



## THE MARONITE ANTONINE SISTERS

*Serving Northeast Ohio  
since 1959*

PATRON SAINT  
ANTHONY  
OF THE DESERT

The order of Saint Anthony was founded in Lebanon in the 1700s. Back then, the Antonine nuns followed the rules of the Antonine monks and were called adorers. They led a solitary and cloistered life that was based on prayer, manual work, and service inside the cloister.



*Mother Isabelle Khoury,  
the Antonine Sisters  
Order's Innovator*

**1932** On May 10 of 1932, Mother Isabelle Khoury, Superior of the sisters at the monastery of Saint Anthony, in Jezzine, Lebanon, felt the urgent need for ministry outside the confines of the cloister. On April 10, 1940, the nuns were authorized by the Holy See to start an apostolic life. Their new Constitutions were approved on January 17 of 1958.

Whereas the motherhouse of the Antonine Sisters is located in Lebanon, the sisters have different convents & ministries overseas, namely in Paris-France, in Melbourne-Australia; in Ottawa- Canada, in Ohio-USA, in Nicosia-Cyprus, and in Jerusalem.

**1959** In 1959, a group of six Antonine Sisters were sent from Lebanon to the United States both to further their education and to become better acquainted with the American educational system. While living in Cleveland, Ohio, and working at Saint Maron Church in the Maronite parish there, the sisters formed a choir and taught Arabic and Religious Education.

**1965** On April 7, 1965, the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches granted the sisters the required permission for the establishment of a religious house in the United States. On August 12, 1965, the sisters moved to their new house in North Jackson, Ohio, where they were granted a convent plus a plot of land on the grounds of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon. The sisters then worked in local schools, hospitals and parishes as teachers and pastoral ministers.



**1989** In 1989, a new group of sisters was assigned to the United States to establish a day care facility for the elderly, a ministry that was much needed and fast growing in the region.

**1991**

In January of 1991, encouraged and helped spiritually and financially by the late Bishop James W. Malone,

then Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Youngstown, the sisters started to offer care and service to five elderly in their own convent. Then through the kindness of his Excellency Archbishop Francis M. Zayek of the Maronite Diocese in the USA, a nearby house on the grounds of the shrine was also made available to accommodate the increased number of elderly participants. Eventually, the number of seniors outgrew the facility, necessitating the sisters to explore the possibility of building a larger facility that would accommodate the needs of the local community.

**1996**

Supported financially by their own community, other religious communities, and by many faithful throughout the United States, the sisters were able to build a new facility designed to accommodate fifty participants on a daily basis. It started operating on May 27, 1996 and a formal dedication of the building followed on August 11, 1996.





*Antonine Sisters*

**2001** In February of 2001, His Eminence Mar Nisrallah Peter Sfeir, Patriarch of Antioch and the East, broke the ground for a new addition to the center. The addition consisted of a therapy center, along with an activity room designed for the comfort and benefit of participants with dementia, as well as a beauty salon.



**2007** In September of 2007, the Antonine Sisters in Youngstown celebrated the Diamond Jubilee for their order with family and friends. Monsignor Robert Siffrin presided the Divine Liturgy for the occasion.



**2010** At present, 6 sisters are assigned to North Jackson, Ohio. Besides, working at the day care, they direct and teach religious education program at Saint Maron Parish in Youngstown, Ohio, conduct baptism and adult formation classes, and teach languages. They are also active members in several eparchial and local committees for vocation promotion and youth ministry.

Sister Marie Madeleine Iskandar is the current Local Superior, Founder and Director of the Adult day Care Center.



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