



News Release

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Ritual honors Osage's past and present

CLYDE, Mo.—The Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration observed a Day of Remembrance and Thanksgiving at their monastic ashram, Osage Forest of Peace, in Sand Springs, Okla. in March.

Taking place during the biannual meeting of the Extended Council, the event honored the monastery's founding and those who played an important role in the community over the years.

"Because it was the last council meeting Osage would host, we had a beautiful and meaningful ritual of remembrance with the community," Prioress General Sister Ramona Varela, OSB said. "The ritual included holding in prayer all who have ever been a part of Osage or have visited for any purpose."

Sister Pascaline Coff, OSB, who helped establish the Osage community in 1977, said the foundation was like "a dream coming true and being made real through the blessings, prayers and support of (then-Prioress General) Sister Audrey Jones in the name of our Congregation."

The ritual traced the path taken by the five pioneers, from a year spent at the Benedictine Sisters at St. Joseph's monastery in Tulsa to their settlement on the land chosen for the permanent site.

"It was with both the blessing and encouragement of Bishop Beltran and the native peoples of the sacred Ozark Land that the small birthing community arrived in the Forest of Peace," Sister Pascaline said.

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The Osage community in Sand Springs hosted its final Extended Council in March. Shown at table are (clockwise from bottom left) Prioress General Sister Ramona Varela, Osage Superior Sister Benita Luetkemeyer, Sister Pascaline Coff, General Councilor Sister Jane Heschmeyer, General Councilor Sister Virginia Anne Argenziano, Tucson Prioress Lupita Barajas, General Councilor Sister Joan Ridley, Clyde Prioress Pat Nyquist, Treasurer General Sister Valerie Marie Stark and Sister Kathleen Gorman.

Then all the sisters who had been a part of Osage throughout its years were named as witnesses who have been a vital force in the life and formation of the community of faith.

Given special recognition were Father Jim Connor and Father Bede Griffiths who was the abiding inspiration for the existence of Osage.

“So many names surfaced with love and thanksgiving such as our oblates, Friends of the Forest and temporary members,” Sister Pascaline said. “Those who arrived as strangers and left as treasured friends.”

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