

COURAGE IN CONFLICT

The Righteous Among Us

Wartime Stories from Religious and Priests

Wednesday, November 14, 2018
held at Fontbonne University

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Courage in Conflict

Franco-Prussian War

Before coming to the United States as immigrants, seven Adorers of the Blood of Christ, including American foundress Clementine Zerr, served as nurses in 1871 in Mannheim, Germany, during the Franco-Prussian War. They were awarded the Iron Cross of the Empire by Grand Duchess Louise, daughter of Emperor William of Prussia.

Adorers flee Kiang Kia and Yangsin during the Sino-Japanese War on Sept. 28, 1937.



World War II

Italy: The Italian Sisters in Rome offered housing and other assistance to their neighbors and sheltered Jewish families on the third floor of the Generalate, the central house of the Congregation in Rome. At another one of their houses in Rome, they hid a Jewish man in the attic for three days. The Sisters in yet another

location in Rome saved many girls being chased by Moroccan soldiers.

China: The former Ruma Province of the American Adorers of the Blood of Christ sent missionary Sisters to China from 1933 to 1945. From March 21 to August 16, 1943, Sisters Sophie Gartner, Mary Regis Zar, Mary Colette Woltering, Mary Louise Utar, Mary Anthony Mathews, Maureen Shea, Terentia Woltering, Angelica Frisch and Mary Edward Pissina were detained in the Japanese-run Weihsien Internment Camp, located about 200 miles south of Peking, with 1,800 other foreign nationals. The camp, formerly a Presbyterian mission compound, held civilians of Allied countries living in North China during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-'45). After negotiations between the apostolic delegate in Peking and the Japanese consul, the Japanese relocated most of the priests and sisters from the Weihsien camp to religious houses in Peking. From August 1943 until October 1945, the Adorers, along with the Spanish Daughters of Jesus, were under house arrest in Peking. They returned to the United States in November 1945 aboard the Navy transport USS Lavoca.

Liberia's Civil War

Five U.S. Adorers of the Blood of Christ from the former Ruma, Illinois, Province, were teaching and providing medical and pastoral care services to some of the world's poorest people as missionaries in Liberia on Africa's western coast. As the first Liberian Civil War heated up in the early 1990s, the Sisters left to regroup in the US, but after a short time, they returned to Liberia, only to be murdered in October 1992. Sisters Barbara Ann Muttra and Mary Joel Kolmer were taking an employee home when their vehicle was ambushed and they were killed on October 20. Three days later, Sisters Agnes Mueller, Shirley Kolmer and Kathleen McGuire were rounded up in front of their home and shot to death.

Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina

While the Yugoslav Wars raged in the early 1990s, the Adorers in the Croatian capital of Zagreb stayed with the people, drawing courage and strength from their Sisters who had been killed in Liberia's civil war.

Archdiocese of St. Louis Priests in Wartime

Compiled by the Office of Archives and Records

Anglo-French War

In 1778, Fr. Pierre Gibault was the only priest residing near St. Louis, on the east bank of the river in Kaskaskia. When a British commander arrived in town, Fr. Gibault sided with the Americans. He rallied the community to American cause. "He traveled to Vincennes and convinced the settlers... that their future lay with the American colonies." He secured supplies for the American forces and "made himself an exile from his native land, Canada... Few men so wagered their future on the American cause."¹

Civil War

While Archbishop Peter R. Kenrick was decidedly silent and neutral on the subject of the Civil War, one of his priests, Father John Bannon left St. Louis in December 1861 to join the Confederate lines as a chaplain for General Sterling Price's unit. He "began his service by hearing 30 confessions." "Unlike Protestant ministers in the Confederate Army or the Missouri militia, Father Bannon carried no weapons, organized no fighting unit, and drew no salary."²

World War I

When the United States entered World War I, at least seven Archdiocesan priests volunteered as chaplains. Most of them served at military camps around the U.S. One Archdiocesan priest, Fr. Elmer C. McFadden saw frontline action for two years in France and Germany. In an open letter from American bishops to President Woodrow Wilson, they stated that citizen "loyalty is manifested more by acts than by words; by solemn service rather than empty declaration."³

