

## Former Great Falls Priest Leader of Monastic Order

McConnellsville, O.—The Rev. M. Cletus Altermatt, O.C.S.O., former priest in the Diocese of Great Falls, is the first superior of Ave Maria Monastic Hermitage near here.

The life of the few priests and monks at the monastery will be a return to a strict interpretation of St. Benedict's Rule. It will be close to the Carthusian life—a hidden life of prayer. The Ave Maria Community will observe the strictest interpretation of the rule of monastic silence and enclosure that is practiced in the Church today. The monks will rise at 2 o'clock every morning to chant the Divine Office. Along with this daily participation in the public prayer of the Church, they chant a Solemn Mass every day, and spend five to six hours each day at prayer.

Members of the community

who aspire to the priesthood have the necessary study and class time allotted for that purpose. The size of the community will ultimately grow to 20, according to present plans.

The monks will support themselves by manual labor on the 485-acre farm that surrounds the monastery. Work will include gardening, grass land farming, operation of orchards, and care of livestock.

Soon after purchase of the monastery site (the former McGovern farm), lay persons from nearby towns helped to erect and furnish the monastery chapel. The first Mass was said in the new chapel by the Most Rev. John K. Mussio, Bishop of Steubenville. Although this was not the dedicatory ceremonies of the new monastery, it was the official opening of Ave Maria Monastic Hermitage.



**First Superior** Among the more than 100 persons who witnessed the first Mass said at Ave Maria Monastic Hermitage, McConnellsville, O., were Father M. Cletus Altermatt, O.C.S.O. (formerly of the Diocese of Great Falls), the first superior; Monsignor Ambrose Schilling, Paul McGovern, A. F. McGovern, and Bishop John K. Mussio of Steubenville, O., who celebrated the Mass.