

focus

a publication of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

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Sisters of
Bon Secours, USA

contents

“YOU TOO NEED TO SEE THE ENTIRETY OF YOUR LIFE AS A MISSION. TRY TO DO SO BY LISTENING TO GOD IN PRAYER AND RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS THAT HE GIVES YOU. ALWAYS ASK THE SPIRIT WHAT JESUS EXPECTS FROM YOU AT EVERY MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE AND IN EVERY DECISION YOU MUST MAKE, SO AS TO DISCERN ITS PLACE IN THE MISSION YOU HAVE RECEIVED. ALLOW THE SPIRIT TO FORGE IN YOU THE PERSONAL MYSTERY THAT CAN REFLECT JESUS CHRIST IN TODAY’S WORLD.”

— POPE FRANCIS



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DEAR FRIENDS

- Sharing Our Mission.....2
- Founder’s Day2
- Jubilees2
- Retreat & Conference Center3
- 200th Anniversary.....3

FEATURES

- Responding to the Universal Call to Holiness 4
- Sr. Anne Lutz.....7
- Sr. Patricia Eck.....8
- Embrace the Bon Secours Family10
- A Reflection from Eileen Fernandini14
- Timothy Douglas’ Journey..... 15

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

- Partners in Mission.....16

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- Chris Knowles Joins Young Adults Committee.....20
- Nathalia Ouy Works in the Motherhouse21

LIVING OUR MISSION

- Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ.....22
- Carlton Cheatom23
- Robin Gundersen.....23

VOCATION NEWS

- Wear Orange to Stand Against Gun Violence24

FORMATION NEWS

- The Journey to Becoming a Sister of Bon Secours26

JUBILEES

- Sr. Mary Cabrini Bonnett.....28
- Sr. Jean Aulenback29
- Sr. Fran Gorsuch.....30
- Sr. Anna Mae Crane31

AWARDS

- 2023 Sister Josephine Potel Service Award 33
- Employee Service Recognition Awards..... 35

ASSOCIATE MINISTRY

- Associates Extend the Mission of the Sisters 36
- A Reflection from Minta Davis 37

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

- Meet Ann Schwartz.....38
- A Reflection from Julianne Esteves 39

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

- Young Adults Embrace Their Faith 40
- A Reflection from Zach DeSmit.....41

RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER

- Upcoming Overnight Retreats42
- Join Us for a Sponsored Retreat.....43
- Retreat & Conference Center Celebrates 55 Years.....44
- A Reflection from Rev. Linda Kapurch45

HEALTH SYSTEM NEWS

- Rebecca Clay Christensen Leads Outreach Efforts in Virginia.....46

AROUND THE CONGREGATION

- Sr. Elaine Davia Visits Alaska48
- Transition to New IT Provider.....49
- Canine Training on Marriottsville Campus49
- Sr. Nancy Glynn Supports Nursing Home in France.....49
- Welcome New Employee Caleb McCandless.....49

ARCHIVES

- Connecting Families to Our Sisters.....50

MINISTRY GRANTS

- Ministry Grants Awarded to Five Projects..... 52

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DEAR *friends*

Sharing Our Mission



Over the years, the Sisters of Bon Secours have been blessed with many people who have shared our mission and understood what it means to be “called to holiness.” In this issue of *Focus*, you will read about the many ways you can be a part of the Bon Secours family in addition to being a vowed sister. We delve deeply into our ministries and the connection our employees, associates, ministry volunteers, young adults and others have to the Sisters of Bon Secours.

Sharing our mission might be as simple as praying in our chapel, helping a person in need or making a gift to Bon Secours. We invite you to join us in exploring the opportunities to live our charism of compassion, healing and liberation and of being “good help”—the meaning of Bon Secours.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to congratulate our 2023 Sister Josephine Potel Service Award recipient, Program Manager of Fundraising Tessa Newton, who was chosen by our employees. Her genuine compassion

for others makes her so very deserving of this prestigious award. She received the award at our Founder’s Day luncheon on Jan. 24, where we also presented service awards to our long-term employees. On behalf of the Sisters of Bon Secours, I thank Tessa and all the employees we honored. Your dedication to Bon Secours enriches each of our lives every day.

This spring, we look forward to celebrating our jubilarians, Sr. Mary Cabrini on her 75th jubilee, Sr. Jean Aulenback on her 70th jubilee, Sr. Fran Gorsuch on her 60th jubilee and Sr. Anna Mae Crane on her 50th jubilee. We congratulate these sisters and recognize the many wonderful contributions they have made to our Congregation and the communities they have served throughout the years.

The Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center (RCC) celebrates its 55th anniversary this year.

We reflect on the many groups of people the RCC has hosted since its early beginnings as the Bon Secours Spiritual Center. Today, RCC is well known and respected throughout the region, hosting individuals and organizations for retreats, meetings, seminars and more in our facilities and on our beautiful grounds. Special thanks to our conference center staff and presenters for making the RCC such a special place of healing, renewal and wholeness.

Next year, 2024, will be incredibly special for the Congregation of Bon Secours as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of our founding in Paris in 1824. An international committee chaired by Sr. Nancy Glynn from the United States and Sr. Rocio Zapata Chigne from Peru has already started making plans for this celebratory year. Additionally, a separate committee has been formed in the United States to plan country-specific activities. Look for more details about these celebrations in the coming months.

As the trees turn green, the flowers start to bloom and I start to plan my garden, we all feel a sense of awakening and renewal. Be sure to take advantage of this wonderful time of year and appreciate and care for the great outdoors.

Sincerely,



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

SR. ELAINE DAVIA

Area Leader, Sisters of Bon Secours, USA

Responding to the Universal Call to Holiness

THE UNIVERSAL CALL TO HOLINESS IS A TEACHING OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH BASED ON *MATTHEW 5:48*, A RIVETING BIBLICAL PASSAGE WHERE JESUS ISSUES A CLARION CALL TO TRANSFORM OURSELVES INTO AN IMAGE OF GOD'S OWN HOLINESS SO WE MAY TRANSFORM THE WORLD. JESUS ASKS US TO EMULATE THE SELFLESS LOVE THAT RADIATES FROM GOD AND LIVE OUR LIVES IN WAYS THAT ALLOW OTHERS TO FEEL GOD'S LOVE.

“**Lumen Gentium**, the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, is a document that came out of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s and proclaimed that all people are called to holiness and to the vocation of a deep relationship with God,” explains Sr. Elaine Davia, area leader for the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA. Chapter 5 of the *Lumen Gentium* discusses the universal call to holiness in detail:

“All the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity...They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor.”

Sr. Elaine says, “The Sisters of Bon Secours took this teaching and understanding to heart. We reflected on this universal call and seriously looked at what it meant in relationship to having a vocation to Bon Secours, not only as a vowed sister but in other ways.” Around this same time, some of the people who worked with the Sisters of Bon Secours, who were married and had families, expressed interest in becoming more deeply bonded with the sisters, and their vocation helped form the foundation for the Bon Secours Associates.

The understanding of a universal vocation has continued to evolve. Today, it is also expressed through the Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry and the Bon Secours Young Adults Ministry. Sr. Elaine says, “It has expanded to an understanding that all who volunteer and work with us are part of our Bon Secours family and share our mission of being ‘good help’ and bringing compassion, healing and liberation to others.”

These well-worn marble steps grace the Sisters of Bon Secours' historic Motherhouse in Paris, France. Since the early 1800s, many sisters and members of the Bon Secours family have climbed them. “When we walk them today, we are reminded of Sr. Josephine Potel and the founding members of the Sisters of Bon Secours who also walked these stairs,” says Sr. Elaine Davia, area leader for the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA.

“WE ARE FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THESE COURAGEOUS WOMEN, AND LIKE THEM, WE ARE RESPONDING TO THE UNIVERSAL CALL TO HOLINESS IN THE CHARISM OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS.”





The Sisters of Bon Secours with Deacon Peter McCourt (center l) and The Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, Bishop of the Diocese of Richmond (center r).

Being a Sister of Bon Secours

“ALL CHRISTIANS IN VIRTUE OF THEIR BAPTISMAL PROMISES ARE CALLED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SAVING MISSION OF THE CHURCH. OUR MANDATE FROM THE CHURCH, THROUGH OUR RELIGIOUS CONSECRATION BY VOW, CONSTITUTES US APOSTLES IN A NEW WAY. AS SUCH, WE ARE WITNESSES OF THE GOOD NEWS OF LOVE, OF HOPE, OF JUSTICE AND OF PEACE. FOR US, THEREFORE, THE STRUGGLE FOR A MORE HUMANE WORLD IS NOT AN OPTION. IT IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SPREADING THE GOSPEL.

— Justice in the World 1971 Synod of Bishops #6 and Sisters of Bon Secours Constitutions #7

Sr. Anne Lutz: Furthering the Ministry of Jesus and the Catholic Church



Sr. Anne Lutz joined the Sisters of Bon Secours because she felt called to be of service to the elderly. She met the sisters when she was in high school and a nursing aide at St. Francis Country House in Darby, Pennsylvania, a home for the elderly

staffed by the Sisters of Bon Secours. She says, “The sisters were my role model and inspiration as I saw them at work and the compassionate care they gave to the elderly.”

Sr. Anne says that becoming a sister changed her life, giving her opportunities she could never have dreamed of. The Congregation allowed her to continue her education, and she served as a nurse for 10 years in Bon Secours facilities in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. She held positions as a staff nurse, nursing supervisor and nursing home administrator, truly fulfilling her calling to serve the elderly. She is currently one of the few sisters to have served in both acute care and long-term care facilities.

Sr. Anne then served in the Bon Secours Health System’s Mission Department in Mariottsville. She was senior vice president of mission for the health system for many years and was responsible for the implementation of the mission and values throughout the health system.



Srs. Mary Shimo (l) and Anne Lutz (r) with Shakira Foster (c) of Bon Secours Community Works.

“After prayerful reflection, I realized I was still being of service but now it was to all the people throughout the health system,” says Sr. Anne.

“It has been a humbling experience and true privilege to work with so many wonderful people who carry out the mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours every day.”