World War II

Military Chaplains: Of the 447 Archdiocesan priests, 35 enlisted as chaplains with the military. Chaplain Walter Boul, former assistant pastor at St. Boniface Parish, [recited St. Michael the Archangel's Prayer] in a barn after saying Mass on the hood of his jeep. He was near the German border, and 88 mm shells were exploding around him. He commented, 'During the Mass, Christ came upon our altar in a real stable, cow flops and all the odors of the barn. At birth, Jesus came on earth in the same way.' "⁴ "Reaching Regensburg, Boul's unit freed 39 French POW's and got word of Germany's unconditional surrender. V-E day was celebrated with a solemn High Mass. The church was filled. A French POW priest served as Deacon and the Austrian pastor was Sub-Deacon. Father Boul noted, 'It really showed the universality of the Church. Beautiful.' "⁵

ST. BONIFACE CHAPLAIN IN GERMANY



POW Camps in Missouri: "Within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of St. Louis there were 12 military camps and 13 Prisoner of War detention camps or side camps. Each of these needed clergy assistance, often rendered by local priests on a part-time basis... The pastor of St. Ambrose, Father Lupo, and his assistant Father Palumbo regularly traveled to [the Italian POW camp in] Weingarten to hear confessions and teach English to those who wished to study it."⁶

¹ Faherty, SJ, William Barnaby. *Dream by the River*. St. Louis: Piraeus Publishers. 1973. P. 5. The Diocese of St. Louis was not founded until 1826. Prior to being the Diocese of the Louisiana and the Floridas in 1815, the territory was under the Diocese of Quebec, to which Father Gibault belonged.

² Witt, Msgr. Michael John. *Saint Louis: The Story of Catholic Evangelization of America's Heartland: Vol II: The Lion and the Fourth City*. St. Louis: Miriam Press. 2016. P. 154.

³ Witt, Msgr. Michael John. *Saint Louis: The Story of Catholic Evangelization of America's Heartland: Vol III: The Age of Cardinals*. St. Louis: Miriam Press. 2018. P. 65.

⁴ Ibid. P. 176

⁵ Ibid. P. 199-200.

⁶ Ibid. P. 193- 194.

A Glimpse into the Service of the Daughters during World War I



Known to many as "The Great War," World War I began in 1914. Three years passed before the United States entered the war in April 1917—a little more than 100 years ago. At the request of Joseph Dunn, M.D., Daughters of Charity were missioned to serve on the Italian front from September 1918 through March 1919. The Daughters who made the journey ranged in age from 33 through 56. Their birth places included Ireland, England, Michigan, New Jersey,

Louisiana, Wisconsin, Maryland, and Illinois. Accounts from the Sisters' diaries provide a true perspective into the work they did—both medically and spiritually.

Sister Catherine Coleman recorded the death of a young soldier who passed away in October 1918 at Base Hospital 102 in Vicenza, Italy. Sister Catherine wrote:

"An American boy from New York by the name of Holden died of Pneumonia. He leaves his parents and a brother and sister in New York. He was baptized before his death. When asked what message he would like to have sent to his people, he said that is a hard thing to have to talk about, and asked Sister what she would say. The subject was dropped for the present, and as he grew weaker, he was asked the second time and he said: Tell my people I have fought hard against death, but it must be. Tell them I am glad to die for my country. He was a lovely boy, just 21 yrs. Old. While in New York he posed for the Arrow Collar for three years. Many remembered having seen his picture in the papers wearing the Arrow Collar. His Regiment took charge of the body. He was taken from the hospital to the cemetery. Six of the Sisters and a number of Nurses attended his funeral. His body lies at the foot of the Alps on a little mound, a very beautiful spot. He was buried with Military Honors. One of his comrades read the burial services at the grave. Sister Chrysostom Moynihan, Chief Nurse wore his mother...also pressed one of the flowers from his grave and sent it in the letter."



Sister Florence Means wrote about her day in October 1918:

"On duty at 7:30 PM, new wards opened to admit 30 gas cases; they had worn their masks but the order to remove them came before it was rized in the trenches so it was an unfortunate accident and some are very badly burned."



