

Flint native celebrates 50-year jubilee with Sisters of the Precious Blood



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FLINT, MI – A Flint native celebrates her 50-year jubilee with Sisters of the Precious Blood this year, inducted into the Catholic organization on Jan. 3, 1962.

Sister Marie Kopin, 74, is the former Central Michigan University clinical supervisor and now lives in Mount Pleasant.

Although she is retired, Kopin is still active in coordinating a committee on environmental issues, leading prayer services at community gatherings and playing organ and training cantors at Sacred Heart Parish in Mount Pleasant.

She also is a mentor and student of international and universal peace dances and leads Michigan mushroom hunts.

“Primarily, (the sisters) have done education ministry,” said Director of Communications Dave Eck. “Today, they minister in social justice, community outreach, medicine and pastoral administration.”

There are about 150 sisters in the organization, which is based in Dayton, Ohio, working across the country as well as in Chile and Guatemala, Eck said.

Kopin said she became interested in a religious vocation while at Kearsy High School because she was a “cradle Catholic.”

As a college student at Central Michigan University, Kopin said she was challenged on her faith by her roommates, which made her investigate Catholicism further.

“It became clear after that that I had a calling,” she said. “This would be the place I would go.”

Unlike other sisters, Kopin said she “shopped” around for a community – Sisters of the Precious Blood ended up being the perfect fit.

“I would be able to continue my work as a speech pathologist,” she said. “Another attraction was they had already modernized their habit ... It didn’t make any sense to wear that (cumbersome) garb.”

At the time, many Catholic communities still wore restrictive headgear and wool habits.

When she joined in the 1960s, Kopin said that hundreds of sisters lived in the Flint mother house. Now, only three Sisters of the Precious Blood reside in Michigan – the other two live in Brighton and Flint.

“The number of sisters has diminished,” she said. “That’s why we don’t live in big groups (anymore) – there’s nobody to live with.”

Kopin said her favorite thing about the organization is the yearly Sisters of the Precious Blood reunion called Spirit Days, held in Dayton, Ohio.

“We get to see our friends and network and have some fun together and pray together,” she said.

Kopin earned a bachelor’s in speech correction and vocal music education from CMU in 1959; a master’s in speech pathology and audiology from the University of Michigan in 1967; an education specialist degree in educational leadership from CMU in 1991; and a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Virginia in 1999.

Eck described Kopin as outgoing and vivacious.