Today, Sr. Anne is chief sponsorship officer for Bon Secours Mercy Health, which has more than 50,000 employees. She is responsible for sponsorship in the United States and for sponsorship and mission for Bon Secours Ireland, which is a part of Bon Secours Mercy Health.

Sr. Anne believes her life’s work has been to further the ministry of Jesus and the Catholic Church and fulfill her calling to be of service to others. As Sr. Anne reflects on the many opportunities being a Sister of Bon Secours has given her, she says, “It was Sr. Rita [Thomas] and Sr. Justine [Cyr] who challenged me to use my talents and saw something in me that gave me the confidence to take on these leadership roles that have allowed me to walk the journey with people and dedicate my life to service.”

Being a Sister of Bon Secours

Sr. Patricia Eck: *Grateful for the Opportunities to Make a Difference*



As a high school senior considering religious life, Sr. Patricia “Pat” Eck never dreamed that one day she would be in leadership roles at a national health system and be recognized

for her leadership in Catholic health care, creating alignment between sponsorship and governance and receiving one of the Catholic Health Association’s highest awards. Nor did she envision becoming congregational leader for the Congregation of Bon Secours of Paris, meeting three popes and being awarded the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice medal.

Raised in Richmond, Virginia, Sr. Pat knew she wanted to follow in her mother’s footsteps and become a nurse. After graduating from nursing school in the mid ’60s, Sr. Pat met several Sisters of Bon Secours who had come to Richmond at the invitation of the bishop to run St. Mary’s Hospital. As she got to know the sisters, and encouraged by Mother Germanus, Sr. Pat decided to “give it a go” and entered the Congregation of Bon Secours in September 1966.



Sr. Pat Eck (fifth from left) visits sisters and families in Peru.

Sr. Pat really did not know what was ahead for her, but some kind of religious life was central to her imagination. Over time and exposure to Jesuits and Ignatians, spirituality became important to her along with a desire to continue her education in nursing. With the encouragement of her community, Sr. Pat attended the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) at Virginia Commonwealth University and earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing followed by a master’s degree in nursing from the Catholic University of America, allowing her to become a clinical specialist. She then continued her nursing career in Baltimore.

Sr. Pat Eck holds baby Ella at a young adults retreat.



Pictured (l to r): Srs. Elaine Davia, Ji Kyung Choi, Pat Eck and Fran Gorsuch advocate against the misuse of Title 42 in Washington, D.C.



As Congregation leader, Sr. Pat traveled the world meeting with sisters. She and her team implemented the restructuring of the Congregation, eliminating individual provinces, moving the headquarters to Marriottsville, Maryland, and establishing a Congregation Team to provide leadership for the countries. Sr. Pat says, “The walls came down, and we were able to share our needs and resources more freely.”

Today, Sr. Pat resides in Marriottsville and serves as vice chair for Bon Secours Mercy Ministries and on the boards of Bon Secours Mercy Health, Mercy Housing and the Resource Center for Religious Institutes. She also serves as treasurer of the Congregation and is a past chairperson of the Catholic Health Association.

“Being a Sister of Bon Secours has given me so many opportunities to make a difference,” says Sr. Pat. “I am especially proud of the fact that the Sisters of Bon Secours were one of the first congregations to invite laity to collaborate and share in their mission. Also, with all the changes in health care over the years, the Sisters of Bon Secours have never lost their commitment to the care of the sick and dying. This is the core of who we are.”

There came a time when Sr. Pat questioned remaining in the Congregation. She was encouraged by Sr. Justine Cyr and Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski to talk to her spiritual director, who suggested she change her plans from going on a vacation to attending a retreat. On that retreat, Sr. Pat explains, “My relationship with God became central to me, and I knew I was indeed on the right path, a decision from which I have never wavered. This was a turning point in my religious life.”

Sr. Rita Thomas suggested Sr. Pat consider administration, which led Sr. Pat to earn a master’s degree in health care administration from MCV. A fulfilling career followed, starting as an administrator at Bon Secours Hospital in Grosse Point, Michigan, and then operating officer at St. Mary’s Hospital in Richmond. Sr. Pat then assumed the role of full-time chairperson of the Bon Secours Health System headquartered in Marriottsville, a position she held for 12 years until being elected in 2009 as Congregation leader, a position she held for 10 years. Sr. Pat also served as chairperson of Bon Secours Ministries.

Embrace Our



Enjoy the peaceful grounds of our Marriottsville campus.

The Sisters of Bon Secours welcome you into our family. We are all called to service in the eyes of God. You might not know where God is calling you or what unique talents you have until you start exploring ways to answer your call to holiness. Often the key to discerning your own purpose or becoming involved comes down to the amount of time you can commit. Sometimes it simply means being present and attuned to your own inner voice. We invite you to join the Sisters of Bon Secours in big and small ways and share our charism of compassion, healing and liberation with the world.



Members of the Bon Secours family participate in an advocacy event in Washington, D.C.

Bon Secours Family

VOWED SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

Sisters of Bon Secours come from all backgrounds and fulfill the Bon Secours mission in a wide variety of ways, including all aspects of health care, social services, spirituality and education.



Srs. Nathalie Lundolo and Ji Kyung Choi celebrate becoming vowed Sisters of Bon Secours.



Mulching roses is one of the ways Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski cares for creation.

BON SECOURS ASSOCIATE MINISTRY



Bon Secours Associates experience a special kinship with the Sisters of Bon Secours and collaborate in a mutual relationship with sisters in their prayer, spirituality, mission and ministry in the world.

Bon Secours Associates (l to r) Matthew Silver, M.D., Maryanna Fournier, Linda Mastro and Mickey Reed with Sr. Nancy Glynn (r) at the annual associates retreat.

Bon Secours Family

BON SECOURS VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry (BSVM) offers young adults an opportunity to immerse themselves in a year of spiritual formation and service in order to share in the Sisters of Bon Secours' commitment to justice in radical solidarity with the poor, the suffering and those most in need.



Jonah Cremin-Endes, BSVM 2018-2019, helps a patient.

BON SECOURS YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Bon Secours Young Adults are a diverse community of people in their 20s and 30s interested in building a faith-based culture of friendship, prayer and purpose that supports them in giving a generous response to God's call in their lives.



BSVM staff with the BSVM 2022-2023 cohort.



Bon Secours Young Adults enjoy spending time together.

BON SECOURS EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Bon Secours employees and volunteers are called to action through their dedication and commitment to the Bon Secours mission and values.



Yayo Aidahis, groundskeeper.



Sr. Mary Shimo (l) with Debbie Snow (r), a front desk staff member for the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center.



Pray with us in our chapel.

BON SECOURS RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER

The Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center brings people together within a sacred environment for spiritual healing and nourishment.



Self-reflect while walking the labyrinth.

JOIN the Bon Secours Family

If you are interested in learning more about the Sisters of Bon Secours and where you might fit into our family, visit bonsecours.us.

A Lifetime Connection to the Sisters of Bon Secours



Eileen Fernandini (front row, center) celebrated her 70th birthday with the Sisters of Bon Secours.

A Reflection from Bon Secours Associate EILEEN FERNANDINI

My association with the Sisters of Bon Secours has lasted a lifetime. I was born at Bon Secours Hospital Baltimore in 1953, and I celebrated my 70th birthday this year at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center with the sisters, my family and other close friends. Whenever I visit Marriottsville, I feel like I am home.

My relationship with the sisters was nurtured while working at Bon Secours Hospital Baltimore. In high school, I took a weekend job working in the hospital business office. Seeing the interactions of the sisters and nurses with patients, I felt a calling toward a nursing career. After graduating nursing school in 1974, I spent my entire career at Bon Secours Hospital Baltimore until my retirement in 2018.

In my early career, I worked side by side with Srs. Jean Aulenback, Mary Cabrini Bonnett, Anne Maureen Doherty, Anne Marie Mack, Mary Shimo, Alice Talone and Margaret “Peggy” Whiteneck. They taught me so much about care and compassion for patients and about the dignity of human life. I truly felt I was a partner in the mission of the sisters. For me, faith was an action word, and my Catholic faith was strengthened through this partnership.

I even met my husband, Oscar Fernandini, a house physician, at Bon Secours Hospital Baltimore.

Sr. Walbert Prendergast, a friend since my business office days, stopped by the physicians’ dining room to inquire about Dr. Fernandini’s intentions for “her Eileen.” Oscar’s fellow physicians found it quite amusing. We were married for 44 years before he passed away in 2019. He shared my love of Bon Secours and was a physician for several of the sisters. Our daughter, Kim, married the son of a dear friend and fellow Bon Secours nurse, Monica. We now share two wonderful grandchildren. Bon Secours has touched every aspect of my family life.

“My spirituality was linked closely to the sisters and their charism. It seemed a very natural progression to commit to becoming a Bon Secours Associate.”

The associate experience continued to nurture my relationship with God. Through the associates, I was privileged to participate in the Water with Blessings program. Along with several Peruvian sisters, another associate and I delivered water filters to two remote areas in Peru. It was a life-changing trip. The dedication of the Peruvian sisters and the spirit, humility and generosity of the indigenous people touched my heart in a profound way.

In 2020, I was asked by the sisters to become a member of both the USA and international Justice, Peace and

Integrity of Creation teams. This was yet another fostering of my spirituality and faith in action. I learned so much, especially about Laudato Si’ and the sisters’ commitment to care for the Earth.

My last story about my connection to the Sisters of Bon Secours is one my grandmother used to tell me. She lost her mother to diphtheria in 1904 when she was only eight years old. She remembers going with her father in their horse and buggy to the train station to meet the Sisters of Bon Secours, who were coming to nurse her mother. Sadly, the trip to the train station was to tell the sisters to return to Baltimore because her mother had died earlier that morning. It seems I was destined to develop a deep connection to the Sisters of Bon Secours.