Sister Florence Means

Sister Angela Drendel wrote on November 4 1918 after hearing the Austrians had surrendered on November 2:

"Went in a large truck to Monte Greco the hill on this side of Monte Grappa where the hardest fighting was done on this front. We were heartily cheered by the French and Italian soldiers also by the civilians as we passed by. Saw many rear trenches and lookouts. Two of the lookouts were up in the high trees. On our way back, we passed several thousand Austrian prisoners. They looked as though as if they were hardly able to walk...they looked so hungry, sick, and tired."

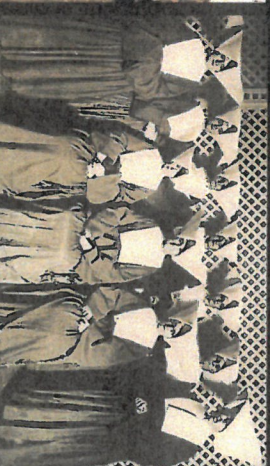
In total, the 8 Daughters who served alongside the Allied Forces, as Red Cross Nurses were estimated to have cared for 3,000 soldiers—not all American. Some were prisoners of war. The Daughters faced difficulties, too; conditions were difficult, sources for heat were hard to find, and at least one Daughter of Charity contracted the Spanish flu.

We pray for the repose of the souls of all who have died in defense of their homeland. The Province Archives hosts a two part video series entitled "Over There." You may view the videos online-Part 1: <https://vimeo.com/117666142> Part 2: <https://vimeo.com/118021431>

Sister Angela Drendel



Left photo: Daughters follow the march in formation as they depart Italy in 1919. Right photo: The 10 Daughters of Charity who served at Base Hospital 102.



LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR



During World War II, at the Little Sisters of the Poor infirmary in Florence Italy, there were around 12 residents who were not really residents. The sisters dressed them up in little bonnets and put them in bed. They stayed in bed for weeks on end. Many times the gestapo went through the infirmary and they were not discovered. Some were in their thirties, and they put powder in their hair to look older.

Many years later a Jewish lady came from Israel to Italy while Sister Mary Alphonsus was living there. She wanted to visit the home where her mother had been saved during the war. She was very appreciative for all the Sisters did for her mother.

Story told by Mother Mary Alphonsus , l.s.p.



*Portrait by Florence Meyer, White House Artist
 'The Catholic Sisters were the most efficient...veritable Angels of Mercy.'
 -President Abraham Lincoln*

ANGELS OF MERCY- EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE CIVIL WAR AND YELLOW FEVER

ANGELS OF MERCY is a powerful testament to the special gift religious women are to our church, our society, and our history. The Mercy Sisters, whose history is chronicled in this book, is a compelling reading about heroic women, providing Christian service, under hostile and life-threatening circumstances. In this eyewitness historical account of the Civil War and the outbreak of yellow fever, readers will get to meet Heroines and Saints who not only served the needs of many in their time but provide inspiration and encouragement for the ages to come.

**Daniel Mediger,
 Editor BALTIMORE REVIEW.**

As a primary source this book tells delightful stories and is full of local color. It is well researched and serves as a great attestation to the potent ministry of women religious during the Civil War and epidemic. A stirring read. **Father Michael Roach,
 Opt. Of Church History, Emmittsburg, MD.**

To the more than 300 Sisters of Mercy who ministered in Mississippi from 1860 this book is dedicated. May God continue to bless Sisters' efforts in education, healthcare, and, the emerging needs of those most dispossessed and marginalized in our society. To those who sensed the importance of what was happening and who preserved precious accounts we owe our gratitude.

Sister Mary Paulinus Oakes, author.



**Washington D.C. Monument reprinted with the permission of the
 U.S. Catholic Health Association**

*Picture of the monument in Washington D.C. honoring the Sisters from the
 12 religious communities who served in the Civil War as Sister-nurses.*



The School Sisters of Notre Dame were founded in Bavaria in 1833 and expanded rapidly throughout the European continent and in North and South America. For the European Sisters, living in wartime was no stranger to them. They experienced the **Austro-Prussian War** (Seven Weeks War) in 1866, the **Franco-Prussian War** (1870-1871), **World War I** (1914-1918), **World War II** (1939-1945).

