compassion O'Connell planted a garden in Detroit, Michigan.

In the past, sisters in Baltimore, Maryland, Detroit, Michigan, and Darby, Pennsylvania, used the land around their convents and health care facilities to engage in a form of subsistence farming.

In Baltimore and Darby, the sisters also kept a small number of livestock and poultry.

Unlike gardens which yield plants that are consumed only by their owners, the planting and harvesting done by the sisters also fed the sick and poor individuals that were in their care. As explained in the book *A Century of Caring: The Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States 1881-1981*, the land around the sisters' West Baltimore convent was described as "well cultivated with fruit trees and a large vegetable patch. The produce from it likewise found its way to the convent table and to the tables of the needy. Nothing was wasted."

When reflecting upon her time in Detroit in the 1920s, Sr. Mary Gertrude McGonegal (1891-1981) reported that,

“MOTHER [MARY OF THE COMPASSION O'CONNELL] PLANTED A GARDEN, AND WE NEVER GOT ANYTHING [TO EAT] BUT WHAT CAME FROM THE GARDEN, THAT IS VEGETABLES, CABBAGE, SPINACH AND TURNIPS.”

— SR. MARY GERTRUDE MCGONEGAL

By making good use of the natural resources available to them, the sisters were able to conserve money for the care of their patients and to help build their health care facilities.

Out of gratitude for their services or with a view to supporting the Sisters of Bon Secours' mission, lay people gave cows and chickens to some of the first sisters who came to the United States. In 1881, Sr. St. Ferdinand LaHalle (1841-1889) was one of the three sisters chosen to bring the charism of healing, compassion and liberation to Baltimore, Maryland. Sometime between the establishment of the convent in 1882 and her death in 1889, Sr. St. Ferdinand accepted a young cow named Molly from the sibling of a man the sisters had nursed through typhoid fever. Molly was kept on the land around the Baltimore convent and provided the sisters and those in their care with milk and butter for many years. In the 1920s, the sisters in Darby were given two cows plus the necessary equipment to farm the land. As stated in *A Century of Caring*, the sisters in Darby had "their own supply of vegetables, milk, and eggs."

While it is not clear how many chickens were provided, the mention of eggs indicates that chickens were part of the gift.



▲ Sr. St. Ferdinand LaHalle was one of the three sisters chosen to bring the charism of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris to Baltimore, Maryland, in 1881.

IN MEMORIAM

Sr. Mary Regina Flatley

1932-2021



Sr. Mary Regina Flatley died on August 23 at the age of 89 in her home on Marian Hall in Marriottsville. She was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1932 and attended Blessed Virgin Mary Grade School in Darby and Notre Dame High School in Moylan. After graduation, Sr. Mary Regina entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in 1951 and professed her final vows in 1959. She attended the Bon Secours School of Nursing in Baltimore and received her B.S.N. from Villanova University and her master's in education with a focus on counseling from the University of Delaware. She also received a certificate in spirituality/spiritual direction from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California.

Sr. Mary Regina worked as a staff and head nurse at Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital and St. Francis Country House in Darby, and she was a clinical director in the Bon Secours School of Nursing in Baltimore. She served as vice president of mission and associate director at Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital as well as vice president for mission at Bon Secours DePaul Hospital in Norfolk, Virginia. Sr. Mary Regina was also regional vice president of sponsorship for the Bon Secours Health System's Southeast Region in Venice, Florida.

"Sr. Mary Regina was the director of nursing when I was a student and was responsible for the early formation of many of us as a sister of Bon Secours," said Sr. Elaine Davia, area

leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA. "She was a wise woman who gave me principles to live by early on that still help me today. One principle was to trust in the Lord and the wisdom of others when caring for patients and in many situations. She shared generously many gifts throughout her years as a sister of Bon Secours."

Over the years, Sr. Mary Regina served on the boards of many Bon Secours facilities and was president of the Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital board of trustees, and the boards of Bon Secours St. Francis Xavier Hospital and Bon Secours St. Joseph Healthcare Group. She was also president of the Bon Secours Health System board from 1986-90.

Sr. Mary Regina served many roles in the Congregation to include provincial councilor, formation director and USA centennial year coordinator. She served for two terms as provincial of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, and in November 1999, she was elected to the Congregational Leadership Team in Paris, France.

