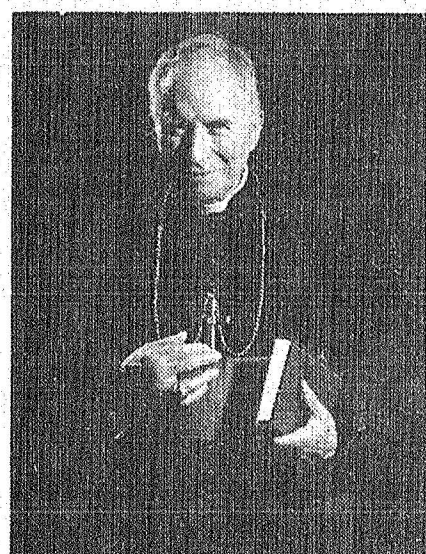


The Sunday Magazine Section of the Topeka Capital-Journal

A former Jesuit college in Kansas
appealed to the Society of St. Pius X as an ideal
place to teach pre-Vatican II Catholicism



Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre
used his experiences in Africa in
starting the Society of St. Pius X.

St. Mary's: sanctuary for tradition

ST. MARYS — Members of the Society of St. Pius X and those who worship with them here take the name of their facility seriously.

St. Mary's.

The sound of the Ave Maria is heard, as ordered by the holy father, Pius V, in 1568: "Hail Mary, full of grace! Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God! pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."

The words of the mass are heard: In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti (In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost).

Amen.

Introibo ad altare Dei (I will go unto the altar of God).

Again, as ordered by Pius V.

The Rev. Stephen DeLallo, one of the priests on this campus, says the mass "as it was said in his childhood, sings it as it was sung before the Second Vatican Council."

"The main objective here is to provide a good, traditional Catholic education to the Catholic youth of America," DeLallo said. "We are the largest traditional boarding school in the country."

DeLallo sat in his office on the third floor of the boys' dormitory, speaking over the hum of a window air conditioner that sought to prevail over the August heat. Earlier he had walked across the campus, up the steps that lead toward the ruins of the Immaculata Chapel.

The chapel burned nearly six years ago. The door to the chapel has been sealed and plastered, and a crucifix placed in the center. The chapel itself is in ruins; trees grow wild there: cottonwood. Ash. Redbud, also known as the Judas tree.

Those who labor here plan to rebuild the chapel, to return fallen statues to their places of prominence, to rebuild the walls and plaster them anew.

But the Academy is more important, the mission more pressing: the saving of souls and, they say, the saving of the church.

The Church. The Church suffering. The Church militant.