World War I: Sisters were imprisoned or became refugees when convents and schools were destroyed or confiscated. Through the leadership of the General Superior, **Mother Bruno Thoma**, the Sisters ministered by making articles of clothing, serving soup in school kitchens, educating children gratis, taking in orphans, serving in hospitals, supporting refugees, sending shipments to Army chaplains. As the war progressed and food became scarce, they went to the woods to pick mushrooms or berries and often had only potato-water soup to eat.

World War II: During the leadership of General Superior, **Mother M. Almeda Schricker**, Sisters were given guidelines regarding what to do when convents and schools were confiscated or destroyed. They were advised to comply with Nazi demands without compromising moral principles. 11 Sisters were killed during the Allied bombings; 2 were shot in Vienna and 1 died from her treatment in prison. Some Sisters were fined or imprisoned and many became refugees. No longer able to teach, they continued to minister by working in hospitals, nursing homes, business offices. They cared for orphans, became secretaries, housekeepers, nurses.

S. Maria Antonina Kratochwil was imprisoned in a political prison in Poland in July 1942. She was interrogated, tortured and severely beaten when she intervened for Jewish women in prison. Prior to her release in September 1942, she contracted typhus. She was taken to a hospital where she died five days later from her injuries. She was beatified by Pope John Paul II in June 1999, one of the 108 Polish martyrs of WWII.

Josefa (S. Mary Imma) Mack: As a candidate, from May 1944 to April 1945, she went weekly to the Dachau concentration camp bringing food, clothing, medicine, letters, hosts and wine for priest prisoners. She was instrumental in obtaining permission, holy oils, etc. for the secret ordination of prisoner, Father Karl Leisner.



M. Bruno



M. Almeda



Maria Antonina



Josefa Mack

(Communism) Soviet Union Occupation of Poland, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia, German Democratic Republic (West Germany): the Iron Curtain countries; (1945-1991): Sisters could not live in community, teach, travel or wear habits. They were allowed to care for the mentally handicapped, worked on farms or in other secular occupations.

LORETTO COMMUNITY

Sisters of Loretto/Co-members of Loretto

Walter Cronkite announced the daily body count in Vietnam each evening during my canonical year at our Kentucky Motherhouse and the four successive years when I was teaching in Denver. At the end of the broadcast, my heart would question, "What can I do that would be positive, life-giving?" In the spring of 1973, a Loretto sister announced she would be going to Saigon to nurse orphans. I told her that if there was something a non-medical person could do, I would go to help her. After 6 days in country, Sr. Susan Carol wrote me to say, "Get your shots, get your passport, come; I need help."

Sister Susan and I worked with a group of volunteers led by an Australian, Rosemary Taylor, who had opened a nursery for the care of orphaned and abandoned children in 1968. By September 1973, we had 4 nurseries in Saigon caring for 400 children, one for toddlers and older children, 3 for babies and infants. Two Sisters of Mercy and 2 former Mercies from Australia, and volunteers from Germany, Canada, Australia, and the United States formed the core of the foreign staff. We employed hundreds of Vietnamese women to serve the children as caretakers, nurses, kitchen workers to prepare the food and formula, laundresses to wash clothes, crib sheets, and hundreds of diapers. Friends For All Children in Colorado, World Children's Fund in Missouri, and organizations throughout the US, in Canada, Belgium, France, Germany, and Switzerland raised the funds needed for nursery rent, Vietnamese staff salaries, food and formula through donations, garage sales, bowling nights.



Sisters of Providence, Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, and Sisters of the Good Shepherd operated provincial orphanages throughout South Vietnam. We delivered supplies to them regularly and brought children for foreign adoption and medical care. We had to return to Saigon by dusk as the war heated up after dark and Saigon imposed a nightly curfew.

