

Important Dates in September

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- 3 1896 Last sisters leave Gurtweil, Germany, to come to O'Fallon, Missouri, in America.
 - 5 1845 Mother Ursula Xaveria Behringer establishes the Steinerberg Community.
 - 6 1872 Mother Clementine Zerr travels to London to visit Adorers to look into the possibility of joining them.
 - 7 1902 Adorers establish St. John's Institute in Wichita, Kansas.
 - 8 1845 German Congregation of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood is founded. Mother Theresa Weber becomes superior at Steinerberg.
 - 8 1848 Sister Celestine Meyer is elected superior of the Steinerberg Sisters exiled in Ottmarsheim, France.
 - 8-12 1981 Columbia Province hosts Inter-Assembly Congress.
 - 10 1971 Swimming pool at Ruma, Illinois, is blessed.
 - 12 1933 Sacred Heart College, now Newman University, opens in Wichita, Kansas.
 - 12 1894 First Mass is celebrated in the Chapel of St. Teresa's Academy in East St. Louis, Illinois.
 - 14 1973 Mother Clementine Zerr and 20 novices arrive in Belle Prairie, Illinois.
 - 14 1893 Adorers establish their first Kansas community in Westphalia.
 - 14 1985 Ruma Province votes to provide sanctuary to undocumented immigrants in violation of the law.
 - 15 1933 Adorer missionaries arrive in Shanghai, China.
 - 15 1977 Adorers open mission in Masan, Korea.
 - 19 1971 The Adorers' new St. Clement Hospital in Red Bud, Illinois, is dedicated.
 - 21 1855 Novices at Ottmarsheim make first vows according to the Rule of Maria de Mattias.
 - 21 1909 Adorers establish Alton, Illinois, as a vicariate. Sister Paulina Schneeberger is superior.
 - 22 1863 Sisters Clementine Zerr and Pauline Feser write to Maria de Mattias to request permission to go to Rome to learn the spirit of the Rule and become more familiar with the Institute.
 - 22 1982 Sisters from Wichita establish mission in Crownpoint, N.M., to serve the Navajo.
 - 26 1854 German sisters in Ottmarsheim receive a French translation of Maria de Mattias' rule. Later, it was translated into German.
 - 27 1867 Bishop Juncker requests that Sisters from Gurtweil, Germany, be sent to the U.S.
 - 30 1923 Ground is broken for construction of a motherhouse in Ruma, Illinois.
 - 30 1956 The new St. Anne's Home for the Aged opens in Columbia, Pennsylvania.
 - 30 1923 Plans for the new motherhouse in Ruma are drawn. Father Frederick Witte, the chaplain at Ruma, assumes responsibility as general contractor, managing the purchase, transportation and use of the building materials.

1845 September 8 The community of the Sisters of the Precious Blood for the Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar with Rev. Karl Rolfus as its spiritual director was founded in the village of Steinerberg, Canton Schwyz in Switzerland. In an old building, which served as their convent home, Ursula Behringer (later Mother Xaveria) assembled with 11 companions who became members of the Archconfraternity of the Precious Blood while they were in Baden. Steinerberg is a place of pilgrimage to St. Anne Shrine, near Einsiedeln. During a pilgrimage to the shrine, Ursula Behringer was inspired to found a convent there. She declined becoming the superior of the Sisters, and Magdalen Weber (later Mother Theresa) was chosen for the position.

1845 September 5 Ursula Behringer, born at Wellendingen in the Archduchy of Baden, Germany, had made missions and pilgrimages to Steinerberg, Switzerland. With the help of the pastor of Steinerberg and her own spiritual director, she was able to establish a religious community there in honor of the Precious Blood. Ursula arrived on September 5 to prepare the convent home for the arrival of the other young women who were to arrive on September 8.

1855 September 21 The first profession ceremonies for the German Sisters according to the Rule of Maria De Mattias occurred at Ottmarsheim. Eighteen Sisters, who had originally entered the community at Steinerberg, pronounced the holy vow of chastity. Besides the community, seven other members of religious congregations were present.