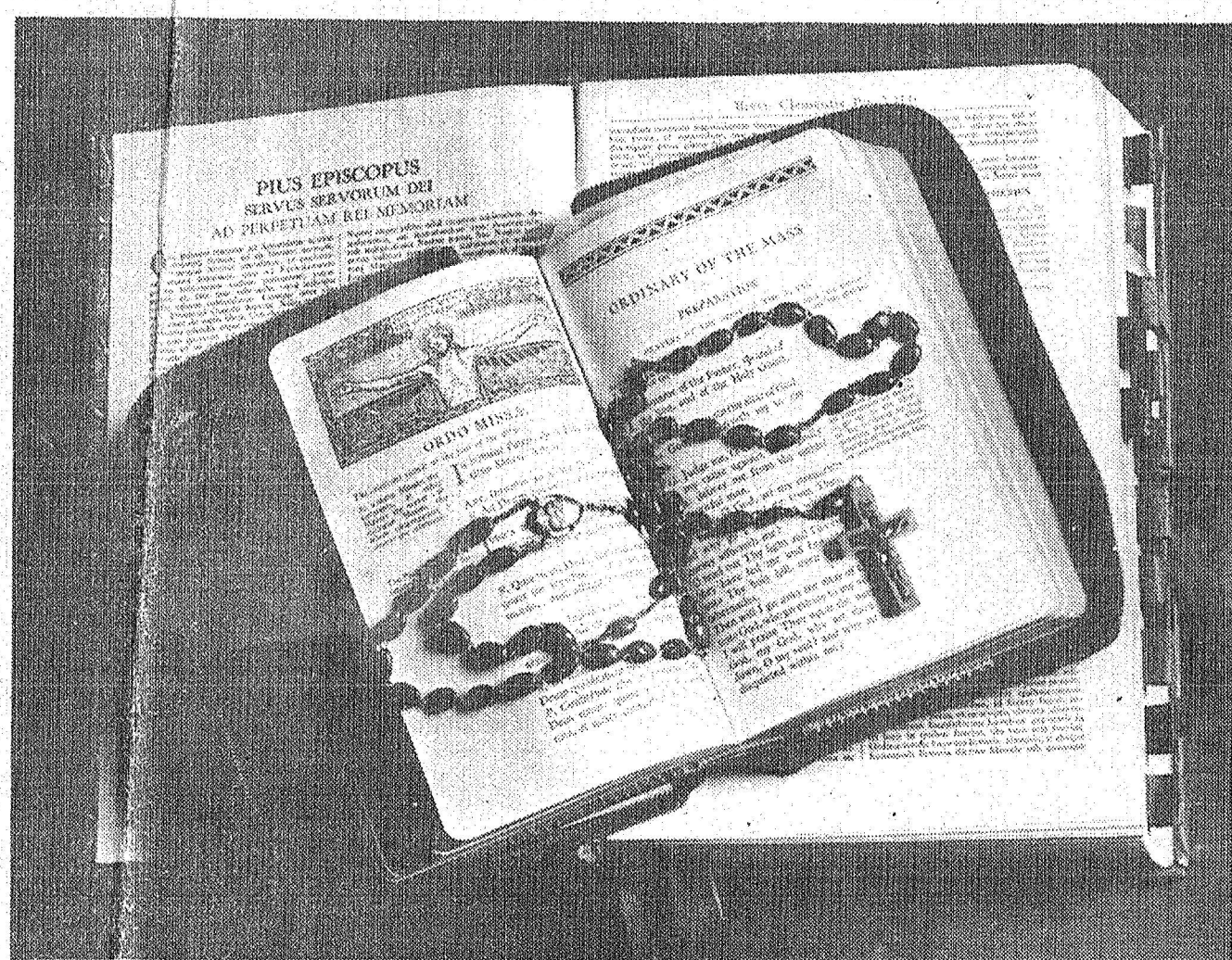
The Church triumphant.

The Church of the Tridentine Mass, the Mass that resulted from the Sixteenth Century Council of Trent.