Because we were nursing premature infants, malnourished babies, handicapped children, death was never a stranger. We purchased a cemetery plot and contracted with a funeral service to come to the nursery with a tiny coffin. The child's caretaker would wrap the beloved in a blanket and carry it, with tears streaming, sobbing, to hand the little one to the mortician. I frequently attended the burial. Upon arrival in the cemetery, I was struck by the number of flag-draped graves in which the dead soldiers had been buried. Sometimes during the day, the bell at our gate would ring, Vietnamese staff would answer and then fetch one of the fellow workers. They would stand to receive the news of a death of a brother, a father, a husband, then collapse in quiet wailing. The war and its effects were omnipresent.

In the spring of 1975 the North Vietnamese offensive overtook both villages and cities, heading south towards Saigon. We were desperate to evacuate the adopted children. A US Air Force C5A transport aircraft was made available to us. On April 4, 176 children and 8 volunteer staff (including Sr. Ursula from the Good Shepherd Home) boarded. Mechanical failure caused a crash near Saigon. While 100 children and 2 volunteers survived, we lost 76 children and 6 adults.

With the exodus of Vietnamese refugees, I did resettlement work for 20 years.

— Sister Mary Nelle Gage SL



Sisters of Loretto

Vietnam 1973 - 1975

I was a nurse and was working in our infirmary in early 1970's. I kept seeing the plight of children in Vietnam during the war there. I wanted to help. I wrote to Rosemary Taylor, an Australian woman who was working with abandoned children in Vietnam. After some conversation with her, clarifying

that I would not need a separate place to pray and live, I flew to Saigon. It was 1973.

Rosemary asked me to be in charge of one of the nurseries in Saigon, New Haven. New Haven had approximately 200 abandoned infants at any one time under its roof. We did not take any children who had known relatives. The children we took were found in markets, on church steps, in busses or left at our door. If any of the other nurseries had sick babies, they were sent to us at New Haven.

Infants at that time were fed rice water and were terribly malnourished when they came to us. Many were Amerasian. The Vietnamese mothers knew that a child fathered by an American would have no life in Vietnam. They were called "Dust of the Earth". The Vietnamese mothers left their infants out of love and a hope that they would live.

Our work was to care for the infants, get them adequate nutrition and healthcare with the hope that they would be adopted. Our efforts resulted in adoptions from around the world: United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, France, Finland, Australia and the United States. I hired Vietnamese women to work at New Haven, one woman for every 3 children. They provided attention, affectionate contact, personal feeding. I am grateful to them to this day.

Rosemary Taylor's nurseries operated completely on donations. Many countries were generous toward us with donations of food, money etc.

Another Sister of Loretto, Mary Nell Gage, SL came to help me. Mary Nell did all the necessary paperwork, airline tickets, visas...all invaluable services. We were blessed to have her.

I have often been asked if I was afraid during the bombings, killing....my answer is "no" ...we were busy caring for children...we had valuable help from the Vietnamese people and, no doubt, some of them kept watch over us the whole time.

One of the most horrific events for me was the crash of the C5-A airplane on April 4th 1975. The whole story of this is well documented elsewhere. Enough to say, that much of my time when I returned to the US was spent as a witness for the lawsuits that followed. Each case ended with the child who had been in the crash and survived being awarded damages and the airline (and US government) found guilty.

I left Vietnam later in April 1975 and began working in the US for the health and well being of Adoptees from Vietnam.

I think during my 2 years in Vietnam, some 2000 children were cared for and adopted. I knew the children would want to know about their beginnings in Vietnam as they got older. The first thing I did when I returned to the U.S. was to write a book, for them. The book is FOR CHILDREN CANNOT WAIT. It is written in English, French and German. I sent one of these books to every adoptive family I knew of. I still send one of these books to adoptees who request one.

My 2 years in war torn Vietnam was the most significant time in my life. I am grateful.

The photo is of Susan Carol McDonald, SL on April 4, 1975.



