

Cardinal Valerio Blesses the Seminary

Vatican Prelate Dedicates New Scholasticate. Three Bishops, Abbot Participate

August 10, 1954, Pine Hills was baptized. The priest, His Eminence, Valerio Cardinal Valeri, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, christened her Our Lady of the Snows.

August 9, 12:30 p. m.: The shiny black Buick of His Excellency, Bishop Richard Gerow of Natchez rounded the driveway leading to the arched auto entrance and slid to a halt before the door. The slightly-built, elderly Cardinal walked smiling up the steps. Akin to the Holy Father, he exhibited a scholarly face, warm smile and great natural dignity. The community, mustered by the trumpeting electric horn and ringing bells, swarmed to greet the Cardinal and their own Bishop Gerow, while the Superior, Very Rev. John E. Taylor, O. M. I., and the Provincial, Very Rev. Edwin J. Guild, O.

M. I., conducted them through the building. Just then His Excellency, Bishop Charles P. Greco of Alexandria, La., kindly stopped in, though he couldn't stay. Sixty visiting priests registered with our relation committee that night and were gartered in the scholastics' rooms.

Tuesday, Aug. 10, 6:15 a.m.: Blue Mississippi skies framed the desert pink scholasticate. The early morning schedule was the same. After meditation, Very Rev. Joseph Rousseau, O. M. I., Procurator General of the Oblate General Administration, and Cardinal Valeri's escort from Rome, said the community Mass. The visiting priests said Mass at many side altars set up for their use. After breakfast, important visitors drove up. They were Most Rev. Francis R. Cotton, Bishop of Owensboro, Ky., Most Rev. Maurice Schexnayder, Auxiliary Bishop of Lafayette, La., and Abbot Columban Thuis, O. S. B., of St. Joseph's Abbey at St. Benedict, La.

Ten a.m.: The Cardinal, at the end of a solemn recession, a brilliant mitred figure in scarlet and lace, advanced up the crowded aisle of the chapel, benignly blessing the throngs of guests. At the altar, he intoned the VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS, which was taken up by the choir, calling upon the loving Holy Spirit to bless the dedication. Thereupon he returned to the

lobby and blessed rooms representative of the house. After returning to the altar, he solemnly intoned the VEXILLA REGIS, the hymn of the cross, and again returned to the lobby to erect a beautiful crucifix.

With all back in the chapel, the Pontifical High Mass was begun and the three-part choir, directed by Fr. Carl Becherer, O. M. I., added to the magnificence of the occasion by a very creditable performance of Pietro Yon's sublime "Regina Pacis" Mass. After the gospel, Bishop Gerow, who brought the Oblates to Mississippi, delivered the sermon. Thin and erect, speaking quietly, he told the scholastics earnestly that they were now dedicating themselves again to God, that the world was in sad need of just such dedication. The last gospel ended the two and one-half hour ceremonies.

One-thirty p.m.: The 150 visiting priests sat at long tables set up in the elegant library with its ceramic tiled floor, lofty pillars, and encircling French windows. Scholastic waiters served the banquet, an elaborate roast beef dinner, single-handedly directed by the house chef, Elliot Cambric. With fitting formality, the superior of the scholasticate, Fr. Taylor, introduced the provincial; and the provincial, Bishop Gerow; Bishop Gerow, the Cardinal, who expressed his enjoyment of his first visit to the U. S. A. After the speech the provincial read a letter from the Oblate Superior General thanking the Cardinal.

Aug. 15, afternoon: The civic-minded scholasticate held open house. The public saw all the rooms, including the blue-walled chapel, softly illuminated by darker blue stained glass, the well-lighted library, and the modern kitchen, then serving a community of 72.

The dedication of which we have told is the Church's solemn way of saying, "This is a house belonging, not to man, but to God." Now she, like the men who dwell within her walls is dedicated to the service of God alone. She has become an enlarged version of the cottage of Nazareth wherein other Christs prepare themselves to continue the work of redemption. And as the tides of the bay ebb and flow incessantly, Nature's measure of progress in her journey back to God, the majestic walks of Pine Hills flaunt the coursing years---a monument to the faith and labor of men who have in her one more proof of the love of the One whose name she bears, Our Lady of the Snows