

Archbishop re-consecrates Mount St. Mary's to Mary

EMMITSBURG – Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien helped close a yearlong celebration of Mount St. Mary's Seminary and University's bicentennial by re-consecrating the Emmitsburg institution to the Blessed Virgin Mary during an Oct. 10 Mass.

"We re-consecrate this rich and blessed Mount St. Mary's soil to her protection and guidance," said Archbishop O'Brien. "Be convinced, that under her continued patronage, the hand of God paints a portrait of what each of us is striving to become by our baptism and in the strength of this Eucharist."

Under Mary's continued patronage, Archbishop O'Brien said, the seminary and university will "pilgrimage another century and more" – remaining faithful to Mary's plea to do whatever Christ asks.

The prayer of consecration was adapted from the same prayer the U.S. bishops used to consecrate the United States to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In his homily, Archbishop O'Brien emphasized the link between devotion to Mary and worship of the Eucharist.

"Wherever there is devotion to her, in the many shrines dedicated to her around the world or in religious communities bearing her name, the eucharistic sacrifice enables the faithful to experience the heartbeat of love for the Lord that she knew physically and spiritually during his nine-month advent in her womb," Archbishop O'Brien said.

The liturgy was part of a Marian Symposium held on campus Oct. 9-11. Nationally-renowned theologians and academics addressed a wide variety of Marian topics including Mary in Scripture, Mary in Catholic Doctrine and Spirituality and Marian teachings of Pope Benedict XVI.

The archbishop called it fitting for the university to sponsor what he called a

“festival” in honor of Mary and not just a symposium. A festive atmosphere was evident on campus as seminarians sang Marian hymns and songs outdoors and while students ate lunch inside the Patriot Center.

At the conclusion of the Mass, Dr. Thomas Powell, president of Mount St. Mary’s, presented Archbishop O’Brien with its Bicentennial Medal. The same award was also given to Sandra A. McMurtrie, a close associate of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The two awardees were among 200 honored throughout the bicentennial.