After returning to the United States in 2005, she retired to Venice, Florida. While in Florida, she assisted in the formation program, holding classes in spirituality and other topics. Sr. Mary Regina returned to Marriottsville in December 2010.

(continued on page 53)

IN MEMORIAM

Sr. Victoria Segura

1941-2021



Sr. Victoria Segura, M.D., died on August 23 at the age of 79 at Bon Secours Community Hospice House in Richmond, Virginia. Born and educated in the Philippines, Sr. Vicky, as she was known, received her medical degree from the University of the Philippines in 1967 and entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in April 1979, professing her final vows in 1986.

She was a medical examiner in New York City before joining the Sisters of Bon Secours. Upon entering the Congregation, she served as a pathologist at St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, before moving to Grosse Pointe, Michigan, in 1981 where she worked with a family practice. From 1986-2000, she was the medical director of Bon Secours Hospital Hospice of Southeast Michigan. Sr. Vicky became board certified in hospice and palliative medicine, and in 2000 she began serving as medical director of Hospice/Palliative Care for Bon Secours Richmond Health System in a program known as the Care of the Dying/End-of-Life Initiative. Sr. Vicky was a leader in the hospice movement and became the first full-time hospice physician in central Virginia.

In 2019, after many years of providing direct patient care, Sr. Vicky took on a new role helping to raise funds to complete the new Bon Secours Community Hospice House, just outside of Richmond. "Our goal is to change

end-of-life care from a medical experience only to a human and family experience. The Sisters of Bon Secours was founded in 1824 to care for the sick and dying, and Community Hospice House is truly an extension of the sisters' original mission," said Sr. Vicky in an interview about her new position.

In March 2021, Sr. Vicky was honored at the Richmond Times-Dispatch's Strong Voices event in celebration of women who have impacted and shaped the Richmond community. She was also featured in a Richmond Times-Dispatch video commemorating Women's History Month.

She held active roles in the Congregation on the formation team and provincial council. Previously, she served as vocation director and chaired the formation task force. Sr. Vicky served as president of the board of directors of Bon Secours St. Mary's Health Care Foundation, St. Mary's Hospital, Stuart Circle Hospital, Richmond Community Hospital and Bon Secours Memorial Regional Hospital, all in Richmond, Virginia.

Sr. Vicky was an avid gardener, an accomplished photographer and loved to travel. She was honored to have worked with our sisters in South Africa

(continued on page 53)

Sr. Katherine Ann Durney

1923-2021

Sr. Katherine Ann Durney, affectionately known as Sr. Kay, died on July 23 at the age of 97 in her home on Marian Hall in Marriottsville. She was born in 1923 in Wilmington, Delaware, and attended St. Thomas-Lore & Bayard Grade School and Wilmington High School. A graduate of St. Francis School of Nursing in Wilmington, Sr. Kay was a registered nurse when she entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in 1946. She received her nursing home administrator license in 1977.

Over the years, Sr. Kay served as an operating room and night supervisor at Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland; director of nursing and assistant administrator at Villa Maria Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Miami, Florida; and as assistant administrator in Bon Secours Hospital in Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

She became a certified pastoral care chaplain in 1987 and, for several years, ministered to patients and residents in the Bon Secours Nursing Care Center in Ellicott City, Maryland. She also served in Virginia as chaplain at Bon Secours DePaul Hospital and Provincial Place of Norfolk. In an interview about her career prior to her death, Sr. Kay said, "It was a deeply rewarding and fulfilling experience to minister to people who hunger for love, compassion and the word of God."

Sr. Kay served as president of the board of trustees of Bon Secours Hospital in Grosse Pointe in the early 1960s and as president of the board of trustees of Villa Maria from 1975-1985. She served as a provincial councilor for the Sisters of Bon Secours and as a member of the Sponsorship Task Force. Additionally, Sr. Kay was on the board of directors of Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore and Bon Secours Housing, Inc.

After Sr. Kay retired in 2000, she volunteered at Bon Secours Assisted Living facility in Norfolk, Virginia, before continuing her retirement in Marriottsville. She enjoyed having meals with the other sisters on Marian Hall and partaking in activities such a bingo, word games and crafts.