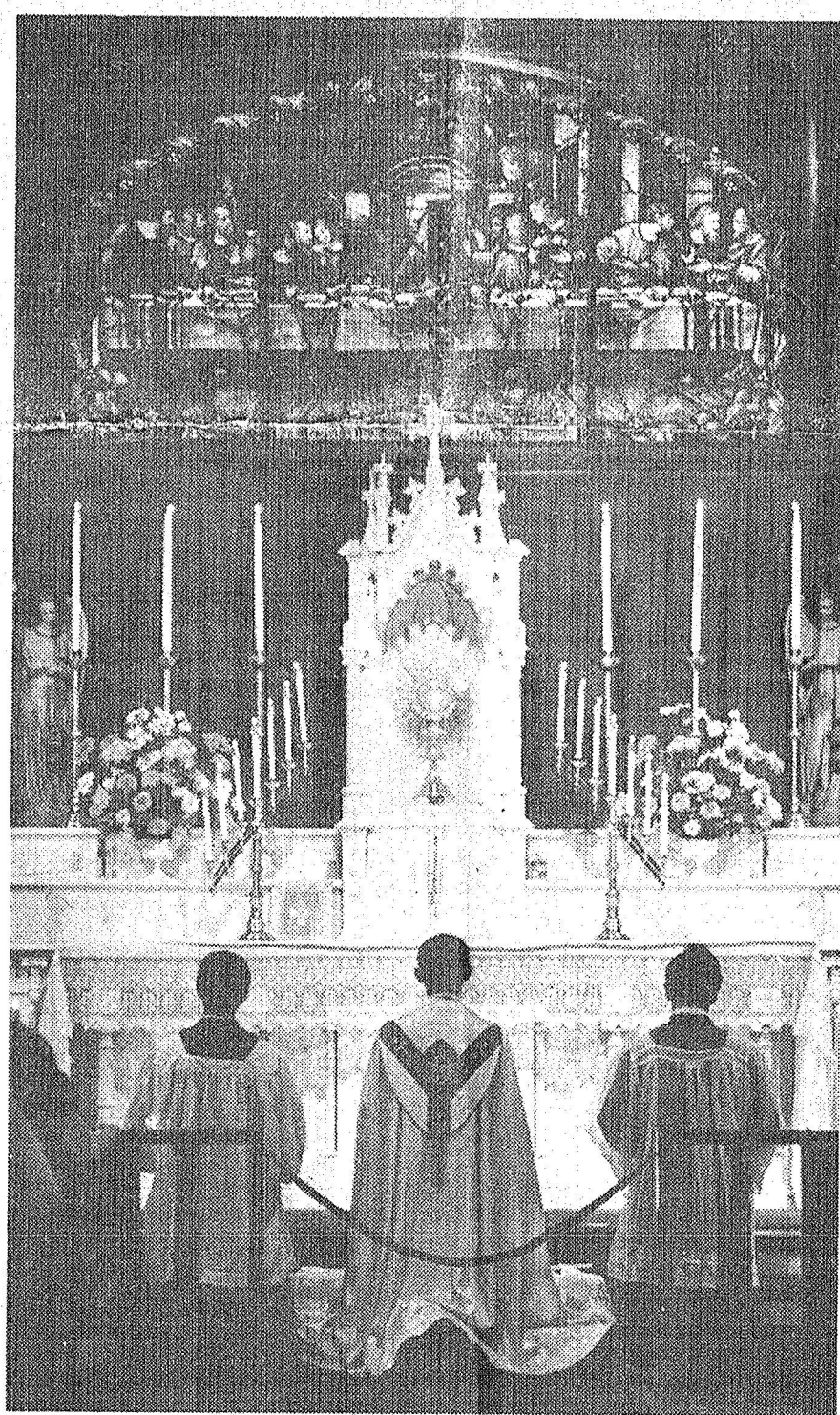
The Church whose pilgrims had gathered to honor the Blessed Virgin, to sing her praises and to rejoice in contemplating the beautiful mystery of her Assumption.

DeLallo had joined the pilgrims at supper.

Continued on next page



The Society of St. Pius X and many other Catholic traditionalists say the Quo Primum (bottom book), which was written by Pope St. Pius V in 1570, mandates the use of the mass from the Council of Trent (top book) for all time.



While the post-Vatican II Catholic church has turned its altars around, the Society's priests still face the altar rather than the congregation.



