

History of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Vossenack, Germany



Last year, the Sisters of Notre Dame celebrated 70 years of service in Vossenack in the Eifel region, Germany. The Louis-Quast siblings had stipulated that their house and property in Vossenack be bequeathed to the parish of St. Josef after their death, with the stipulation that it be used to care for the elderly and sick in the village and to establish a kindergarten.

In 1955, Pastor Matthias Hegger brought the Sisters of Notre Dame to Vossenack for this purpose. The sisters' house was added to the old Louishaus, which existed until 2002. Now there is a beautiful new building with 12 apartments for “assisted living.

In 1965, the Fatima Kindergarten was opened under the auspices of the parish. It started with one group, and Sr. M. Irmgilde Schlie served as director until 1977. Like the local population, who were rebuilding after the destruction of the village in World War II, the sisters were poor and began their work in the home, fields, and in outpatient care.

In 1967, the retirement home “Haus Pius XII,” offering space for 41 residents, was opened. The parish of St. Josef is the sponsor of the retirement home, and the Sisters assumed responsibility for its management and administration, as well as for work in the various departments. One sister worked in outpatient nursing in the village until 1978, when the Caritas nursing station for the communities of Hürtgenwald, Heimbach, and Nideggen was opened in an affiliated replacement building, which was managed by a sister until 1998.

At the beginning of the 1990s, it became increasingly apparent that the retirement home was too small and uneconomical and, above all, no longer met modern requirements for geriatric care. In 1998, the new, modern retirement home was opened under the new name “Geschwister-Louis-Haus” accommodating 76 residents. For the first time, a “protected living” area was set up for residents with dementia.

At that time, for staffing reasons, the sisters had to relinquish the management and administration of the Geschwister-Louis-Haus, but they continued to work there as employees. Currently, Sr. M. Marcella Klüners works in nursing, Sr. Lucia Maria Bergrath in social services and pastoral care, and Sr. M. Magdalena Dautzenberg as a volunteer at the Geschwister-Louis-Haus. Sr. Lucia Maria also serves as a pastoral assistant at the parish of St. Josef in Vossenack. The sisters are also involved in volunteer work in the parish.

Over the years, the modest beginnings of working with the elderly and the sick have developed into a highly recognized senior center offering a wide range of geriatric care and social and pastoral support.