1863 September 22 Sister Clementine Zerr and Sister Pauline Feser wrote to Maria De Mattias requesting that they might be allowed to go to Rome to learn the spirit of the Rule and become acquainted with the customs of the institute. They were especially eager to meet the foundress herself. Rev. Kessler, the spiritual director for the German Sisters at Gurtweil, had recommended that these two Sisters be given the opportunity to visit Italy, confident that they would convey the spirit to the Sisters at Gurtweil upon their return to Baden. It is interesting to note that Rev. John Merlini warned Maria that the two Sisters thought that Acuto must be the perfection of religious observance. The story of their visit to Italy is told in *Joy in the Planting*, pp. 71-78.

1873 September 14 On August 26, 1873, 46 Sisters left Gurtweil to come to America including Mother Clementine Zerr and her novices. They traveled through France to Paris and then to LeHarve and sailed to the New World on the steamer L'Europe. After an unusually peaceful voyage, the Sisters were met in New York City by the Vicar General of St. Louis, Monsignor Muehlsiepen. Besides their trunks and baggage, the Sisters had brought an altar from the chapel at Gurtweil. They arrived in St. Louis on a Sunday and crossed the Mississippi by ferry. After Mass at St. Agatha's House (where 20 of the Sisters stayed), Mother Clementine and the novices continued on to Belle Prairie, Illinois, several days later. They were to remain there until 1876, when Mother Clementine moved her headquarters to Ruma, Illinois, as Vicar of the Sisters united to Maria De Mattias' Community in Italy.

1867 September 27 The Rt. Rev. Damian Juncker, bishop of Alton, Illinois, visited the Sisters at the Gurtweil Motherhouse in Baden, Germany, to request that some Sisters go to serve the needs of the Church in America. The bishop died the following year and the matter was forgotten. The request was later repeated by Rev. Winterhalter, the pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Belle Prairie, Illinois, and the Sisters gladly responded since the government of Baden was gradually limiting their apostolic activity.

1872 September 6 Prior to Mother Clementine Zerr's departure for America in 1873, she had visited Maria De Mattias' Sisters in London to investigate the possibility of joining that community. She was advised that the London foundation's future was precarious due to the prevailing Protestant environment. The following year, Mother Clementine went to America. For details on the London establishment, see *Joy in the Planting*, pp. 100-102.

1896 September 3 As a result of the repressive measures of the government of Baden against religious houses in the 1870s, most of the Sisters left the Gurtweil Motherhouse to serve the needs of the Church elsewhere. The greater majority of Sisters already had immigrated to America. Some went to Austria, England and Italy. A small group settled in Bosnia in 1879. A few Sisters remained at Gurtweil to hold claim to the property, but they were not allowed to engage in any apostolic activity or to wear their religious garb. Rev. Anton Fraessle remained there as their spiritual guide. The Sisters supported themselves by doing church embroidery and were subject to frequent inspection of their building by civil officials. Mother Augusta Volk, superior of the community, returned to Gurtweil from America on May 26, 1883 to sell the property. She failed to find a purchaser, however, and never returned to America. Mother Augusta died in 1893 in exile from her community. Father Frassle died the following year. In 1896, the property was finally sold to the ordinary of Frieberg for the sum of 60,000 marks, and the last sisters came to O'Fallon from Gurtweil. The former motherhouse later became an orphanage under the direction of the Sisters of St. Francis. (By 1896, the Precious Blood Sisters in America were divided into two separate groups. In 1875, Mother Clementine Zerr, desiring to maintain the affiliation with Rome that had existed since 1874, left the Sisters established at O'Fallon, Missouri, who were gradually departing from the Rule and spirit of Maria De Mattias' congregation. Mother Clementine established a motherhouse at Ruma, Illinois, with the Sisters and novices who likewise desired to maintain the connection with Maria's Sisters in Italy.)