

The **Adorers of the Blood of Christ** were founded in Italy in 1834 by St. Maria de Mattias. Nearly 40 years later, in 1870, a group of Adorers came to the United States. In 2020, we celebrated the rich history of 150 years since our founding in the United States. We remember the lives of those women on whose shoulders we stand and the gift they have been to those they served.

Our History: Who We Were

In February 1870, a group of nine sisters from Germany traveled 12 days aboard the S.S. Hammonia, a French steamer. Anti-Catholic fervor forced sisters in Gurtweil, Germany into exile and a new home in the United States. American bishops offered opportunities for them to minister to newly arrived German immigrants.

From New York, they headed to Cincinnati, then traveled the Ohio River to present-day Piopolis (Belle Prairie), Illinois, arriving on February 28. Three other groups followed and by 1873, 79 sisters would establish the charism and mission of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in this country.

Mother Clementine Zerr, now considered the American foundress, led the last group of 46 sisters who arrived in St. Louis, Missouri on September 14, 1873. A ministry at St. Agatha's parish in St. Louis awaited, but an overcrowded parish convent persuaded them to push on to Belle Prairie/Piopolis, Illinois.

Clementine and a dozen followers broke from the sisters of O'Fallon, Missouri in loyalty to the Italian Adorers. Ten professed sisters, three novices, and six candidates relocated to another remote site in Ruma, Illinois, a place that would eventually become the first U.S. motherhouse for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

Clementine began to send sisters to schools, hospitals, and orphanages. In 1902, sisters migrated to Kansas and established what would become the Wichita province motherhouse in 1929.

Mother Paulina Schneeberger led sisters from Bosnia to the United States in 1906. These sisters eventually settled in Columbia, Pennsylvania, which became the third U.S. province in 1929. The three U.S. provinces converged in October 2000 to form the United States Region of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

Who We Are

The three provinces established schools and hospitals and homes for the elderly and taught African American children in the South. They also launched missions in China, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Liberia, Bolivia, Korea, Vietnam, and Guatemala.

After the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, the Adorers engaged in civil rights, social justice, and parish work. Today, they work with immigrants, refugees and those seeking asylum.

Over the community's history in the United States, ministries have changed, institutions have closed, and the sisters have continued to respond to ever-changing needs.

Our congregation remains vibrant, joyful and courageous, just like the sisters who went before us.