She celebrated her 75th Jubilee year in 2021, and said, "My community has always been a source of strength and inspiration to me and has given me many opportunities to grow spiritually and professionally. My primary life source has been and continues to be prayer. What a wonderful life I have experienced as a Sister of Bon Secours for 75 years."

Area Leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA, Sr. Elaine Davia described Sr. Kay by referring to Proverbs 31:25-26, "She is clothed with strength and dignity;

(continued on next page)



Sr. Mary Regina Flatley

(continued from page 50)

"I look back on the whole experience as one long journey with many milestones over 70 years. In one sense, it seems like a long time and in another sense, it doesn't feel that long," Sr. Mary Regina said in preparation for her 70th Jubilee planned for this fall. "I've been blessed by being in service with people, through nursing and care of the elderly. Service is what it's all about. I've enjoyed watching people grow and sharing experiences with them as we each take steps forward on our own journeys."

In recent years, Sr. Mary Regina enjoyed reading mysteries and espionage novels. She also spent time continuing to deepen her own spirituality. She used the computer to keep in touch with

family, friends and the many people she encountered during her ministries. When she lived on Marian Hall, she assisted the staff and managed a book and craft cart.

A wake service and Celebration of Life Mass were held in the Sisters of Bon Secours Chapel in Marriottsville, and the burial was in Baltimore.

Sr. Mary Regina is survived by sisters-in-laws Mary Flatley and Sue Flatley. She was predeceased by her parents James and Irene Flatley, brothers John, James and Hugh Flatley, Sr. Rose McDermot, brother-in-law Daniel and sister-in-law Sandra Flatley.

Sr. Vicky Segura, M.D.

(continued from page 51)

caring for people with HIV/AIDS. Throughout her life journey, prayer remained the center of her life.

"Sr. Vicky was a creative, good and generous friend and made so many contributions to our Congregation and to the people of Richmond. She was truly a pioneer in the field of hospice and palliative care, and her contributions to the field will have an ongoing impact on so many people in the future. She will indeed be missed," said Sr. Elaine Davia, area leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA.

A viewing and Mass of Resurrection were held at Saint Bridget Catholic Church in Richmond, Virginia, and the burial was at Mt. Calvary Cemetery.

She is survived by her sister Ester Barcenilla and brothers Val Segura and Tony Segura. She was predeceased by her mother Benjamina Osmania Valencia, M.D., her father Gregorio Segura and her brother Alex Segura.

Sr. Katherine Ann Durney

(continued from page 52)

she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue." Sr. Elaine continued, "Sr. Kay was loved and lived the Bon Secours charism of bringing Good Help to Those in Need."

A wake service and Celebration of Life Mass were held in the chapel at Marriottsville. In accordance with her wishes,

Sr. Kay was buried in Richmond, Virginia, next to her biological sister Sr. Elizabeth Durney, also a Sister of Bon Secours.

Sr. Kay is survived by her nephews Henry Daniel Lemon and Marty Lemon; Marty's wife Deborah Perala; and her niece Pamela LeManico.

Ministry Grant Fund

SUPPORTS

Caring for Creation

THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS MINISTRY GRANT FUND SPEAKS TO THE MISSION OF THE SISTERS.

The purpose of the fund is to enhance the sisters' service and outreach by allocating support to organizations whose goals and intent align with their own. Priority is given to smaller start-ups and local organizations that address the specific needs within their communities. Through these targeted efforts, the sisters are able to bring about real change on a grassroots level.

“MANY OF THE PROPOSALS HAVE LIMITED RECOGNITION. THEIR WORK FOCUSES ON THE PARTICULAR NEEDS OF PEOPLE WHOSE NEEDS ARE OFTEN NOT MET. IN CONSIDERING THESE PROPOSALS, WE SEE IN EFFECT WHAT JESUS DID.”

— TOM BUTLER

Chairperson, Ministry Grant Fund Committee

Tom is a recent Bon Secours Mercy Health retiree, and for more than ten years, he has lead a small group of volunteers entrusted by the sisters to review applications and select ministry grant recipients. “Our committee is so proud to be able to facilitate and encourage others to embrace the sisters’ mission,” says Tom. “It is inspiring to read the ministry grant proposals and learn about all of the good work being done in the world.”

