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Villa Given Pope Becomes School

Venice City—(NC)—The Villa Schifanoia in Florence—dedicated in 1941 by Mr. and Mrs. Myron C. Taylor to His Holiness Pope Pius XII—the Pius XII Institute was formally opened with ceremonies in the presence of His Eminence Elia Cardinal Dalla Costa, Archbishop of Florence, and many representatives of the Church in Italy and the United States.

The Institute will be conducted as a graduate school in the fine arts under the direction of the Dominican Sisters of Sinisnawa, Wisconsin.

Five of eight girl students from the United States who are enrolled in the Institute attended the opening ceremonies, in the course of which Cardinal Dalla Costa read a telegram from the Holy Father to Mr. Taylor, President Truman's personal representative to His Holiness.

The Holy Father's message renewed expression of gratitude for the gift which made possible such a valuable work of Christian education.

Film Honors 'Silent Night' Priest-Author

Vienna—(NC)—Wherever Christmas is celebrated around the globe, they sing, in many tongues, the hymn "Silent Night, Holy Night."

Next December 23, one hundred years will have passed since the author of the most beloved of all Christmas hymns died in the little village of Oberndorf, near Salzburg.

He was Father Josef Mohr, whose memory will be honored in a film written by Rudolf Heas, director of the Vienna Broadcasting station.

There is probably no other German poet who has achieved such world fame through a single poem as has Father Mohr, the pastor of a little mountain parish who wrote the words for which the village schoolmaster composed the melody.

He was the child of poor parents — so poor that they could find no other person to serve as godfather but the executioner of Salzburg. He died at the age of 58.

Missionary Sister Routs Panther With Her Umbrella

Tingchow, Fukien—(NC)—A Chinese nun narrowly escaped death when attacked by a black panther on a mountain road 20 miles south of this city.

With two Swiss Sisters, the nun set out from Wuping just before daybreak for Shanghai, 18 miles distant along a washed-out bus-road. The three were reciting the Rosary as they walked, when suddenly a black animal leaped from a ditch behind them, jumped on the Chinese nun, walking between the others, and threw her heavily to the ground.

ONE SWISS Sister advanced, opening and shutting her umbrella rapidly, a ruse which the Chinese use to protect themselves against tigers. The panther, apparently a young one, became frightened and disappeared in the darkness.

The panther had scratched the Sister's back and hip with its heavy claws, and had bitten through the heels of her leather shoes. Her wounds are gradually healing.

Missionaries of the Tingchow diocese, staffed by German Dominicans, have seen and met tigers several times, but this was the first encounter with a panther, considered more bloodthirsty than a tiger.

age and clinic at Wuping;

Munich Bishop Freed From Pro-Nazi Charge

Munich—(NC)—Auxiliary Bishop Anton Scharnagl of Munich has been completely rehabilitated, according to an official statement issued by the Archbishop's Office here. The Bishop has been acquitted of all charges brought against him by a denazification court and will soon resume his duties in the diocese.

Shortly after the end of the war, says the statement, these charges were thoroughly investigated by order of the Holy See and found to be without any foundation. Nevertheless church authorities insisted that all witnesses be heard.

Denazification proceedings now have proven beyond any doubt not only that Bishop Scharnagl never delivered confidential information to the Gestapo or provided them with evidence against specific individuals, but that charges preferred against him on moral grounds were shown to be nothing but calumnies of the kind Nazi propaganda has so often used to discredit the Church, the statement explains.

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State Seizure of Catholic School Protested in France

Paris—(NC)—The seizure by the State of Catholic schools in the Grand Combe mining area, near Nantes, which were formerly conducted by the Christian Brothers, has caused serious incidents.

On the eve of the date fixed for the seizure, 1,500 parents locked themselves in the school buildings and spent the night there, determined to hold out until they were ejected by force.

ON the following morning, the Prefect of the district appeared in person at the school, accompanied by 300 police. The official called on the parents to respect the law and to leave the premises. When they refused, police broke in the doors and ejected the 1,500 occupants one by one.

The outraged parents then formed a parade and, reinforced by several thousand townspeople, marched through the streets shouting: "Nous voulons Dieu dans notre ecole." (We want God in our schools.)

The school conducted by the Christian Brothers had about 350 pupils; now it has been taken from them to make room for 100 children who will receive secular, non-religious education.

The pretext for the seizure is a law, passed by a small majority, according to which all the schools attached to the nationalized mines are to come under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education and to be changed into (non-religious) state schools.

U. S. Pilgrims Reach St. Therese's Shrine

Lisleux, France—(NC)—Members of an American pilgrimage to the European shrines of the Blessed Virgin were received here by His Eminence Bernard Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, following their arrival at the convent where St. Therese of Lisieux used to live.

Cardinal Griffin spoke enthusiastically of the large number of pilgrimages being conducted to Europe and showed great interest in plans for a 1949 pilgrimage of American lawyers to places associated with the memory of St. Thomas More.

Led by Msgr. W. M. Higgins of Denver, Colo., and the Rev. George B. Murphy of Brooklyn, the American Lisieux pilgrims are also visiting shrines at Lourdes and Toulouse in France.

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