

THE MERCER COUNTY

CHRONICLE

WEEKLY PUBLICATION • VOLUME 112, NUMBER 30 • COLDWATER, OHIO • AUGUST 27, 2009 - SEPTEMBER 2, 2009 • 75¢

More than 500 attend Mass and picnic at Maria Stein for Sisters' 175th anniversary

BY PAT MORRISON

With a bright sun overhead (and 90-degree temperatures providing a sizzle factor), more than 500 people filled the grounds of the Maria Stein Center on Sunday, Aug. 16, for a Mass and picnic to help the Sisters of the Precious Blood celebrate their 175th anniversary at this historic and memory-filled site.

Families, friends, volunteers and Sisters and Missionaries of the Precious Blood sat on folding chairs, camping seats and the green grass for the 4 p.m. Mass, which was followed by a picnic supper in the center's courtyard.

Helping to make the celebration more festive were several fraternal and patriotic groups, including men and women of the Maria Stein American Legion Post 571, Knights of St. John Commandery 313 from Maria Stein and the Ladies Auxiliary Commandery 288, and the Knights of Columbus, Council 2158, from Minster. Approximately 40 Country Fest committee members and another four dozen volunteers helped with shuttling participants from the parking area to the Mass site in golf carts, baking, contributing and serving food items and soft drinks and grilling burgers and hotdogs.

More than two dozen priests and brothers of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood joined the more than 50 Precious Blood Sisters on hand for the celebration. Many of the sisters in attendance were either from the area or ministered there over the years.

Representatives of the two groups of religious communities offered remarks. Sister Florence Seifert, president of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, welcomed the participants and thanked them for their years of support and friendship. At the close of the Mass Sister Barbara Ann Hoying, director of the Maria Stein Center/Relics Shrine, also thanked all who participated and continue to support the sisters' ministry.

Both she and Sister Florence noted that a celebration at Maria Stein was fitting during the congregation's 175th anniversary year, for many reasons. The sisters first came to Maria Stein in 1846 and the convent became the first motherhouse of the con-



Little Donald Recker, 3 months, finds a comfy place to take a nap during the Mass: the arms of older brother Herman, 11. The Reckers – Mom, Dad and seven children—drove from New Cleveland, Ohio, for the celebration. The children's great-aunt is is Precious Blood Sister Nancy Recker.

gregation in the United States, welcoming, training and sending out on mission hundreds of sisters until 1923 (when the motherhouse was relocated to Dayton). From the beginnings, the sisters were the beneficiaries of wonderful support and rapport with their neighbors, working closely with them in farm tasks, making clothing and shoes for the people of the commu-

----- Continued on page 12

175th Anniversary

Continued from page 1

nity as well as themselves and the Missionaries, educating and caring for children, and sharing in prayer with their neighbors.

Precious Blood Father Kenneth Schroeder of St. Charles Center, Carthagen, presided at the Mass. In his homily the former pastor of St. John Parish in Maria Stein noted the importance of Maria Stein Center not only for the sisters, but also for the people of the area, both historically and as an ongoing source of prayer and inspiration. Fr. Schroeder was assisted by Deacons Omer Bertke (St. John Parish, Maria Stein) and John Schmeising (St. Augustine Parish, Minster).

Organist Paul Mizer led a choir of Precious Blood Sisters in music for the liturgy.

Before and after the Mass, participants toured the historic convent, chapel and relics shrine and grounds, as well as its museum and gift shop. They also had the opportunity to view a new historical display showcasing the history of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

The next part of the yearlong 175th celebration in Ohio will be a lecture on Saturday, Oct. 3, by Precious Blood Father Barry Fischer and a public Mass of Thanksgiving on Sunday, Oct. 4, with Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk at Precious Blood Church in Dayton. More information is available on the website: www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org. (Click on News & Events>News>175th Anniversary.)