Through the ministry grants, the sisters bring a message of compassion, healing and liberation as well as hope and reconciliation to the poor and those most in need.

As the sisters’ awareness surrounding ecology and the environment has evolved, they have revised the criteria for ministry grant funding, and caring for the Earth is at the top of the list.

Other criteria include projects that: focus on eliminating violence in all its forms; ease the displacement of people fleeing political unrest and natural disasters; serve populations who are economically poor and vulnerable; meet unmet or underserved needs; or address a holistic, health-related issue. The sisters recognize the connection between climate change and negative outcomes such as poor health, poverty, violence and displacement, and the devastating impact on those who are poor and vulnerable.

Tom states, “The Ministry Grant Fund supports God’s work on Earth, and this brings a great deal of satisfaction to everyone involved, especially the sisters whose lives are dedicated to living and loving as Jesus did.”

THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS have provided ministry grants to hundreds of organizations including some in other countries. For details on the current ministry grant recipients, see page 56 in this issue of *FOCUS*.

\$50,000

IN MINISTRY GRANTS AWARDED

BON SECOURS COMMUNITY WORKS— \$15,000

This grant supports the work of a staff member to provide direct services to clients participating in Bon Secours Community Works Returning Citizens Program, in addition to the staff member’s current supervisory duties. The direct services include: completing financial assessments for a client’s household; coaching and counseling to help increase a client’s household income; screening for eligibility for public benefits such as SNAP, financial assistance utilities cost reduction and Affordable Care Act health insurance; and assistance with enrolling eligible clients in the appropriate programs. Additionally, the staff member will process referrals for service providers based on the client’s needs and will assist the client with federal and state tax preparation.

MISSION HELPERS OF THE SACRED HEART— \$15,000

Under the auspices of the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama, this grant supports Sr. Princess Mary Dawson of the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart in her service to impoverished communities in Tuscaloosa. Since 1992, she has provided relief to those in need by distributing food, clothing, toys, household goods and other donated items. She also offers spiritual love and care and assists families with financial assistance from Catholic Social Services to help with expenses for rent, utilities, medical care, medications and glasses. Funding will go toward Sr. Princess Mary’s health care, health insurance and living expenses so that she may continue to live and serve in the area.

MAKE A MIRACLE— \$5,000

This grant helps the nonprofit organization Make a Miracle provide food and supplies to three community kitchens in San Juan Lurigancho (SJL), the most impoverished district in Lima, Peru. In 2021, these kitchens provided approximately 450 meals per day or about 13,500 meals per month, alleviating hunger and chronic malnutrition and assisting in the development of SJL. This project aligns with the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours, as do other Make a Miracle programs in SJL, which include community education centers, weekly kids’ programs, college scholarships, the construction of low-cost houses and the development of a building in SJL to house a wellness center with a medical and dental clinic.

NEXT STEPS TODAY— \$15,000

Next Steps Today empowers men recovering from addiction by helping them to create a strong foundation and develop real-life skills for their future. It aligns with the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours by helping these men to wholeness as they recover from addiction. The program focuses on four key areas: health, relationships, spiritual life and purpose, and it fills a void in the recovery process, providing support through the transition from a recovery program back into society. The grant will be used to fund salaries, supplies and support for training programs that provide opportunities for participants to create new lives and better tomorrows.



Volunteers welcome the new comedor in their community.

A Ministry Grant Helps Build Comedores in Peru

During the pandemic, Make a Miracle, a small, family-run nonprofit organization, recognized a need for more comedors in San Juan de Lurigancho, an impoverished region of Peru. A comedor is a building where volunteers prepare and serve low-cost or free meals to those who need them. It is a beautiful and dignified way to care for a community. With the support of a Bon Secours Ministry Grant, Make a Miracle quickly built and stocked three new comedors. The communities where these new comedors were built could not have been more thankful.



A Peruvian community celebrates the opening of a new comedor.



A volunteer prepares meals at the local comedor.

“Small yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us, as Christians, are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live, and all its peoples.”

— POPE FRANCIS

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL, N.216

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 Sisters of
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