Sister Susan Carol McDonald, SL

Sisters of Loretto in Service During World War I

Courtesy of the Loretto Heritage Center

The Sisters of Loretto, an American order founded in Kentucky, were called to service during World War I in many ways. One of their schools, Loretto Heights Academy in Denver, was transformed into the National Service School in July 1917. Started by the Woman's Section of the Navy League, this camp trained women in service skills needed during wartime and national disasters. Sisters of Loretto also contributed to the war effort by sending clothes, medical supplies, and Catholic items such as prayer books, rosaries, and scapulars. They also bought liberty bonds and raised money for relief efforts.

But some sisters were called to do much more. In 1918, twenty Sisters of Loretto were sent to nurse victims of the Spanish Flu at Camp Zachary Taylor in Louisville and twelve to the mining communities in Eastern Kentucky. They took the Novices' white veils and long white aprons with sleeves to use as their nurses uniforms. One Sister made the ultimate sacrifice: Sister Mary Jean Connor SL, who had not yet made final vows, died from the flu on October 28, 1918. She was given a military funeral at Camp Taylor before being brought to Loretto for interment.





Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

World War II: Pearl Harbor

Courtesy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet's Archives

On December 7, 1941, the sisters experienced the horrors of war at a dangerously close range.

Three of them, Sisters Martha Mary, Frances Celine, and Adele Marie, on their regular Sunday morning catechetical trip to Schofield Barracks, were passing Pearl Harbor when squadrons of Japanese planes hurtled over them, dropping their destructive missiles on an unsuspecting and incredulous island world.

"At first we thought it to be just another Army maneuver...the planes, however, were flying so low as to seem almost ready to land on our car," wrote Sister Frances Celine.

Despite the attack, the sisters attended Sunday Mass as planned, even as sounds of gunfire and bombing persisted, and worried parents arrived to take their children to safety. After Mass, they found a taxi driver who attempted to get them back to Honolulu, but were turned back at a roadblock.

Sister Frances Celine wrote, "All the way into Honolulu we drove through a barrage of gunfire ... to the right of us was Pearl Harbor with her

ships burning and many of our defense projects in ruin, to say nothing of the hundreds of sailors that were rushing to meet their God."

As the islands were placed under martial law, the sisters adapted their lives to a regime of wartime restrictions. Words scarcely used or heard, such as, "censor," "rations," "gas masks," "air raids," "blackouts," and "bomb shelters," now took on new significance.

"Since that day we have had blackouts and become really skilled in finding our way in the dark," Sister Francis Cecile wrote. "By the way we are the only Sisters here who can get into their gas masks without taking off all the head gear!"

During the war years, both St. Theresa's and Holy Rosary in Paia become second homes for scores of servicemen, many of them mere boys, who were helped through a grim experience by visits to the sisters. The latter, in turn, were aided in countless ways during those lean years by the generosity and thoughtfulness of the servicemen, their officers, and chaplains.



Sisters of St. Joseph wearing gas masks. After the attack, civilians were registered, finger printed and equipped with gas masks.



The Sisters of St. Joseph with servicemen who visited the convent on a regular basis.



In the St. Joseph Chapel of the **Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, Missouri**, the fifth arch features this medallion together with the inscription **Angels of the Battlefield 1870**

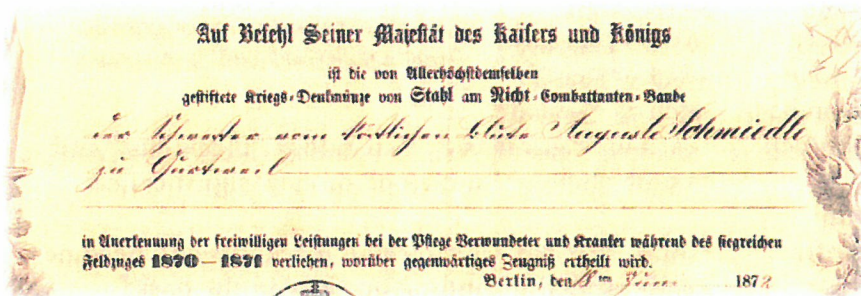
The medallion commemorates the bravery on the part of seven Precious Blood Sisters from Gurtweil, Germany. *[The Sisters from Gurtweil immigrated to the United States in the early 1870s and subsequently established their motherhouse in O'Fallon, MO.]*

