



Our Mission

The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVMs) is a community of Catholic women religious who, in response to a personal call from God, have chosen a vowed life of prayer, ministry and community. In response to this call, BVMs express their mission in service to God's people through their core values of

**FREEDOM
EDUCATION
CHARITY
and
JUSTICE**

BVM History

In 1833, BVM Foundress Mary Frances Clarke journeyed from Dublin, Ireland, to Philadelphia with her four companions to answer God's call to serve the growing need for Catholic education in the immigrant church. These five Irish pioneer women began a tradition of outstanding BVM education.

Ten years later, the young community of 19 sisters migrated to Dubuque, Iowa, at the invitation of Bishop Matthias Loras. The pioneer sisters, recognizing again the immense need for education, particularly of girls, established a boarding school on the prairie near Dubuque. It later became Clarke University. As the BVM community grew, the sisters staffed elementary and high schools along the upper Mississippi Valley and farther west.

In 1867, the sisters began their educational ministry in Chicago in elementary schools, high schools, and later Mundelein College. From Chicago, the BVM community expanded to the west coast and other locations in the midwest, south and east. After World War II, missions were established in Hawaii. In 1961, in response to a papal invitation, BVMs began ministering in Latin America.

Since the beginning, nearly 5,000 women have followed in the footsteps of Mary Frances Clarke to serve God's people.



*I am with you
your humble
Mary Frances Clarke*



Walk With Us

There are many ways to walk with the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary:

VOWED MEMBERSHIP

Lou Anglin, BVM: langlin@bvmcong.org
Kathy Carr, BVM: kcarr@bvmcong.org

ASSOCIATION

Ann Therese Chaput, BVM
achaput@bvmcong.org

MINISTRY PARTNERS

development@bvmcong.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

bvmoutreach@bvmcong.org

To learn more, visit:
WWW.BVMCONG.ORG or



FOLLOW us on FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com/bvmsisters

*"Leave the future to God.
I have no fears as long as you are
working unitedly that God will
aid you as in the past."*

—BVM Foundress Mary Frances Clarke



Walk With Us



FREEDOM, EDUCATION, CHARITY *and* JUSTICE
Core Values

Sisters of Charity
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Freed by Love, Acting for Justice


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of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Freed by Love, Acting for Justice

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BVMs Today



Responding to the changing vision of the Catholic Church and the increasing needs of God's people, the BVM community continues to carry out the mission of Jesus through their core values of freedom, education, charity and justice.

A key aspect of BVM spirituality is being open to the new ways in which God invites us individually and as a community to respond to the needs of the times. Grounded in a life of prayer, BVMs seek to live out the Gospel values of compassion, mercy, inclusivity and justice through their diverse ministries.

Many BVM ministries are rooted in the community's long-standing tradition of education. Sisters continue to teach, tutor, direct religious education programs, and mentor students who are learning English.

Besides education, sisters are pastoral ministers, counselors, and advocates for the elderly and immigrants. Others minister in social services and healthcare. They are committed to working with organizations and groups who share BVM vision and values, striving for justice and care for the Earth.

For the past 180 years, BVMs have been inspired to seek out and respond to those in need, especially women and children. Guided by their *Constitutions*, BVM sisters are willing to go wherever the critical human need is the greatest. Learning about other cultures and values enriches the lives of the sisters, expanding relationships. Currently BVMs minister in 22 states and in Ecuador, Guatemala and Ghana.

When retired, sisters continue to live life to the fullest. Many remain in their local communities to serve. Other sisters, who are no longer able to participate in active ministry, are involved in the ministry of prayer.

Walk With Us

With faith in God's presence and finding inspiration in the people they serve, the Sisters of Charity have many reasons to celebrate and embrace the future. We invite you to Walk With Us in creating this future.

Vowed Membership

Our lives are dedicated to "being freed and helping others enjoy freedom in God's steadfast love." (*Constitutions* #10) Each sister shares her gifts and talents with all of God's people. Our lives are characterized by simple living, prayer and ministry within the bond of community.

In whatever way we feel called to minister, we do so in a spirit of joy, sharing in God's abundant love. Community is experienced as a circle of friends who reach out to others with love.

BVM Association

BVM sisters and associates are connected as faith-filled believers who embrace the gospel vision and make it part of their daily lives rooted in the charism

of Mary Frances Clarke. This relationship provides a source of mutual support through prayer and service to others. Together, we reach out to alleviate the hardships that our brothers and sisters experience in the local and global community.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering is an opportunity to open your heart to others and to share your gifts and talents while learning from other people whose lives have many challenges, such as meeting basic needs. Each year we sponsor volunteer opportunities close to your home and in the United States and Ecuador that integrate service, community and prayerful reflection. We invite you to join us in reaching out in love to people in need.

Ministry Partners

There are many ways to financially partner with the BVMs to help ensure that our mission and ministries continue well into the future, and help us care for our retired sisters:

- BVM Prayer Association
- Honorary and Memorial Gifts
- Cash Gifts
- Gifts of Appreciated Stock and Other Assets
- Matching Gifts
- BVM Monthly Partner Program
- Planned Gifts
- Gifts Through Your Will

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