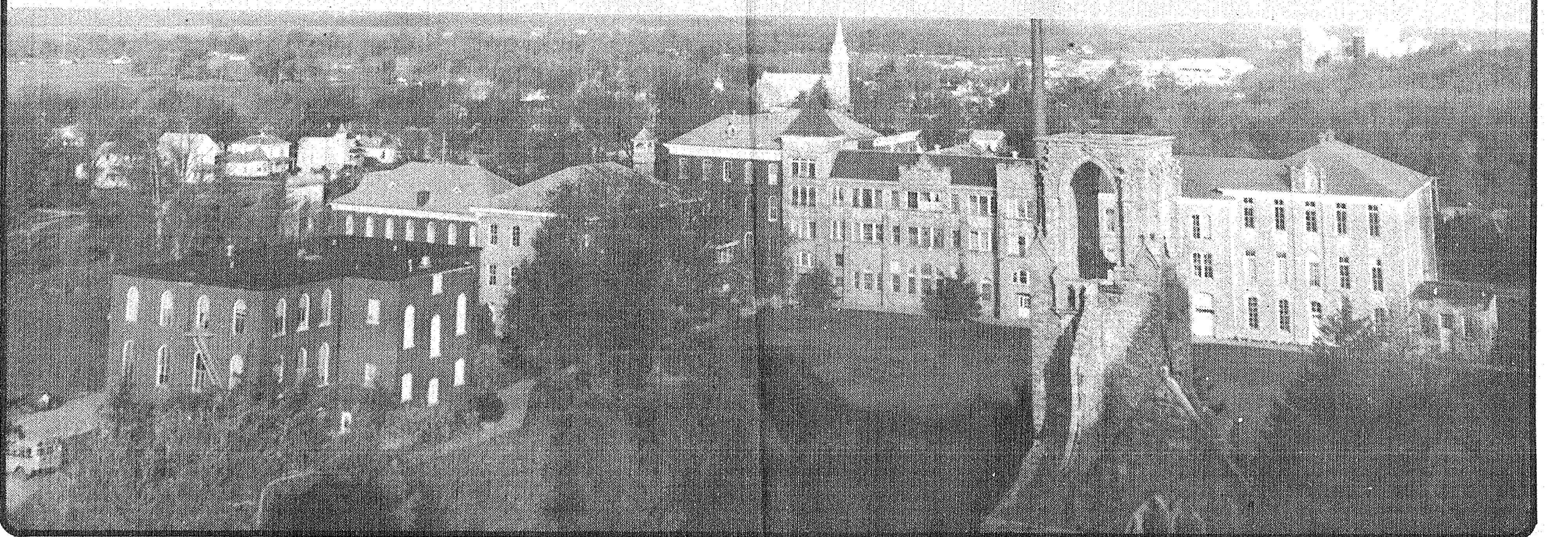
In Society churches the host — the body of Christ — is distributed by a priest and placed on the tongue of the receiver, not in the hand, as in the new church.