IN MEMORIAM

The Sisters of Bon Secours note with great sadness the passing of Eileen Fernandini in March 2023. USA Vocation Director Sr. Fran Gorsuch encouraged Eileen to share her story in this issue of *Focus*. Sr. Fran says, “Eileen was a beloved Bon Secours Associate, co-worker and friend of the Sisters of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours family. She will be deeply missed by all of us, but especially by her wonderful family!”

Bon Secours Employee TIMOTHY DOUGLAS Shares His Journey



Timothy Douglas, program manager for food access and workforce development for Bon Secours Community Works Urban Farm.

A newfound hobby in gardening and a love for working outdoors piqued Timothy Douglas’ interest in farming. He took a leap of faith and enrolled in an intensive two-year farmer training program and has become a skilled farmer steeped in sustainable agriculture methods.

An opportunity to mentor an urban farm in Baltimore further sparked his passion. “I saw the impact the farm was having on the community and knew it was what I wanted to do,” he says.

He applied for the first opening that became available at Bon Secours Community Works Urban Farm and quickly rose through the ranks. He is now the program manager for food access and workforce development. Among his many responsibilities, Timothy oversees Bon Secours Community Works’ CSA (Community-supported Agriculture), a food program that allows community members to subscribe to the harvest of the Bon Secours Community Works Urban Farm. He is also responsible for a variety of farm and food education programs focused on health, nutrition, pollination and more.

“I am very much a boots-on-the-ground-oriented person, so I find this job very exciting and rewarding. Today, I am laying the landscape for a community teaching garden for an after-school program for elementary and middle school children. Later, I will be tending bees.”

Timothy has expanded the CSA from 12 families to 82. He enjoys introducing people to new produce and is open to suggestions from the community.

He has strong ties to the Northwest Baltimore community where Bon Secours Community Works is located. “I have family from this community, and I grew up visiting people here,” he says. “It’s part of my job to assist people and give back, and I definitely feel I am living the sisters’ mission through this work. It is a privilege and a driving force to be able to take what were once vacant, blighted lots and transform them into a farm and a beautiful public space.”

PARTNERS IN

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



Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ (l), and Sr. Nathalie Lundolo (r) participate in the Catholic Day of Action for Immigrant Children in Washington, D.C.

MISSION:

Healing Our Suffering World Together

Congregation Leader Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski (l) and Sr. Fran Gorsuch (r) participate in a Black Lives Matter protest.



MARY OLIVER, A FAVORITE POET OF MINE, ENDS HER POEM “THE SUMMER DAY” BY ASKING, “TELL ME, WHAT IS IT YOU PLAN TO DO WITH YOUR ONE WILD AND PRECIOUS LIFE?” SO, I INVITE YOU TO PAUSE FOR A MOMENT...TAKE A BREATH... AND CONSIDER: HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THAT QUESTION AT THIS TIME IN YOUR LIFE? WHAT CAPTURES YOUR HEART? FOR WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED?

At some point in their lives, each Sister of Bon Secours answered that question personally, and her answer led her to respond to God’s love by choosing religious life. In 2009, the sisters discerned together who they desired to be and what they wanted to do with their “one wild and precious life” in these contemporary times and articulated their hopes in a mission focus statement that has become the touchstone for their lives.

(continued on next page)

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

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.

Join us in Caring for Mother Earth



A presentation on Meatless Mondays during the employee monthly forum at the Retreat and Conference Center (l to r): James Wilkins, Sr. Fran Gorsuch, Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, Linda Wallace and Rhonda Hooker.

The JPIC Team has planned several events

this year and warmly welcomes the participation of the Bon Secours family. Details will be communicated via the JPIC Google Group and the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center.

- **Outdoor Masses/Prayer Services:** As a way to more fully embrace an ecological spirituality, outdoor Masses and prayer services are being planned on a quarterly basis in May, July and November at our beautiful campus in Marriottsville, Maryland.
- **Virtual Advocacy Event:** Tentatively scheduled for June 2023, this workshop will include a speaker and tips for developing advocacy skills.
- **Fall Scavenger Hunt in the Spirit of Laudato Si':** Last summer, over 40 members of the Bon Secours family participated in a nature scavenger hunt that helped us slow down and appreciate the beauty and diversity of God's creation. It was met with so much enthusiasm that participants suggested we consider holding another one in the fall.

The sisters have embraced many initiatives and personal practices

that are helping them live out this mission focus, and they invite you to join them in their efforts to live in a more mutually enhancing relationship with Mother Earth and all her beings as women and men of healing.

- Since March 2020, the sisters have participated in the Meatless Monday Movement. Knowing that methane emissions from livestock contribute to climate change, the sisters decided to go one day a week without meat as a way to care for and heal the Earth. They have become quite savvy in creating vegetarian meals. Is this a practice you could consider?
- The sisters are also conscious of their use of plastic, especially single-use plastics. Learning that plastic is made from fossil fuels, has a high carbon footprint, pollutes our oceans, kills marine animals and birds—

with only a tiny percentage being recycled—the sisters committed themselves to address their plastic consumption in an effort to help heal the Earth. The biggest four plastic polluters—plastic bottles, shopping bags, straws and cups—will outlive each of us by hundreds of years. Is there one single-use plastic item you can choose to refuse for the rest of your “one wild and precious life?”

- The sisters regularly use their voice to speak out against injustices that cause suffering to so many: racism, environmental injustice, gun violence and our broken immigration system, to name a few. We invite you to join us in using your voice for healing these injustices by signing up to receive updates and action alerts from our Bon Secours Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Google Group. Send your name and email to: marybeth.hamm@cbsparis.org with “JPIC Google Group” in the subject line.



Srs. Mary Shimo (l), Pat Dowling (c) and Elaine Davia (r) say “Cheers” for reusable bottles.

THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS ARE HUMBLD AND GRATEFUL TO KNOW THAT AMONG THE THINGS YOU ALREADY PLAN TO DO WITH YOUR “ONE WILD AND PRECIOUS LIFE,” YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO BE IN MISSION WITH US AS WOMEN AND MEN OF HEALING. AS YOU CONSIDER THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED IN THIS ARTICLE TO BE IN MISSION WITH THE SISTERS, WHAT “NEXT STEP” MIGHT DRAW YOU MORE DEEPLY INTO LIVING OUR MISSION OF HEALING TOGETHER?



Chris Knowles *Joins the International Young Adults Committee*

CHRIS KNOWLES IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL FOR SYNODALITY IN GREAT BRITAIN. HE STARTED A PROJECT TO PROMOTE CHRISTUS VIVIT AND THE GREAT ENCOUNTERS THAT TOOK PLACE THROUGH THE 2018 SYNOD ON YOUTH. THROUGH THIS WORK, HE WAS INTRODUCED TO INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR BON SECOURS YOUNG ADULTS NICK STEIN AND CONGREGATION VOCATION COORDINATOR SR. PAT DOWLING, WHO WERE PLANNING TO VISIT GREAT BRITAIN IN THE COMING MONTHS.

Chris shares how he became involved with Bon Secours:

“After meeting Nick and Sr. Pat in person, they drew me into other aspects of the ministry of the Congregation of Bon Secours. Working with the Sisters of Bon Secours has been a joyful and enriching experience for me.

“**The sisters’ mission of compassion and service to those in need resonates strongly with my passions and experiences.**

“I have been fortunate to work with the Sisters of Bon Secours’ international young adult network through the pandemic, and upon meeting many of the sisters in person at their midterm assembly, I was inspired by their passion and commitment to the Gospel. I am grateful for the opportunity to currently be working with the International Bon Secours Young Adults Committee and am excited about what we can do together.”

Nick is pleased to welcome Chris into the Bon Secours family in this new capacity:

“One of the most rewarding aspects of my work with Bon Secours has been the opportunity to get to know and work with tremendously gifted leaders around the world.

“**Chris has become a truly valuable strategic partner and a wonderful colleague in our work with young adults.**

“Sharing the Bon Secours mission and charism with partners in ministry is such a blessing, and I thank God every day for the graces and gifts of our many, many companions on this journey of ‘good help.’”



A chance introduction led Sr. Noelia Lara Núñez, designated area leader for France (l), to meet Nathalia Ouy (r), who soon became her assistant at the Motherhouse in Paris, France.

Nathalia Ouy

Feels Blessed to Work in the Motherhouse

NATHALIA OUY IS THE ASSISTANT FOR SR. NOELIA LARA NÚÑEZ, DESIGNATED AREA LEADER FOR FRANCE. IN JUNE 2021, NATHALIA HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET SR. NOELIA, THANKS TO A CHAPLAIN FROM THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY OF SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS WHO INTRODUCED THEM. WEEKS LATER, NATHALIA BEGAN WORKING AT THE MOTHERHOUSE AS SR. NOELIA’S ASSISTANT.

Nathalia describes her work and what it means to her to share the sisters’ mission:

“I am very grateful for my job and find the work fulfilling. Every morning I have the blessing of entering the chapel of the Motherhouse in Paris and starting my day hand in hand with the Virgin Mary, who I ask to guide me in being of service to Bon Secours.

“I have been learning every detail in the preparation of the Eucharist with the help of Sr. Anne Madeleine. The readings, the limestone, the altar cruet, our new missal of 2022, the flowers, the candles and the priestly ornaments are all part of my work every morning, and I feel so blessed, because I feel that it was not me who chose to be in this wonderful place, but it is the Virgin Mary who brought me by Her Hand, and I can only be grateful.

“**With gratitude in my heart, after having attended Mass and feeling the grace of the Holy Spirit, I assist Sr. Noelia in her tasks for the Motherhouse community to include accounting, translations and medical appointments, among others.**

“Empathy and compassion have been important values in my life since my primary education with the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters. Having the experience of being with each of the elderly sisters in the Motherhouse represents for me a deep compassion and recognition of their life’s work in the service of Bon Secours.

“I feel that my work is not part of a job but part of a mission that includes dedicating time so that each of the sisters feels heard and perhaps brightened by a word, by a sharing of ideas or a cup of coffee. Being with the sisters enriches my life. I know the sisters need attention, affection and understanding. We don’t know how we will age one day, and everyone deserves to be treated with respect and compassion.”

Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ

has served as the coordinator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) for eight years, supervising the Congregation’s justice and peace efforts in the United States and internationally. She chairs the International JPIC Committee, supports the JPIC teams in each country and oversees the implementation of the Laudato Si’ Action Platform. She represents the Congregation on the UNANIMA International Board and the Board of Friends in Solidarity and publishes a monthly JPIC newsletter. She does everything possible to provide opportunities for advocacy and keep the Bon Secours family aware of and responsive to the mission focus of the Sisters of Bon Secours, “to defend and care for all creation and to cry out with others against injustice and all that diminishes life on Earth.”



“As a Sister of St. Joseph, it is a **graced experience to minister with the Sisters of Bon Secours and a wonderful example to me of how Catholic sisters can collaborate effectively. From time to time, I have heard colleagues remark that they thought I was a Sister of Bon Secours. I think that speaks volumes to the connection I feel with this wonderful group of women Religious whose hospitality of heart and welcoming presence have embraced me.**

“I am especially touched by the deep compassion the sisters exude. Their compassion was evident in the generous ways they offered ‘good help’ to their employees during the pandemic, and their compassion continues to extend to those in need in places far and wide. The Congregation is a generous benefactor to the Catholic Health Training Institute in South Sudan through its membership in Friends in Solidarity. The sisters in Ireland have opened two of their homes to house Ukrainian refugees. The sisters in Peru have opened a facility to welcome female victims of domestic violence. The sisters in the U.S. generously sponsor and support Asylee Women Enterprise, Mercy Housing and Sisters Academy in Baltimore. In all these ways, the sisters offer the recipients of their generous compassion a future full of hope.”

Carlton Cheatom

serves as a head house person for the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center. He has worked in housekeeping for eight years and was honored with the Sister Josephine Potel Service Award in 2016. A jack-of-all-trades, Carlton is dedicated to ensuring the center runs smoothly and is a place of welcoming hospitality for guests and colleagues.

“From day one, the sisters have showered me with love, and I am proud to work for them and share their **charism of compassion, healing and liberation. There was a time when I felt no one loved me. I was like a child of Israel wandering the wilderness. Thank goodness feelings are not facts.**

“I have survived incarceration, homelessness and addiction, but when people meet me now, they cannot imagine the person I used to be. What I went through wasn’t in vain. Now I sponsor and help other people in recovery. God does a superb job cleaning us up.

“Many people have helped me in my journey and being a Bon Secours employee gives me a big platform to help others on a daily basis. It’s a blessing to be able to work with people who believe in the Lord. One of my favorite things is talking to the sisters about religion. I already had a relationship with God, but working for the sisters has deepened and enhanced it.”



Robin Gundersen

has served as the director of finance for the Congregation of Bon Secours of Paris for two years. She directs and manages the finance functions and processes that support the preparation of financial statements and reporting for the Congregation. She has also been extensively involved with the Congregation’s recent transition to a new IT provider, acting as the point of contact for the Congregation. Previously, she served 16 years as an employee of the Bon Secours Health System, with the last few years in that role dedicated to finance-related work for the Congregation.

“Working for Bon Secours, both for the sisters and the health system, has made me a more compassionate person. Countless times I have seen and experienced co-workers providing support to other co-workers in times of need, even when they do not know each other.

“In 2018, I had the opportunity to go to Trujillo, Peru, and visit the Peruvian Sisters of Bon Secours. It was amazing to see them at work in their clinics. I am full of admiration for their commitment and dedication to their communities.

“Bon Secours has always been a **second family to me, and I am grateful to be surrounded by people who are committed to the sisters’ mission of ‘good help.’ It is why I continue to commit myself to them.**”

Wear Orange to STAND AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

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

THE CALL AGAINST VIOLENCE IN ALL ITS FORMS IS ONE OF THE COMMITMENTS OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS AND THE BON SECOURS FAMILY. YOU CAN HELP THE SISTERS AND SHARE THEIR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE BY LENDING YOUR SUPPORT TO THEIR CALL AGAINST VIOLENCE AND ESPECIALLY THE PREVALENCE OF GUN VIOLENCE THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTRY.

Have you worn or seen anyone wearing orange recently? People in Maryland wear orange for the Orioles, but did you know that wearing the color orange commemorates those who have died from gun violence, and it is worn as a call to end such violence? **WEAR ORANGE** on June 3, 2023, for National Gun Violence Awareness Day. The statistics are staggering. In 2021, there were over 48,000 firearm homicides and suicides in the United States. The U.S. has many times more deaths from gun violence than any other wealthy nation.

When I was privileged to work through Catholic Charities with parents in Head Start in Baltimore City more than 20 years ago,



Sr. Fran Gorsuch and pre-candidate Natalie wear orange for the Baltimore Orioles and to stand against gun violence.

“The color orange symbolizes the value of human life,” the coalition of 200 nonprofits explains on its website wearorange.com.

The particularly vivid shade of orange that has been adopted by gun control activists is also known as “blaze orange” or “safety orange.” It is associated with hunting garments, road-safety markers and caution signs. Many states require hunters to don caps, shirts and vests in “hunter orange” to help them stand out in the woods, offering a clear “don’t shoot” signal to fellow hunters.

What can we do? As families of those who have lost loved ones tell us, prayer is not enough. Prayer is essential, especially as we ask our gracious God to soften our own hearts and touch the hearts of those who see their only choice as violence. We as a church and society must work to provide alternatives to violence and show by our lives and our choices that hope is possible. Regard and respect for human life is contagious. Only when someone feels loved can they give love in return; only when shown dignity and respect can a person express respect and dignity toward another.

I remember telling a class of three- and four-year-olds that their teacher was sad because her brother had just died. One of the little boys asked, “Sister, who shot him?” That question is a memory emblazoned on my brain and my heart forever.



We cannot wring our hands and feel helpless. We can write our legislators, our mayors, our governors and our bishops and ask them to speak out and legislate against military-style weapons and tighten the gun laws we already have. We can ask them to close any loopholes in the sale and possession of weapons. We can study the issue and educate ourselves, our families and our neighbors. If you need to, post a picture of a little child who has been killed by gunfire and keep it before your mind’s eye. Now imagine that is the face of a child in your family. We must do whatever we need to do to move ourselves to action. **WEAR ORANGE AND TELL SOMEONE WHY YOU ARE WEARING IT.** Even dye your hair orange if that will help.

Whatever you do, please do not become immune to this violence. Let us pray for one another and let us urge one another to action in the name of Jesus who died for each of us and for each of the victims and perpetrators of gun violence.


We must believe we can make a difference, because Jesus has sent us to be a light to the world; it is not enough simply to curse the darkness.

COME AND SEE, COME AND BE

If you or someone you know might feel called to be a Sister of Bon Secours, please contact Sr. Fran Gorsuch at fran.gorsuch@cbsparis.org. Your world just might become more than you ever thought possible!

 @FranTheNun
@SrsBonSecours

 facebook.com/BonSecoursVocations

 youtube.com/cbsvocations

THE *Journey* TO BECOMING

A Sister of Bon Secours

by SR. BERNADETTE CLAPS
Formation Director, USA

THE JOURNEY TO BECOME A SISTER OF BON SECOURS BEGINS WITH AN INVITATION, A CALL FROM GOD, A DESIRE OF THE HEART TO DEDICATE ONE'S LIFE TO GOD IN A SPECIFIC WAY AND TO SERVE GOD'S PEOPLE.

How is this invitation perceived or understood? It differs for each woman and may involve life experiences, times of prayer, getting to know sisters, contact with people served in a ministry, a heart moved by the suffering of others and being drawn to our charism of compassion, healing and liberation. What may seem like an inkling grows stronger, and eventually a woman will seek guidance from a spiritual director and our vocation director to help discern the possibility of God's invitation. The Sisters of Bon Secours have a formal discernment process with our vocation director that is a prayerful and reflective way to explore the possibility of a call. If this seems likely, a woman will apply for entrance into the Congregation.

Once accepted, the woman becomes a candidate/postulant, the first stage of a formal process we call formation to become a Sister of Bon Secours. This stage can last from six months to two years and provides her with the opportunity to explore her aptitude for community life, deepen her prayer life and familiarize herself with the Congregation, its spirit and charism and apostolic ministries.

Candidacy and the other stages of formation provide the individual and the Congregation the opportunity to discern whether religious life is the appropriate fit for the woman and the Congregation.

If appropriate, the woman will move into the novitiate stage of formation over the next two years. This is a time to deepen her relationship with Christ. Our constitutions describe this period as a

“**privileged time when the community offers the woman ample opportunities to study, ponder and assimilate the Gospel, especially the vows and the spirit and mission of Bon Secours.**”

When the woman and the Congregation feel she is ready to make vows, she will make the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience for three years. She can renew her vows then, or annually, for another three years, which allows ample time for her and the Congregation to discern her call to the Sisters of Bon Secours.

At the successful completion of this stage, the sister and the Congregation are ready for her to make her lifelong profession of her vows.

Religious life is not a career but a way of life, a way of being in the world. What we refer to as formation is a process that includes accompaniment, teaching, modeling and incorporation into our way of life and ministries. It is a living, deepening experience of a sister's relationship with God, what it means to be a Sister of Bon Secours and how to live the charism in service to others and address the pressing needs of the times.

THROUGH THE LOVE OF THE FATHER PRESENT IN EACH SISTER OF BON SECOURS, WE ARE IMPELLED:

- To alleviate suffering.
- To help bring others to an awareness of the redemptive meaning of suffering and death.
- To an awareness of our relationship with the Father by reproducing in ourselves Christ healing, consoling, teaching—Christ always aware of the needs of others.

As Sisters of Bon Secours, we are called to imitate Jesus. Our constitutions express this beautifully.



Sr. Mary Cabrini Bonnett

SR. MARY CABRINI BONNETT GREW UP IN EAST BALTIMORE LEARNING THE VALUE OF HELPING OTHERS. Her father, a city councilman, always offered help to those who came knocking on their door for jobs. Her mother fed those in need with the leftovers from the restaurant she owned.

