The Little Sisters of the Poor have been in central Indiana for 150 years. To mark the anniversary of the order serving in central Indiana, Mother Marie Christine Lynch, superior of the home, is shown from right.

The Little Sisters of the Poor sing during a Mass on the grounds of the St. Augustine Home in Indianapolis on Aug. 26. (Photos by Natalie Hoefer)

Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods purchased from the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods for $1 in 1876. The religious women immediately took six elderly to be cared for. Their memory quickly outgrew the small space, so they purchased from the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods a two-and-half acre lot on the city’s near-northeast side. The sisters and residents moved into their newly constructed home in 1877. They soon outgrew that location as well.

In 1879, construction began on a two-story brick home on the same plot. The home’s address was 352 E. Vermont Street, and there the St. Augustine Home remained until 1967. The Indiana Historical Bureau erected an historical marker there in 2017.

By 1962, the aging home was no longer able to meet the modern needs of the residents and the sisters.

On Aug. 26, the Little Sisters of the Poor in Indianapolis will celebrate the 150th anniversary of their presence in central Indiana. The annual celebration will highlight the Little Sisters of the Poor’s rich history of serving the elderly and those in need.

Mother Marie Christine Lynch, superior of the St. Augustine Home in Indianapolis, said that she is excited to commemorate the order’s long-standing presence in central Indiana.

“The Little Sisters of the Poor have been in central Indiana for 150 years,” Lynch said. “It is a proud milestone for our community and our order.”

The Little Sisters of the Poor are a religious order founded in 1839 by Jeanne Jugan in the Brittany region of France. The order has been present in the United States since 1889, with the first community established in New York City.

The Little Sisters of the Poor are a community of women who dedicate their lives to serving the elderly and those in need. They follow a rule of life that expresses their charism of collecting, which includes providing support and care for those in need.

Lynch said that the Little Sisters of the Poor have been fortunate to have a strong support system in central Indiana, including partnerships with local communities, churches, and corporations.

“Central Indiana has been a wonderful place to work and live,” Lynch said. “The community has been very supportive of our mission.”

The Little Sisters of the Poor in Indianapolis currently serve around 300 residents in a mixture of care settings, including residential homes, assisted living facilities, and hospice care.

Lynch said that the order’s mission remains unchanged over the years.

“We continue to provide compassionate care to those who need it,” Lynch said. “It is the same mission that Jeanne Jugan founded in 1839.”

The Little Sisters of the Poor will hold a series of events in August to celebrate the 150th anniversary of their presence in central Indiana. The events will include a Mass, a pilgrimage, and a concert.

“August is a very special month for us,” Lynch said. “It’s a great time to reflect on our history and to celebrate our present.”

The Little Sisters of the Poor in Indianapolis are located at 520 E. Vermont Street in Indianapolis. For more information on the order or its activities, please visit littlesistersofthepoorindianapolis.org.