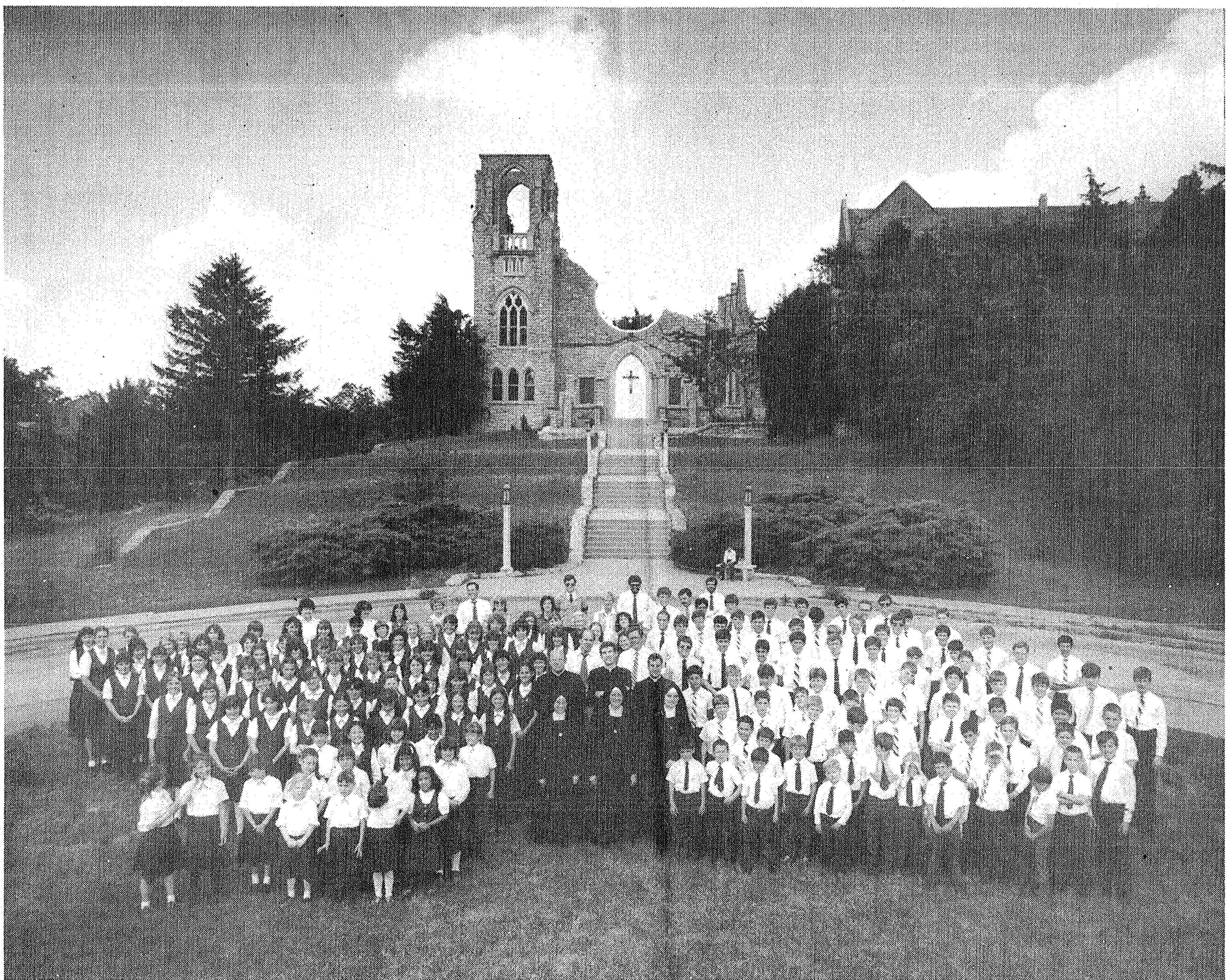
by MERLE BIRD

photos by THAD ALLTON

Tomorrow

Education is traditionally important to the Catholic Church. The Society of St. Pius X, wanting to teach traditional values in traditional ways, founded St. Mary's Academy and College.





The combined enrollment of St. Mary's Academy and college last year was about 220 students. The Academy includes levels kindergarten through 12th grade and has students from many states and several countries in attendance. Separate facilities are provided for boys and girls from the middle grades through high school. The students wear uniforms and attend services throughout the day.

In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen

Continued from preceding page

joined them in praise, then led the way to his office. Along the way he told of the appearances of the Virgin at St. Mary's, told of the nearby gazebo built to commemorate one of the appearances. They take the name of their facility seriously.

St. Mary's.

DeLallo spoke of mission, of guarding against "misguided ecumenicism." He spoke of the Mass, the Pius V Mass, the Mass promulgated following the Council of Trent (and thus the name Tridentine Mass). The continuance of that Mass is a large part of the reason DeLallo finds himself here, and why Bob Averkamp finds himself here, and why from time to time a French Archbishop, Msgr. Marcel Lefebvre, finds himself here.

Averkamp learned of St. Mary's Academy through the quarterly newsletter of a priest who had a radio program carried by a station in his hometown of Quincy, Ill.

"Our oldest kids were getting old enough where we were concerned about putting them in school," he said.

After he read the item in the newsletter, Averkamp called the academy.



The Bob Averkamps moved from Quincy, Ill., to St. Mary's so their children could have a traditional Catholic education.

