

## Six German Sisters Honored on the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Coming to States

“The Baltimore Province Bulletin 1999” reports, “With German song, Bavarian flag and memorabilias, and even beer, the Villa Assumpta Community celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of six sisters coming to the United States. Sisters Agnessa Geisselhardt, Benigna Brandl, Benedicta Viebeck, Eleanore Ringlstetter, Ewalda Daimer, and Maria Wittmann were guests of honor at Mass and a German dinner Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>.”

Decorations in the lobby got the celebration off on the right foot. There were flags of Germany and Bavaria, photos of the six sisters, and on the map of Bavaria pins noting from where each one came. “We welcome you today and we’re glad you came to America,” said Father David Carey as he began the noon Mass. Sisters had practiced two German hymns which they sang in honor of these special guests: *Meersten, ich dich gruesse*, and *Grosser Gott, wir loben dich*.

In his homily, Father Carey recalled the dramatic journeys these sisters took in 1938. He noted how they were willing to go to a country of different languages and cultures, aware that they might never see their homeland and their families again. He said, “You risked and you dared in heroic proportions; the heart becomes what it loves.” Father also remembered Mother Theresa and recalled the wonderful skills and talents the sisters brought to their new homes: Sister Eleanore Maria’s transforming smile in the peeling room, Sister Maria’s culinary artistry, Sister Benigna’s beautiful chapel settings, Sister Benedicta’s teaching and administrative talents, and Sisters Agnessa’s and Ewalda’s love for little ones. Father Carey concluded the celebration for the sisters by saying, “Thank you for coming to America because you have enriched us deeply.”

(Taken from *Enlarge the Space of Your Tent*, by S. Victoria Wiethaler, SSND, 2003, p. 21.