In July, 1870, the **Franco-Prussian War** began. According to the Gurtweil Chronicle, *[Chronicles, 1845-1916, 1926-1928, section "1857-1873 Gurtweil," pp 29-30]* seven Sisters volunteered to care for the wounded soldiers at the suggestion of Reverend Anthony Fraessle, Spiritual Director of the Community. Their offer was accepted by the German Government. The seven sisters who were willing to do this first had to receive instructions from the doctors in Tiengen, three miles from Gurtweil. The sisters learned how to bind wounds and, in general, how to take care of the injured. At the end of July, 1870, they departed for Karlsruhe and then on to Mannheim.

The Sisters were mainly employed in the lazarettes [hospitals for treating contagious diseases] or in the conventional hospitals in Mannheim. Their task was a strenuous one; Sister Clementine Zerr fell ill and had to return to Gurtweil. The other six, however, continued to the end of the war. The war lasted not quite a year. Peace was declared in May, 1871, following the fall of Paris to the German army. In that spring the last of the Sisters returned to Gurtweil from Mannheim.

In recognition of their service to the State, the **Cross of Honor** was given to all, including Father Superior, the Reverend Anthony Fraessle. All of the Sisters, as well as Fr. Fraessle, received **certificates of recognition** from the German State for their bravery and faithful service. The Countess Louise, the Grand Duchess of Baden, presented each of these brave Sisters with a silver watch in token of gratitude for their faithful service. **Medals of merit** were also awarded to them.

All seven of the sisters who served in the War immigrated to the U.S. Six came to O'Fallon. The seventh, Sr. Clementine Zerr, chose to remain at the first foundation in Belle Prairie, IL, and is considered Foundress of the Precious Blood Sisters in Ruma, IL [Adorers of the Blood of Christ].



The certificates read in part:

Upon the command of His Majesty, the Emperor and King, this war-medal of steel, established by His Excellency for the non-combatant group, is given to Sister — — of the Precious Blood at Gurtweil in recognition for her voluntary services in nursing and caring for the wounded and sick during the victorious campaign, 1870-1871, of which this certificate gives testimony. Berlin, 18 June 1872



Here are pictures of the medal and cross [front and back] which the sisters received for their service.

For further information about the cross and medal and the certificates given to the sisters, see <http://cpps-ofallon.org/about/archives/archives-newsletter/> Issue #34, Nov. 2018, Franco-Prussian War

Ursuline Sisters



Ursuline Sisters have a varied history of service during wars.

French Revolution:

During the French revolution, at the height of the Reign of Terror, 16 Ursulines in Orange were executed. They mounted the scaffold laughing, singing, praying for their executioners. 11 Ursulines were guillotined in Valenciennes. They went to their deaths singing.

War of 1812:

During the War of 1812 at the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, Ursulines prayed for the soldiers protecting the city. After the city was saved they nursed both American and British wounded during the battle.

Civil War:

In Galveston, Texas, during the Civil War, the Ursulines nursed both confederate and Union soldiers at their convent. They are commemorated on the monument in Washington, DC, entitled, "Sisters of the Battle Field."

World War II:

During world War II, Sister Maria Klemensa Staszewska welcomed all who sought protection at the Ursuline convent in Rokiciny-Podhalanskie. She was arrested and died in Auchschwitz concentration camp in 1943. Sister Maria Akwil Podskarbi and Sister Maria Kajuska Trznadel were shot by Soviet soldiers in 1945 as they defended their consecrated chastity. At the Ursuline Generalate in Rome during World War II, Mother Marie-Xavier Marteau and the community of sisters welcomed, housed, and fed Jews. Mother Marie-Xavier Marteau and the community of Ursulines were declared Righteous Among the Nations with her name engraved in the Jerusalem Wall of Honor at the Yad Vashem Memorial.

In 1963 Sister Gabriella Haidu died in prison in Hungary after having been arrested for teaching catechism.

In 1980 Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel was murdered in El Salvador for helping the poor.