"I called them up and came over on a Friday afternoon about 4 o'clock," he said. "I was impressed by the boys in their white shirts and ties and the girls in their uniforms, skirts and blouses. The house across the street was for sale, so I bought it that night."

Averkamp attended Mass at 6 a.m. the next day.

"It brought tears to my eyes," he said. "I could still follow that missal just 100 percent."

Averkamp extricated himself from the family business in Quincy and became involved in various enterprises in St. Mary's.

Lefebvre, who had been superior general of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, pleaded the traditionalist case at the Second Vatican Council.

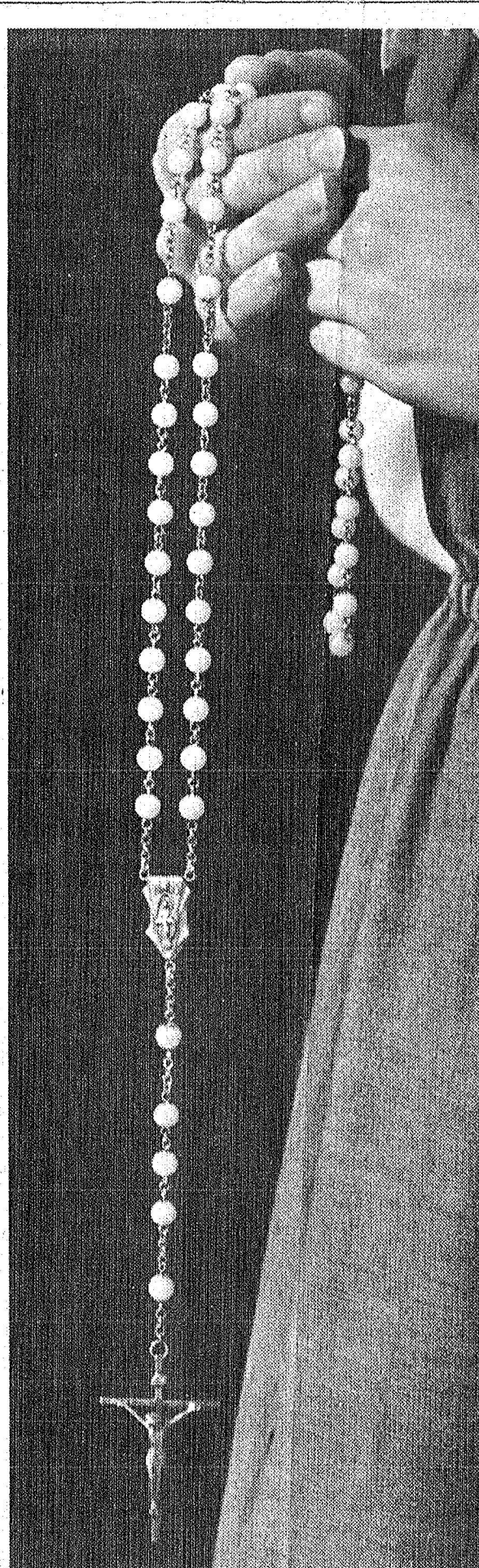
Following the council, he was asked to use his experience and to begin a seminary to train priests in the old way.

DeLallo is one of the priests who trained under Lefebvre.

"God has called me to become a priest," DeLallo said. "I became a priest to save souls, to be a laborer, to continue the work of Christ."

DeLallo believes the Pope strayed from teaching the "truth of the faith."

Others, though, believe that Lefebvre and the society are the ones who have strayed.



The Rosary remains an important part of worship in the Society's churches.

Ignatius J. Strecker, Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, conveyed the Church's position in a 1978 pastoral letter.

Strecker wrote that although members of the Society of St. Pius X have not been expelled from the Church, they have cut themselves off from the Church by their own actions.

"It is incorrect, therefore, for them to present themselves as Roman Catholics," he wrote.