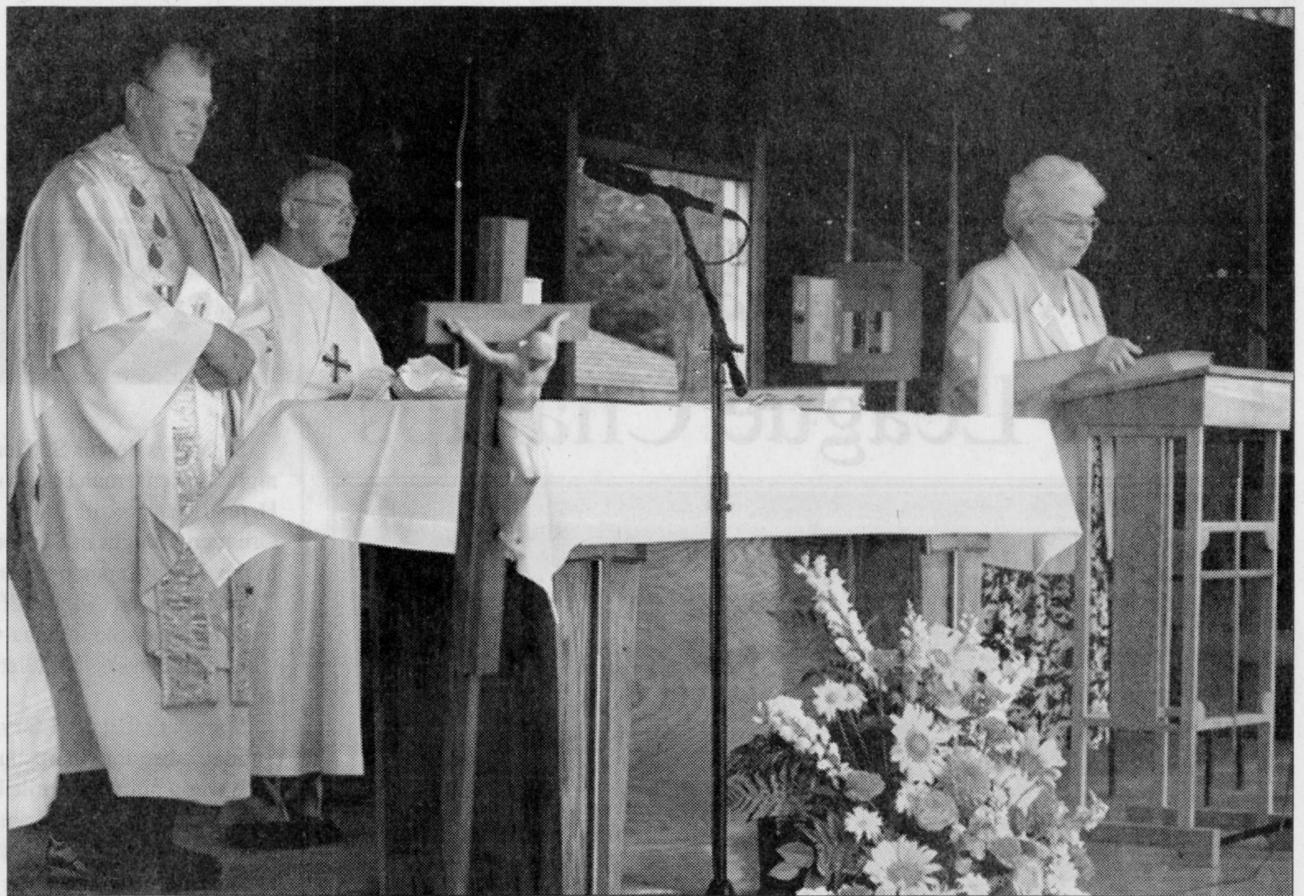
Counties receive funds

Continued from page 1

to create and preserve jobs, promote economic recovery, and assist those most impacted by the recession. For more information about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Community Development Block Grant-R Program, visit recovery.ohio.gov. <<http://recovery.ohio.gov>> The Community Development Block Grant Program enables local governments to undertake a wide range of activities intended to create suitable living environments, provide decent affordable housing and create economic opportunities, primarily for persons of low and moderate income.

The Water and Sanitary Sewer Program is administered by the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Housing and Community Partnerships and helps local governments maintain, improve, and expand water and sanitary sewer systems. The program's goal is to create a safe and sanitary living environment for Ohio citizens through the provision of safe and reliable drinking water and proper disposal of sanitary waste. Communities with documented health and safety concerns receive priority for funding.

Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the non-profit sector, the Ohio Department of Development works to attract, create, grow, and retain businesses through competitive incentives and targeted investments. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the Ohio Department of Development works at the speed of business to accelerate and support the teamwork that is absolutely necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future.



Precious Blood Father Kenneth Schroeder, who presided at the Mass, and Deacon John Schmeising, smile as Sister Florence Seifert offers opening remarks and welcome at the start of the Mass. Sister Florence is president of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Precious Blood Sister Barbara Ann Hoying, director of the Maria Stein Center, smilingly accepts a tray of baked goods from Sister Nancy Wolf of Celina. Area Sisters baked and brought dozens of cookies for the event.