As a young adult, Sr. Cabrini wanted to dedicate her life to helping others and apply the solid, religious values she learned as a child. She graduated from Notre Dame of Maryland High School and the Bard-Avon Secretarial School and then worked at the Exxon refinery in Baltimore. However, she soon decided office work was not for her. In 1948, Sr. Cabrini heard about the work of the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours, decided she wanted to become a nurse and entered the Congregation six weeks later. She graduated from the Bon Secours Hospital School of Nursing in 1953, fulfilling her desire to care for people, and in 1957, she professed her final vows.

Sr. Cabrini served as a nurse for many years, working at Bon Secours Hospital and The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore and at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, interacting with people of diverse religions, races and cultures. At Bon Secours Hospital, she was especially known for her work in the maternity and emergency departments. Sr. Cabrini also served at St. Edmond's Home for Children in Philadelphia. She was later



appointed superior and administrator of the Bon Secours Angelus Convalescent Home in Wildwood, New Jersey, one of her favorite missions. In recognition of her hard work at that facility, she was named honorary fire and police chiefs and was elected "Woman of the Year."

For more than 20 years, Sr. Cabrini worked as a receptionist at the front desk of the Bon Secours Health System Office in Marriottsville and was the friendly face greeting all who came to visit. In 2007, the new Information Technology Department building in Richmond, Virginia, was named the Sister Mary Cabrini Building in honor of her years of service and dedication to the health system. Sr. Cabrini is now retired and living on Marian Hall in Marriottsville.

(continued on page 32)



Sr. Jean Aulenback

SR. JEAN AULENBACK WAS BORN IN 1930 IN MAHONE BAY ON THE ATLANTIC COAST OF NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA. She graduated from high school in Bridgewater and nursing school with the Sisters of Charity in Halifax. After graduation, she worked in the maternity department of a hospital in Halifax.

Sr. Jean immigrated to the United States in 1952, arriving in Michigan, where she met the Sisters of Bon Secours and joined the Congregation in 1958. After making first vows in 1960, she was assigned to Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Massachusetts. She moved to Maryland in 1962 and worked at Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore. Sr. Jean professed her final vows in 1965. During her nursing career, she was a staff nurse, head nurse, supervisor and ICU nurse.

In 1980, Sr. Jean transferred to Grosse Pointe, Michigan, for a year. She left Grosse Pointe for six months to study clinical pastoral education in Methuen and then returned to Grosse Pointe to serve as chaplain for six years. During that time, she graduated from the University of Detroit with a Bachelor of Science degree in health and human resources.

In 1988, Sr. Jean moved to Richmond, Virginia, where she worked with hospice patients and their families in their homes. After four years working in hospice, Sr. Jean moved to Marriottsville. Her ministries with



the Bon Secours Spiritual Center, now known as the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, included management of the bookstore for 10 years and serving as Sacristan of the chapel. She also provided part-time nursing for the elderly sisters living on Marian Hall and helped arrange their transportation to various appointments and shopping. Sr. Jean enjoys traveling, and during this time, she was excited to take a six-month sabbatical in the state of Washington, where she took courses and traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Now retired and living on Marian Hall, Sr. Jean enjoys bird watching, stargazing and seeing movies with her sisters on Marian Hall.

“It never occurred to me when I was baptized at the age of 17 that I would have so many adventures with the Sisters of Bon Secours.”

CELEBRATING
60th
JUBILEE

Sr. Fran Gorsuch

SR. FRAN GORSUCH WAS BORN INTO A LOVING FAMILY IN ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, THE SIXTH OF EIGHT CHILDREN, AND ATTENDED SCHOOLS THERE. After high school, she joined the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart in Baltimore in 1963 and professed her final vows in 1971. She ministered for 39 years in diocesan and parish adult and youth ministries in South Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia, Arizona, Delaware, North Carolina and Maryland. She also served as director of vocations and formation and on the leadership team of the Mission Helpers.

In 2000, she began 15 years of service as vice president of mission and then as director of community initiatives for Bon Secours Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern, New York, which changed the trajectory of her life. In 2002, Sr. Fran began the transfer process from the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart to the Sisters of Bon Secours. To this day, she wears the final profession rings of each community intertwined as she says, “They represent my life. The Mission Helpers formed me into the adult woman I am, shaping my values, my missionary zeal, my adaptability and my love for all people. The Bon Secours community has continued to support and challenge the gifts that I bring and to call forth potential I did not know I had. I owe my life to all the women from both of my beloved communities.”

Currently, Sr. Fran serves as vocation director and on the leadership team of the Sisters of Bon Secours, USA. She also



serves on the Bon Secours Mercy Health System board of directors, the USA JPIC committee and as chair of Region 4 of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Sr. Fran earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy at Loyola College of Baltimore and her Master of Divinity degree at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

Sr. Fran finds her greatest love is in direct service with people of all ages and life situations.

“**My spirituality is in the moment of encounter—to be there, to hear their needs. As sisters, we’re called to universal love—to love everybody. Some people may not appear lovable, but then you get to know them. We’re all so much more alike than we are different.**”

(continued on page 32)

CELEBRATING
50th
JUBILEE

Sr. Anna Mae Crane



SR. ANNA MAE CRANE WAS BORN IN DARBY, PENNSYLVANIA. She attended Archbishop Prendergast High School and received her licensed practical nurse degree from Lankenau Hospital School of Nursing. Sr. Anna Mae met the Sisters of Bon Secours when she was 14 years old and a volunteer with St. Francis Country House, a nursing home managed by the sisters at the time. Sr. Anna Mae stayed in touch with the sisters throughout her teen years, entered the Congregation in 1973 and professed her final vows in 1981.

Her nursing career took her to Bon Secours hospitals in Baltimore, Maryland; Methuen, Massachusetts; Grosse Pointe, Michigan; and Darby, Pennsylvania, where she also did utilization review. Sr. Anna Mae returned to Marriottsville in 1988 and became a full-time student, earning an undergraduate degree from Bowie State University and a master’s degree in social work from the University of Maryland.

She moved to Phoenix, Arizona, in 1993 and began a career as a community organizer with the Valley Interfaith Project. In 1996, she continued her work as a community organizer in Portsmouth, Virginia, where she ministered for many years. One of the accomplishments Sr. Anna Mae is most proud of is organizing representatives from 50 churches of all denominations in Portsmouth and holding a summit attended by 800 people. It was the first time members of African American and white churches in Portsmouth had come together.

“**Many of the pastors came and left Portsmouth around the same time as I did, and I believe that God called us there, during the welfare years, to bring the community together.**”

In 2000, Norfolk State University, a historically Black university in Portsmouth, Virginia, recognized Sr. Anna Mae’s social justice work by honoring her with the Martin Luther King Jr. Keeping the Dream Alive Award. The award, a plaque with a built-in clock, was featured in an exhibit in 2020 condemning the killing of George Floyd. The award is now part of the Sisters of Bon Secours’ archive collection. Sr. Anna Mae returned to Marriottsville in 2005 to serve as coordinator of Marian Hall. She became a community organizer for the Baltimore Foundation in 2009 and later volunteered at My Brother’s Keeper and the Bon Secours Women’s Resource Center.

(continued on page 32)



Sr. Mary Cabrini Bonnett

(continued from page 28)

During her many years as a Sister of Bon Secours, Sr. Cabrini has seen the outwardly visible signs of religious life change from traditional habits to regular dress, from being missioned to a particular ministry and convent to choosing one's living and ministry situations, but the most important tenets have remained the same. "Prayer and the desire to help others — those are the constants," she says. "It gives you a lot of satisfaction to know you are doing this work for the Lord. No matter what happens, you have that peace."



Sr. Fran Gorsuch

(continued from page 30)

"When I think of all the people I have been privileged to work with and serve during the past 60 years of religious life, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to God and my sisters," says Sr. Fran. "I have learned from and seen the face of God in so many people and places. My heart overflows with the love I have received and the friendship and love I have been able to share."



Sr. Anna Mae Crane

(continued from page 31)

She has served on many boards of Bon Secours facilities to include Heartlands and Washington Village in Maryland and Maryview Hospital, Bon Secours Maryview Nursing Care Center, Bon Secours Hampton Roads, Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center and Mary Immaculate Hospital in Virginia.

An active member of the Congregation, Sr. Anna Mae has served as a coordinator of sister clusters in Darby, Baltimore and Virginia and a liaison for the Bon Secours Associates. She has served on the Vocation Team and the Formation Team and chaired and co-chaired the Provincial General Assembly. Sr. Anna Mae was formation director for many years as well as vocation coordinator. She was also on the Vowed Membership Task Force. Sr. Anna Mae is currently a member of the *Focus* magazine editorial committee.

Sr. Anna Mae is now retired and lives on the Marriottsville campus. When reflecting upon her 50 years as a Sister of Bon Secours, she says, "I have always had the sense of being called to service and to bring healing, compassion and liberation to where it was most needed. It has been a very fulfilling life for me."

TESSA NEWTON RECEIVES THE SISTER JOSEPHINE POTEL SERVICE AWARD

Annual Employee Recognition Awards & Founder's Day Highlights

ON JAN. 24, THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS CELEBRATED FOUNDER'S DAY, THE DAY IN 1824 WHEN 12 WOMEN MADE THEIR VOWS IN THE CHAPEL OF OUR LADY IN THE CHURCH OF ST. SULPICE IN PARIS, FRANCE. THESE WOMEN CAME TOGETHER TO BRING COMPASSION, HEALING AND LIBERATION TO THOSE WHO WERE SICK AND SUFFERING.



Sr. Elaine Davia (l) with Tessa Newton (r).

As part of Founder's Day, the sisters host a celebration to recognize and thank employees in Marriottsville for their dedicated service. Employees who have completed service milestones are acknowledged along with those who were nominated for the Sister Josephine Potel Service Award.

This special award is one of the highest honors an employee can receive. Employees are nominated by their co-workers, and the winner is chosen by previous winners. Previous winners include Carlton Cheatom, Tim Cugle, Rose Kurtz, Liz O'Neill, Keith Owings, Sherry Vieweg and, posthumously, Louis Vanlandingham.