The Mass isn't the heart of the issue, Strecker wrote. Rather, the issue is that the society denies the pope and the bishops "the same authority and responsibility that Christ granted to St. Peter and to the Apostles."

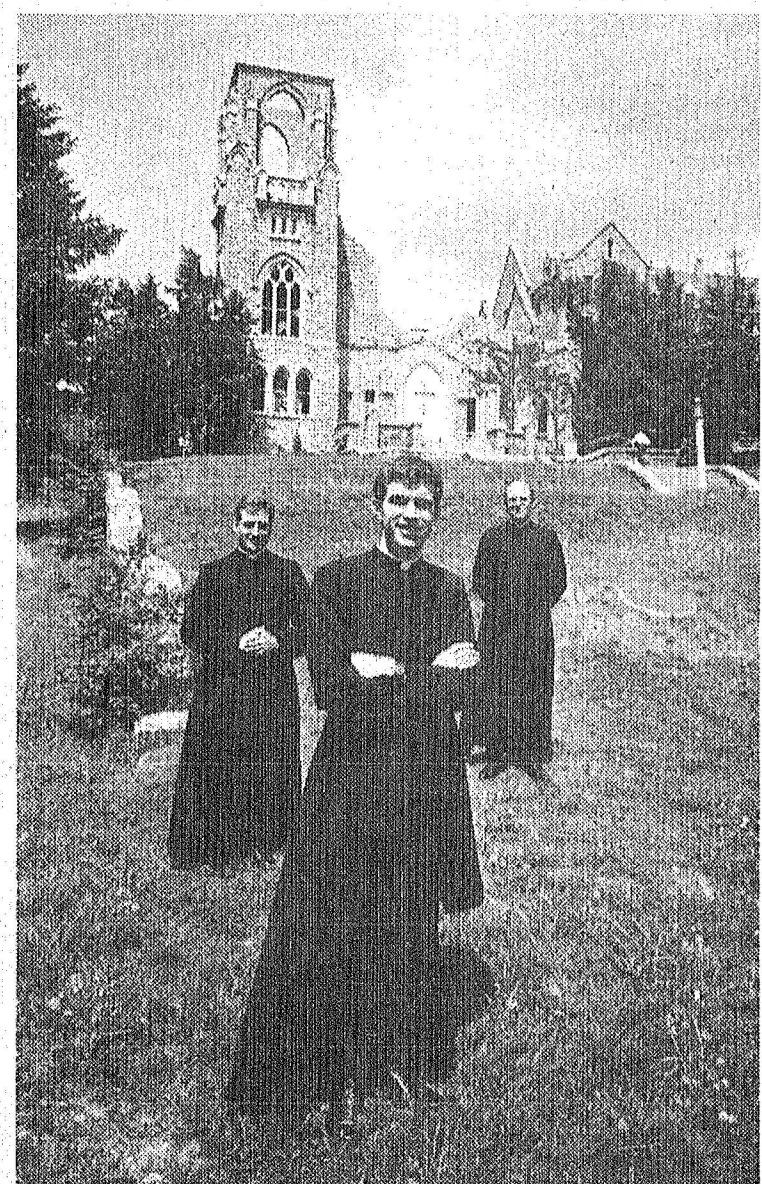
The Rev. Emerick Fletcher of St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, said many Catholics struggled with the changes of Vatican II, but some had "a kind of tragic inability to deal with those changes."

Pressure for the changes of Vatican II had long been building, Fletcher said.

"Up until this century a whole Roman Catholic system was built up that was very classical," he said. "Everything was all in one language, and the doctrine was all deductive."

"A movement started that held that we should go back and look at the early church and see what was done."

Vatican II relied more on the Bible and less on "an abstract kind of theology," Fletcher said.



The three Society priests who attend to the needs of the students and the parishioners are, from left, the Rev. Stephen DeLallo, chaplain of the college; the Rev. Herve de la Tour, rector; and the Rev. Christopher Hunter, assistant rector.