

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Solemn Dedication of Old Saint Patrick's in Kansas City *An Oratory of the Institute of Christ the King*

The sacred melodies of Gregorian Chant fill the church. The hushed faithful look on in prayerful silence. They witness one of the most remarkable rites of the Church's ancient liturgical tradition. The Gospels tell us that two thousand years ago Our Lord Himself had written with His finger in the sand. Today the pontiff with crosier in hand traces out one by one the characters of first the Greek and then of the Roman alphabets to signify the universality of the Catholic Church. The Sacrifice of the New Law, in which the Old Testament finds its perfection and accomplishment, will now be continually offered in this awesome place. Truly this church has become "the house of God" and the "gate of Heaven."

On October 25th, His Excellency, the Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, Bishop of Kansas City, Missouri, solemnly dedicated Old Saint Patrick's, an Oratory of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest in Kansas City, Missouri, in an impressive five hour long ceremony complete with all of the traditional ceremonies of this venerable rite. The exterior of the church having been blessed on all sides, the procession of clergy then entered the church. The Litany of the Saints was chanted, after which the interior walls and floor were blessed with Gregorian water – a blessed mixture of water, ash, salt and wine. Next the relics were carried in solemn procession by two deacons and placed in the church's new altars. Before these were anointed with sacred chrism and incensed, the Pontiff anointed with chrism the twelve crosses upon the walls of the church in the Name of the Lamb and of Saint Patrick. Finally incense was burned directly upon the altars, after which they were clothed, and a beautiful Pontifical High Mass celebrated. Choir members from Saint Francis de Sales Oratory in St. Louis joined with those of the Old Saint Patrick's choir to sing Palestrina's *Missa Brevis* under the joint direction of Mr. Nick Botkins and Mr. Patrick Watkins.

This solemn dedication Mass and ceremony was the culmination of an extensive three-year restoration project under the professional guidance of architect and classicist William Heyer. So many hard-working volunteer members of the Oratory had labored with an exemplary, tireless energy right up until the very hours preceding the ceremony. With joyful enthusiasm the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles, greatly assisted in the final cleaning. The outstanding support of Msgr. Bradley Offutt, Chancellor of the diocese, was invaluable to the success of the project, as was the able leadership of Canon Denis Buchholz of the Institute of Christ the King who served as Rector of the Oratory for three years.

His Excellency remarked during his sermon to the great number of faithful who had come from far and wide for this solemn event: "*I am full of confidence as I renew today my entrustment of the Oratory to the Institute of Christ the King, for whom "doing the truth in love," is much more than an ecclesial motto – but indeed, a dynamic interior motive of outgoing apostolic love. Through Monsignor Schmitz, I express my profound thanks to Reverend Monsignor Gilles Wach,*

Founder and Prior General of the Institute, for his solicitude to the Diocese, in providing this spiritual foundation for our Oratory.” During the warm reception which followed the Mass and ceremony, Monsignor R. Michael Schmitz, Vicar General and Provincial Superior, reiterated the profound gratitude of the Institute toward Bishop Finn for his fatherly support of the spiritual work of the Institute in his diocese.

Originally built in the 1870's, this historic church in the heart of Kansas City now continues with renewed beauty to serve as “a house of God” and a gateway to heaven for countless Catholics attracted to the Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite according to the spirituality proper to the Institute of Christ the King. With its luminous neo-classical interior, high quality woodwork, and exquisite stained glass windows, Old Saint Patrick's will be for generations to come a most worthy sanctuary for the traditional Liturgy of Holy Mother Church as well as a lasting memorial to the great generosity and the steadfast dedication of its many good faithful.

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