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Sisters of the Precious Blood celebrates 100 years in Dayton area



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By [Sydney Dawes](#)

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The Sisters of the Precious Blood congregation is celebrating 100 years at Salem Heights.

Hundreds of people gathered on Sunday at the Precious Blood Church, also located north of Dayton, for a mass and luncheon to look back on a century of service.

The Sisters of Precious Blood are a Catholic women’s congregation. In Dayton, the Sisters help with efforts like the Brunner Literacy Center and local initiatives to bring food to hungry people.

Sister Maryann Bremke, who helped coordinate Sunday’s celebration, said the past 100 years has seen the growth of the church’s ministry. She said she hopes the next 100 years shows a continuation and expansion of efforts to help marginalized people in the Dayton area.

“We want others to carry on what we started,” she said. “And right now we’re looking into how we can plan to help them going into the future.”

The Sisters’ faith community first arrived in the U.S. in 1844, when three Sisters came to northern Ohio to minister to the German Catholic immigrants of the area. For nearly 80 years, Maria Stein in Mercer County was the site of their motherhouse, according to a Sisters press release.

By the early 1920s, Mother Emma Nunlist, the Mother General of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, felt that the Sisters needed to be closer to health care and education amenities near Dayton.

Nunlist purchased 75 acres of farmland two miles north of Dayton, and construction began.

“The feast of St. Augustine, August 28, 1923, will go down in the annals as a memorable day for the community, since it marks the departure of the Sisters from the old motherhouse to the new,” reads the community’s historical record. “Knights of Columbus of Dayton offered to transport the Sisters to Salem Heights, where they were welcomed with the pealing of bells and the greetings of the Sisters who had arrived earlier.”



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Sister Joyce Lehman said Sunday’s celebration will have a special place in her heart.

“There’s this sense of unity,” she said. “And when you look into the congregation, you see a diversity of people coming together with the same hopes. It’s a little glimpse of heaven.”

Top, Sisters of the Precious Blood of Dayton carry crosses during a Good Friday walk that show what they’ve been praying about: support for Haitian immigrants and an end to violence and pollution. Photo provided. Bottom, the Sisters of the Precious Blood held a 100th anniversary Mass and celebration on Sunday, nodding to 100 years in the Dayton area.