

Since Saint Bernard's first opened its doors in 1893, it has educated 2,885 priests, 20 Bishops, and more than 700 laypersons.

The Seminary has communicated with its friends and benefactors in many ways during these past eighty-three years: through annual letters from the Bishop of Rochester, who is chairman of the Seminary Board; through yearly sermons preached in all the parishes of the Diocese of Rochester on "Seminary Sunday"; through newsletters sent to our alumni and friends throughout the country; through the publication of our financial report in the Courier-Journal, the newspaper of the Rochester Diocese; and through reports delivered to our alumni at their biennial meetings.

In an effort to provide accurate information to all of those who are interested in Saint Bernard's, we are now publishing this first Annual Report for the academic year 1975-1976. As one who plays an important role in the life of this seminary, we hope that you will take a few moments to read over what follows. Your interest in Saint Bernard's means a lot to us!



SPIRITUAL LIFE

From the day of its founding, Saint Bernard's has laid a heavy stress on the spiritual and liturgical development of its students. Morning and evening prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist are the focal point of each day. Recollections and retreats are scheduled regularly throughout the year and small groups meet with the spiritual director on a bi-weekly basis. Numerous course-offerings in various aspects of Christian spirituality and a strong emphasis on the necessity for each student of developing a steady and disciplined interior life, reinforce the centrality of the spiritual program in the seminary's life.

January 1976 saw the exciting initiation of what we expect to be a regular feature of seminary life: the Desert Experience. Students in the second year spend four weeks in prayer and reflection at the former Divine Word Seminary, in the hill-country south of Rochester, between Hemlock and Conesus Lakes. Several years of discussion and planning led up to this innovative program which had been suggested in the first (1971) *Program of Priestly Formation* (#167-170), and which

is again encouraged in the 1976 edition (#70-73). Saint Bernard's is one of the first seminaries in this country to offer such an experience, and all who participated in it are delighted with the results. The Seminary owes a special debt of gratitude to those many friends who made this first Desert Experience possible by their generosity and their prayerful encouragement.

ACADEMIC LIFE

Throughout most of its history, Saint Bernard's program comprised the two final years of college and the traditional four years of theology. Beginning in 1965 undergraduate students for the Diocese of Rochester attended St. John Fisher College and lived at the newly-founded Becket Hall, while students from other dioceses and religious communities participated in similar programs in colleges or college seminaries approved by their own dioceses or religious superiors. Thus, by 1968 Saint Bernard's, like most other American seminaries had become exclusively a school of theology.

For several years there were two degree programs: the *Bachelor of Divinity* (B.D.), a professional degree, and the *Master of*