(continued on next page)

THE Sister Josephine Potel Service Award

The Sister Josephine Potel Service Award recognizes an employee who has demonstrated excellent service and a commitment to living the values and mission of the Sisters of Bon Secours at work and in their community and is “Good Help to Those in Need.”

This year’s nominees were Kevin Cassidy, Hamid Esfandian, Robin Gundersen and Tessa Newton. We congratulate all our nominees and are pleased to announce that the recipient of the 2023 Sister Josephine Potel Service Award was Tessa Newton, program manager of fundraising.

Tessa is described by her co-workers as embodying “healing hospitality” to all the guests of the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center. In her previous role as sales manager, she cared for each guest and went the extra mile to attend to all the details they needed. She played a major role in helping the Retreat and Conference Center grow by ensuring each group who visited had an amazing experience, and subsequently, they rebooked for many years.

Colleagues say Tessa is always available to lend a kind, loving ear and shares her genuine compassion for others in both her professional and personal life. For many years, for example, she has assisted Mariottsville staff with their health insurance and personal paperwork when they needed a trusted advocate.

Tessa initiated the first Giving Tuesday event in 2020, and in her new position as program manager of fundraising, she has begun to lay the groundwork for new fundraising efforts which will benefit all of the Sisters of Bon Secours ministries, furthering the sisters’ mission.

As a volunteer with Foster the Family, Tessa helps provide resources to foster families to assist them in supporting the children in their care. She coaches her son’s soccer team, nurturing preschoolers to learn about soccer and have fun while being kind to one another.

In summary, her co-workers say, “Tessa is an amazing friend and co-worker, approachable and always kind. She is willing to go the extra mile and often steps outside her job description to lend a hand. She is extremely dedicated to her job and honors the heart of who the Sisters of Bon Secours are, always willing to give good help.”

The entire Bon Secours family congratulates Tessa on receiving this prestigious award.



Sr. Josephine Potel



Employee Service Recognition Awards

THANK YOU TO OUR EMPLOYEES FOR THEIR DEDICATED SERVICE.

◀ Kathy Warner (l) with Sr. Elaine Davia (r).

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

CATHERINE WYATT
Marian Hall

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

TERESA BECK
Marian Hall

ADENRELE FOLARIN
Marian Hall

KATHY WARNER
Human Resources

15 YEARS OF SERVICE

SHANNON CURRAN
Volunteer Ministry

AMY KULESA
Associate Ministry

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

ROB BELLEW
Facilities

ELIZABETH EFFIM
Marian Hall

MICHAEL “MICKEY” PARSONS
Housekeeping

5 YEARS OF SERVICE

RHONDA HOOKER
Congregation of
Bon Secours Office

SHAHIN MOINI
Housekeeping

LIZ O’NEILL
Communications

LIESEL RUPPRECHT
Volunteer Ministry

Bon Secours Associates Extend THE Mission OF THE Sisters

by AMY KULESA
Director, Bon Secours Associates, USA



Bon Secours Associate Clintonette Robinson (l) with Director of Bon Secours Associates Amy Kulesa (r).

A BON SECOURS ASSOCIATE SHARES IN THE VISION, MISSION AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS AND HAS BONDS WITH THE CONGREGATION WITHOUT BEING CALLED TO VOWS.

Together, Bon Secours Associates are a global faith-based community who aspire to be “Good Help to Those in Need” wherever they are, in their families, places of work, church and local communities.

Associates come from many walks of life, including health care, pastoral care, business, science and the hospice ministry. What they have in common is their commitment to grow in faith, friendship and community and extend the spirit of the Sisters of Bon Secours to be channels of compassion, healing and liberation to our world. Associates collaborate with the sisters in mission projects and support each other with prayer.

Bon Secours Associates welcome both men and women, married or single, and religious or clergy, of any denomination, who feel called to share the mission of the sisters through this inclusive fellowship.



Bon Secours Associates (l to r) Bob Abarno, Mickey Reed, Linda Mastro and Minta Davis with Director Amy Kulesa and discerner Michelle Munson.

A REFLECTION FROM BON SECOURS ASSOCIATE MINTA DAVIS

Allowing God to Guide Me

LIFE MAY BE HARD, BUT LIVING THE MISSION OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS IS SIMPLE. I ANSWER THE CALL BY ALLOWING GOD TO GUIDE ME. BECOMING A BON SECOURS ASSOCIATE HAS GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW SPIRITUALLY AND ELEVATE MY VOLUNTEERISM.

Part of my faith journey has been to learn how to let go of things that block me from enjoying the gift of being “good help,” a Bon Secours charism that especially resonated with me during my formation as an associate and continues to be my North Star.



Minta Davis (l) with Sr. Kathleen Moroney (r).

Within the Bon Secours family, I have facilitated associate meetings and become the Marriottsville reporter — writing articles for the quarterly *Horizon* magazine. For Christmas, I mailed more than 60 cards to the sisters and associates, and I drove a sister to her physical therapy appointments. In my church community, I serve in the food pantry at Saint Joseph’s Catholic Church, am very active in the Catholic Daughters of America Court #2300 and volunteer with various ministries throughout the year.

As a retired Air Force veteran, volunteering for the Veterans Affairs Maryland Health Care System has long been a part of my life. During the pandemic, I participated virtually in the VA’s Compassionate Contact Corps program and became a caring presence for veterans stuck at home. To my surprise and extreme honor, I was awarded the first-ever VA Excellence in Customer Experience Volunteer of the Year Award.

It is a blessing to be able to serve God by serving others. The Bon Secours Associate community supports and encourages me in this mission.

JOIN Bon Secours Associates

If you would like to learn more about the Bon Secours Associates ministry and what it means to make a commitment as an associate, visit bonsecours.us/associates, email [Amy.Kulesa@bonsecoursusa.org](mailto:amy.kulesa@bonsecoursusa.org) or call 410-442-3131.



Meet
Ann Schwartz:

HELPING

College Students Discern Their Next Steps



▲
BSVM 2017-2018 volunteers
(l to r) Narda Salinas,
Ruby Miller and Sam Ting
care for their community.

The Sisters of Bon Secours are pleased to welcome Ann Schwartz, the new recruitment leader for Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry. Ann is from Pennsylvania and holds a bachelor's degree in social work from Shippensburg University and a master's degree in theology from La Salle University. She has worked in youth and college ministry for most of her career and has also held several positions in the field of social work. She previously served as a Catholic campus minister for Missouri State University.

Throughout her career, Ann has always encouraged students to consider a year of service. She says, "I did a year of service after college, and it impacted my life in so many ways." She finds that many students think there are only two options after college: get a job or go to grad school. Ann says, "I enjoy introducing students to a third option, serving as a Bon Secours Ministry Volunteer, a year of service and spiritual formation."

Ann deeply connects with the sisters' mission to "walk with others." She travels to college campuses answering questions about the Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry and accompanying students as they discern their next steps after graduation. "Ideal candidates have a strong desire for social justice with an interest in health care, education or social service, while living in community and focusing on their spiritual formation," she says.

A unique aspect of the Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry year is that ministry volunteers live together in the urban neighborhoods where they serve.

“They experience the hardships of their community, and that helps them to better understand and serve the people in that community. Participating in Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry is an opportunity to grow as a person and establish one's priorities and spiritual identity early on as a young adult.”

Being Attentive to the World's Deepest Needs

A REFLECTION FROM JULIANNE ESTEVES, BSVM 2022-2023

A big reason I was drawn to Bon Secours Volunteer Ministry (BSVM) was its role in providing compassionate health care to those who are often denied equitable access. I also wanted to live in an intentional community where I could be supported and support others personally, professionally and spiritually. As a ministry volunteer, I offer a "ministry of presence" to the Emergency Department at Richmond Community Hospital and accompany patients and staff through the highs and the lows of their days.



The BSVM call to live simply, one of the five foundational pillars of the ministry, has disrupted my previous tendency to cling to productivity. It was especially challenging to confront this pillar as I transitioned from a busy college schedule into an environment that focuses on decreasing patient wait times and seeing as many patients as possible. Yet, supplanted by the mission and values of the sisters, it has been incredibly rewarding to grow into this new mindset that allows me to be more present.

The BSVM pillars have been different (and even counter-cultural) to what I was originally expecting, and I've seen how I can live them out in various settings, whether in the hospital, in conversations with my housemates or in personal prayer. I have found much joy in community life, especially when we creatively live out the five program pillars in order to fully express the sisters' charism of compassion, healing and liberation. We have become acutely aware of the need to live simply and live well, with our time and thoughts as well as our resources. This intention in thoughts and deeds has opened more opportunities to be more attentive to our individual needs, our community's needs and the world's deepest needs. I am very grateful for all of the ways I have been supported and challenged by the BSVM ministry and all of the fruits that have come from this year so far.

Thank you, sisters and thank you, BSVM.

BON SECOURS *Young Adults*



Bon Secours Young Adults are devoted to building community and depth in their relationships with God and others.

Embrace Their FAITH

BON SECOURS YOUNG ADULTS ARE A GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE IN THEIR 20S AND 30S, SINGLE AND MARRIED, CENTERED IN RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS. ESTABLISHED IN 2014 TO EXPAND THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS' MINISTRY TO BE "GOOD HELP TO THOSE IN NEED," BON SECOURS YOUNG ADULTS COME TOGETHER TO EMBRACE THEIR LIVING FAITH IN A LOVING GOD. JOYFUL AND DIVERSE, THEY ARE INSPIRED BY THE SISTERS' CHARISM OF COMPASSION, HEALING AND LIBERATION AND OFFER WELCOME, SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT AND COMPANIONSHIP TO ALL WHO JOIN THEM.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Charism Retreat:
May 5-6, 2023

World Youth Day Pilgrimage:
July 31-August 6, 2023

Charism Retreat:
October 6-8, 2023



JOIN Bon Secours Young Adults

If you are seeking community and opportunities to deepen your faith with other like-minded young adults, contact the USA Program Manager for Bon Secours Young Adults Lauren DeSmit at lauren.desmit@bonsecoursusa.org.

