

# St. Francis de Sales Oratory celebrates centennial of church



PHOTOS BY REBECCA VENEGONI TOWER

**FOR THE MASSES** — More than 1,000 people line the pews at a Pontifical High Mass Nov. 23 at St. Francis de Sales Oratory in South St. Louis. Administered by the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, the oratory is the center for the Traditional Latin Mass, also known as the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite.



**'THIS IS MY BODY'** — At right, Bishop Robert Hermann, archdiocesan administrator, consecrates the host at a Pontifical High Mass Nov. 23 at St. Francis de Sales Oratory in South St. Louis. The oratory celebrated the 100th anniversary of the church, which is in need of extensive repairs. The oratory has launched a fundraising campaign, Tradition for Tomorrow.

## By Jennifer Brinker Review Staff Writer

St. Francis de Sales Oratory celebrated the 100th anniversary of its church, the “Cathedral of the Southside,” with a centennial celebration last weekend.

Bishop Robert J. Hermann, archdiocesan administrator, celebrated the Nov. 23 Pontifical High Mass, which featured the oratory’s choirs and a full orchestra performing Charles Gounod’s Mass of St. Cecilia. More than 1,000 people were in attendance.

A German “Kirchweifest,” featuring sauerbraten, bratwurst, black forest cake and other German specialties and the German Waterloo Band, was held in the parish hall after Mass and organized by St. Francis de Sales Knights of Columbus Council 14067.

The oratory announced during its celebration the kickoff of a new fundraising campaign, “Tradition for Tomorrow,” which will go toward restoration of the church building in need of extensive repair work.

The first phase, which is expected to cost some \$1.5 million, will involve a complete restoration of the steeple tower, which is pulling away from the church foundation because of inadequate foundation support. More information can be found on the web at [www.traditionfortomorrow.com](http://www.traditionfortomorrow.com).

The oratory, which is administered by the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, is the center for the celebration of the Traditional Latin Mass, otherwise known as the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite.

“I have found here a very

large and well-established oratory of the Institute,” said rector Father Michael K. Wiener, who arrived at the oratory earlier this fall.

“We have so many faithful and so many families — I am very impressed by the piety and the faithfulness of the people here,” said Father Wiener, who also is episcopal pro-delegate for the implementation of “*Summorum Pontificum*” in the archdiocese. The document, issued by Pope Benedict XVI as “*Motu Proprio*,” or “on his own accord,” allows for greater use of the Traditional Latin Mass according to the 1962 missal.

“I am looking forward to serving here — to serve the faithful and to serve the whole Archdiocese of St. Louis,” added the native of Hamburg, Germany.