

EDITOR'S NOTE

Maybe we should call 2021 the Year of the Multitasker? Issues that have always been important all clamor for our immediate attention in the present moment: the loss and anxiety brought about from the pandemic; the divides in our nation and culture; the real sense that long-discussed concerns about climate change have very much arrived. With spreading disease and health inequities, with wildfire, earthquake and flooding, our current moment can seem not only overwhelming, but paralyzing. What can I do when there is so much that needs to be done?



**BETSY
TAYLOR**

That is when my time working alongside so many of you in Catholic health care helps me find an answer. To use the language of CHA's recent meditations: Pause. Breathe. Reflect. But also then, Get Moving. We know from our traditions that those who shaped health care in the United States took on remarkably daunting obstacles. This *Health Progress* issue on "Health Care and the Environment" reflects how many health care systems continue to take on today's environmental challenges with new goals and approaches.

Not every one of us can simultaneously tackle every issue in health care today. If I were involved in the day-in, day-out frontline care of people critically ill from the pandemic, I can't imagine I'd appreciate the suggestion that somehow I'm also supposed to tackle our environmental woes.

But there is strength in our numbers, and in bringing our individual skills and talents to the specific work we can each do best for systemic improvements.

Environmentalism, in a Catholic context, encompasses far more than conservation or

recycling or renewable energy. Though those are important! It involves caring for God's creation and, as Pope Francis has asked us, to be "generous stewards" of our resources and the earth.

This issue explores the healing strength of nature; the importance of advocating for environmental justice; and a myriad of strategic and smart ways that health care systems are working to reverse actions that harm the planet to better protect patients and their environments. The work is complex and daunting in its scope. Good thing we have so many others to help us.

In Philippians, Paul writes, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

With faith that prayer and petition can bolster us through times of challenge, we can accomplish more together than we can as individuals. And thanksgiving keeps our hearts open to remind us of all the good in our lives. What helps us in anxious times, when the work may seem overwhelming, is the remembrance that we are not alone in it.

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