Bon Secours Young Adults has helped me form a community of friends, fostered growth in my personal faith and taught me the beauty of hospitality ministry. In many ways, Bon Secours Young Adults has shaped my life as a young adult.

Through Bon Secours Young Adults, the sisters' charism of compassion, healing and liberation are ingrained into my daily life. Coming from an engineering background, the charism seemed like a very difficult thing to understand or live. It is not black and white. Through the many interactions I've had with the sisters and other Bon Secours Young Adults, I have seen that living their charism can be simple.



Zach and Lauren DeSmit.

How the Sisters' Charism Has Shaped My Life

A REFLECTION FROM BON SECOURS YOUNG ADULT ZACH DeSMIT

In 2014, I was introduced to the Sisters of Bon Secours through a Bon Secours Young Adults Retreat. This is where I first learned of the sisters' charism and mission. Fast forward nine years, I now have the incredible opportunity of supporting the ministry through my wife, Lauren DeSmit, USA program manager for Bon Secours Young Adults.

As many who have worked in ministry know, the job is never nine-to-five. I have the privilege of volunteering and serving alongside Lauren and the ministry we both love. From brainstorming future advocacy opportunities to cooking for retreat weekends and connecting with local Catholic communities and ministry partners,

Compassion turns from an abstract concept to staying longer after a work meeting to ask about someone's weekend. Healing takes many forms. Sometimes it is paddling out on your surfboard to be at peace with the ocean; other times, it's a holy hour or deep conversation with friends. Liberation has the widest breadth that I have seen. I've seen it most on retreat while sharing with other young adults who, like myself, are struggling with work, life and family dynamics in today's overburdened society. Bon Secours Young Adults has had a profound impact on my life, and it is an honor to share in the mission of the sisters and be "good help" in the world.



Upcoming Overnight Retreats

SoulCollage®

Guided by Mickey Reed

Friday, June 2 - Sunday, June 4

Self-Love, Self-Care and Self-Kindness

Guided by Kat Middleton

Friday, June 16 - Sunday, June 18

Silent Directed Retreat

Guided by Joy Aker, Sr. Bernadette Claps, Fr. Phil Cover and Rev. Mary Ka Kanahan

Sunday, June 18 - Saturday, June 24

English Mystics and the Contemplative Imagination

Guided by Carl McColman

Sunday, June 25 - Saturday, July 1

Images of God in Teilhard and Merton

Guided by Sr. Kathleen Duffy

Sunday, July 9 - Saturday, July 15

Silent Directed Retreat

Guided by Joanne Cahoon, Sr. Joann Flora, Sr. Pamela Jablon, Ginny Novak and Fr. Michael Schlepner

Sunday, July 16 - Saturday, July 22

Live Boldly, Seek Truth, Ask Questions

Guided by Sr. Mary Ellen O'Dea

Sunday, July 23 - Saturday, July 29

Boundless Compassion Retreat: Making Compassion a Way of Life

Guided by Mickey Reed

Friday, July 28 - Sunday, July 30

8-Day Ignatian Retreat

Guided by Fr. Patrick Bergquist, Nancy Bickel, Paul Gallagher and Dee Papania

Saturday, July 29 - Saturday, August 5

The Wisdom and Practice of Prayer within the World's Spiritual Traditions

Guided by Gordon Creamer

Friday, August 11 - Monday, August 14

Silent Directed Retreat

Guided by Sr. Ann Belmonte, Joanne Cahoon, Fr. Phil Cover and Fr. Michael Schlepner

Sunday, August 13 - Saturday, August 19

The Dharma of Jesus

Guided by Ayo Yetunde

Friday, August 18 - Sunday, August 20

Body and Spirit — Growing Deeper Into God

Guided by Fr. Phil Cover and Cindy Hilbert

Friday, August 25 - Sunday, August 27



Join Us for a Sponsored Retreat

The sponsored retreat ministry offers everyone the opportunity to visit the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, enabling them to spiritually grow and heal. The retreat topics vary significantly, according to the presenter's expertise, liturgical calendar, audience and season, but there is one common theme that resonates within nearly every retreat and that is the beautiful example of creation around us. Retreat presenters carve out time for guests to reflect in nature, and they also often provide resources from Scripture or spiritual authors to ignite a connection and reverence for the outdoor sanctuary around them.

Guests frequently remark about the peace they feel while reflecting by the pond, praying in the Peace Garden or when taking a walking meditation in the labyrinth. Elements of ecological spirituality have always been a common, underlying retreat theme, and it fits so naturally with the Sisters of Bon Secours' mission focus on the care for creation. It is such a privilege to extend this mission with guests who come from far and wide. It is our hope that they always carry it with them and share this caring connection from the Sisters of Bon Secours with others.

Many more retreat options are available! Please learn more and register by visiting our website at BonSecoursRCC.org or by calling 410-442-3120.





◀ Sr. Mary Margaret Burger was the first director and visionary behind the Marriottsville Spiritual Center, now known as the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center.



▲ The Sisters of Bon Secours purchased the Marriottsville property in 1962 to build a cross-shaped Provincial House and support the growing needs of the Congregation in the United States.

THE RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTER *Celebrates 55 Years*

THE RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER IS PROUD TO BE CELEBRATING 55 YEARS IN 2023. VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO READ ABOUT THE VISION THAT SR. MARY MARGARET BURGER DEVELOPED IN 1968 AND HOW IT GREW TO BE THE THRIVING SPIRITUAL OASIS WE ENJOY TODAY: BonSecoursRCC.org/us/history.

Bon Secours is a Prayed-In Place

A Reflection from Rev. Linda Kapurch

REV. LINDA KAPURCH IS A FACILITATOR OF CENTERING PRAYER SESSIONS AT THE BON SECOURS RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER, AND SHE HAS BEEN A FREQUENT RETREAT GUEST FOR MANY YEARS. SHE SHARES HOW HER EXPERIENCES AT THE CENTER HAVE CONNECTED HER TO THE MISSION OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS, FURTHER EXTENDING THE SISTERS' CHARISM OF HEALING, COMPASSION AND LIBERATION.

“Ever since I first encountered Bon Secours — beginning in 1988 through the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation — I have been increasingly grateful to God for the many ways Bon Secours has truly become ‘good help’ to me. From those earliest days, as a fledgling spiritual seeker, I have experienced God’s love made manifest and concrete in so many ways: the welcome silence of the spaces — both inside the building and outside on the grounds; the caring hospitality of the sisters and staff alike; the thoughtful programming of the Retreat and Conference Center; and the availability to just be — whether on personal retreat, having a brown-bag lunch with a friend or attending Mass in the spacious chapel.

“Bon Secours is a sacred place where I can seek refuge in good times and bad, when I am on top of the world or slinking on the bottom of the pond, when my path is clear and when it is clouded. Each time I drive up the long hill to the visitor parking lot, I know that Bon Secours is a ‘prayed-in place,’ to which I can add a prayer for myself and the world. THANK YOU for all you do.”



Rebecca Clay Christensen LEADS Bon Secours Community

EMPLOYEES OF BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH LIVE THE MISSION OF THE SISTERS OF BON SECOURS EVERY DAY IN THE WORK THEY DO INSIDE OUR BON SECOURS FACILITIES AND IN THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE. THESE EMPLOYEES EMBODY WHAT IT MEANS TO “GIVE GOOD HELP TO THOSE IN NEED” WHETHER IN A HOSPITAL, REHAB CENTER, LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY, DOCTOR’S OFFICE OR COMMUNITY CLINIC. MANY OF THESE EMPLOYEES CHOOSE TO WORK WITHIN A FAITH-BASED HEALTH SYSTEM BECAUSE THEY WANT TO SHARE THE SISTERS’ MISSION AND CHARISM.

One example of an employee whose work truly is an extension of what the Sisters of Bon Secours stand for is Rebecca Clay Christensen, known as Becky, who is the executive director for community health for Bon Secours’ Richmond market.

Becky explains that community health services are related directly to community needs as identified in the health system’s triennial Community Health Needs Assessment. This survey helps to identify the key areas of health needs in the community, whether through direct-care services, financial investments or community partnerships.

The goal is to meet the needs of the whole person, beyond just providing health care, and help stabilize communities.

Bon Secours is focused on addressing the social determinants of health in addition to providing wellness and prevention of disease services in underserved populations, which is critical to the health of the community. It has been shown that where you live

can determine how long you live. Communities need affordable housing, good schools, after-school care, sources of healthy food, transportation and access to free and affordable health care. Over the last 10 years, Bon Secours has invested more than \$33 million in community-benefit investment grants to nonprofit organizations addressing the social determinants of health across its communities, which recently expanded in the Richmond market to cover Petersburg and Southern Virginia.

In the Richmond market, residents need affordable housing. The health system supports nonprofit organizations that provide loans to people to enable them to purchase houses, which creates stability in the community and intergenerational wealth.

Violence is an ever-present problem that Bon Secours is addressing with the Bon Secours Violence Response Team, a team of professionals that includes forensic nurses as well as victim advocates to care for all victims of violence. The team provides immediate crisis intervention as well as long-term support to victims.

Outreach Efforts IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

Another area at the forefront of Bon Secours’ outreach to the community is providing quality primary care to the uninsured through a variety of access points. Bon Secours Richmond’s mobile clinic, the Care-A-Van, can be seen in neighborhoods throughout the area, and soon Bon Secours will open a fixed site in the region, which will serve as a bricks-and-mortar headquarters for the Care-A-Van. The Community Health Clinic, Manchester, at the Center for Healthy Living will be a free clinic to deal with chronic disease, behavioral health and children’s services among other issues. Bon Secours has also cared for the uninsured community by holding pop-up clinics, especially during COVID-19, for vaccinations and COVID-19 testing as well as TB testing and other immunizations. As part of its commitment to its underserved communities, a free walk-in clinic was recently opened on the campus of Richmond Community Hospital.

“All these services are promoted through word of mouth with no advertising needed, and they are free to the uninsured. An important part of our job is to build trust in the community, and our team has done an excellent job working with community leaders and gaining the trust of the people in our communities.”

— BECKY CLAY CHRISTENSEN



Becky Clay Christensen, executive director for community health for the Richmond market, speaks at a groundbreaking ceremony for the Bon Secours Community Health Clinic, Manchester, at the Center for Healthy Living, a free community clinic opening later this year to serve the uninsured in Richmond.

BECKY AND HER TEAM KNOW THAT WHAT THEY DO EVERY DAY MATTERS AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, GIVES PEOPLE HOPE.

“We have truly made an impact in our communities,” says Becky. “And there is joy in our work as we follow in the footsteps of the founding Sisters of Bon Secours who ministered on the streets of Paris in 1884.”

Becky has worked with Bon Secours Richmond since 2008 and has served in her present position leading community outreach efforts since 2015.

CONGREGATION

AROUND THE

NEWS





Sr. Elaine Visits Alaska




◀ **SR. ELAINE DAVIA** (left) and her sister, Bonny, had been planning a vacation to see the northern lights in Alaska since 2018. They finally went over the Thanksgiving holiday. On their first night, their dream came true, and they experienced the beautiful dancing lights for almost an hour. Their once-in-a-lifetime adventure included dog sledding, petting a reindeer, seeing the Alaskan Pipeline, swimming in sulfur springs in 12-degree weather and visiting an ice museum.

CONNECT WITH US ON ALL OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS:

 Instagram.com/SistersofBonSecoursUSA

 Facebook.com/BonSecoursVocations

 @SrsBonSecours



Sisters of Bon Secours Transition to New IT Provider

A cable-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the Congregation's successful transition to a new IT provider. As you read through this issue of *Focus*, take a minute to note the new email addresses for our staff and ministries.



MARRIOTTSVILLE CAMPUS

Hosts Canine Training

• PROGRAM •

Catch glimpses of our canine guests and their human companions outside on the Marriottsville campus participating in the K9 Nose Work training program led by the National Association of Canine Scent Work. Pictured are Jessica Rettig and her rescue dog, Capone.

Sr. Nancy Glynn on the Board of Nursing Home in France

In January, **SR. NANCY GLYNN** attended a board meeting for the Sisters of Bon Secours nursing home in Vendome, France. She has served as the sisters' representative on the board for the past 13 years. Part of a newly formed group of Catholic nursing homes, the home is planning for the future by adding apartments for the elderly and housing for retired priests. Look for an article in our fall issue of *Focus* highlighting these exciting new initiatives.



A Warm Welcome to

CALEB McCANDLESS
our new Human Resources business partner.

Connections Families To Our Sisters

by SR. MARY SHIMO Archivist



Sr. Urban Auer as a Guild Girl prior to entering the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours.

ON A RECENT SUNDAY AFTER MASS IN OUR CHAPEL AT MARRIOTTSTVILLE, ONE OF OUR ATTENDEES, KEITH MCQUAY, ASKED IF I KNEW SR. URBAN AUER (MARY DORIS AUER). SHE WAS HIS SECOND COUSIN, AND HE HAD NEVER MET HER. I TOLD HIM I WOULD BRING HIM SOME INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY.

Mr. McQuay's mother, Margaret Ann Auer, was Sr. Urban's first cousin. She lived down the street from where Sr. Urban grew up on the 2100 block of Penrose Avenue near Bon Secours Hospital in Baltimore. Their families had not kept in touch, and now Mr. McQuay wanted to learn more about Sr. Urban.

Sr. Urban, born in 1922, and Mr. McQuay's mother, who was eight years younger, grew up in St. Martin's Parish in Baltimore. From first to 12th grade, both young women attended the St. Martin's School with the Daughters of Charity as their teachers. Sr. Urban had plans to enter the Daughters of Charity, but first, she needed to have her tonsils removed.

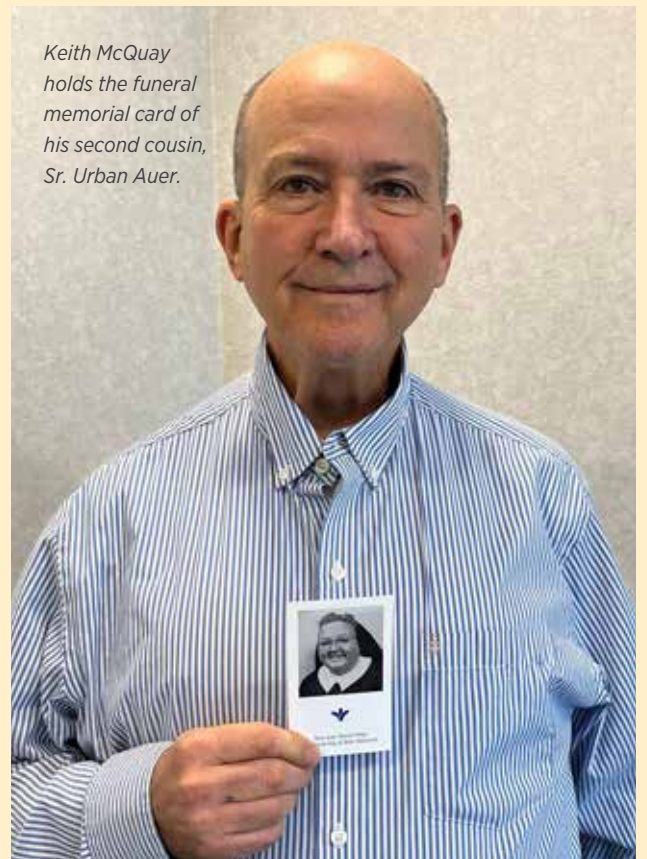
In Sr. Urban's writing about about her journey to becoming a Sister of Bon Secours, she said, "I had every intention of becoming a Daughter of Charity immediately after graduation. However, God had other intentions. Since Bon Secours Hospital was so close, it was only natural that I should be admitted there. I was in the hospital for three days and two nights. I met two Sisters of Bon Secours — the sister technician who drew my blood for the admission test and the sister in the position of head nurse of St. Anne's Hall. I was invited by the sister technician to join the Bon Secours Guild that had recently been organized to introduce young girls to Bon Secours. I told the sister that I already knew what Congregation I intended to enter, and I didn't want to get confused.

“However, I was so impressed by the dedicated work of the Sisters of Bon Secours—twelve hours a day, seven days a week—and their spirit of warmth, cheerfulness and loving care, that I left the hospital with the intention of becoming a Sister of Bon Secours.”

Sr. Urban followed through on this intention shortly after her two brothers came home from World War II. She entered the Bon Secours convent in Baltimore on Sunday, Nov. 18, 1945. While an image of Sr. Urban from her day of entrance could not be found in the Bon Secours Archives, I gave Mr. McQuay her funeral memorial card. He was grateful and remarked that she was smiling so wonderfully.

On the following Sunday, I gave him her eulogy and a picture of her as a Guild Girl prior to entrance. He was most grateful and said he would show these pictures to his mother.

THE BON SECOURS ARCHIVES CONTINUES TO CONNECT WITH FAMILIES OF OUR SISTERS WHO ARE LOOKING FOR INFORMATION. WE CAN BE THE ANCESTRY SITE FOR ALL OUR DEVOTED AND FAITHFUL WOMEN.



Keith McQuay holds the funeral memorial card of his second cousin, Sr. Urban Auer.

\$75,000

IN MINISTRY GRANTS AWARDED

SHEPHERD HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM ON POVERTY— \$10,000

The Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty (SHECP) encourages the study of poverty through hands-on educational opportunities for college students. This grant will support the expansion of SHECP’s summer internship program in Richmond, Virginia, by offering four public health internships. Interns will serve at the Health Brigade, CrossOver Healthcare Ministry and other local clinics.

4MYCITY — \$15,000

Baltimore-based 4MyCiTy focuses on environmental sustainability through the sustainable management of food and the reduction of organic waste. The program reduces organic waste by rescuing healthy food and distributing it within the community. Since its inception in October 2018, 4MyCiTy has distributed over 140 million pounds of food and an estimated 116 million meals to families facing hunger. This grant will help fund Food Rescue To Go!, a new initiative to deliver healthy food directly to the homes of families struggling with food insecurity.

BON SECOURS COMMUNITY WORKS— \$15,000

Eviction rates in Baltimore City have skyrocketed in recent years. West Baltimore renters have been particularly hard hit, and Baltimore City expects its eviction assistance funding will be depleted in early 2023. The financial services team at Bon Secours Community Works offers an eviction prevention assistance program that pays past due rent to landlords and simultaneously delivers financial education to help clients become stable. This grant provides critical funding to help clients avoid imminent eviction. This program serves residents of Bon Secours housing and the greater community.

DETERMINED TO LIVE TRANSITION HOUSE— \$20,000

The inability to obtain stable housing and earn a living wage are the main contributors to recidivism among formerly incarcerated people. This grant helps Determined to Live Transition House provide transitional housing and supportive services to individuals recently released or pending release from correctional institutions in Maryland. Supportive services including educational opportunities, job training, life skills training and assistance in acquiring medical and mental health care will be available to aid in stability, self-sufficiency and ultimately, successful reentry into society.

ST. MARY’S HEALTH WAGON — \$15,000

The number of patients St. Mary’s Health Wagon sees in Southwest Virginia has increased 76% since 2021. In addition to health care, St. Mary’s Health Wagon assists patients with food and hygiene items. More registered nurses, nurse practitioners and licensed practical nurses are needed to provide lifesaving health care, prevention and education to these underserved populations. This grant will help fund the salary of a licensed practical nurse and support expansion of primary and specialty care in Southwest Virginia through an integrated medical-dental model, creating a medical hub where patients can receive comprehensive care.

“TO BECOME HOLY IS NOT SOMETHING WE DO APART FROM DAILY LIVING; RATHER, WE PURSUE AND ATTAIN HOLINESS IN AND THROUGH OUR DAILY ACTIVITIES.”

— MARK ZIA
The Enduring Faith and Timeless Truths of Fulton Sheen.
 Cincinnati: Servant books, 2015



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