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NEWSLETTER / NEWS RELEASE
From the Office of Mayor Thomas P. Schneider

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2012

St. Ferdinand Shrine Benefit A Tremendous Success!

On Sunday evening January 29, 270 people gathered at Kemoll's Restaurant in the top floor of the Metropolitan Building in downtown St. Louis to raise funds to benefit the Friends of Old St. Ferdinand. Mark Cusomano generously donated the 42nd floor premises and the dinner service and Drury Hotel's sponsored the pre dinner reception on the 40th floor where Archbishop Robert Carlson made a brief appearance. His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, was the keynote speaker at the dinner and shared a detailed reflection on the life of devotion and dedication to Christ of St. Rose Philippine Duchesne and in particular her 14 years at St. Ferdinand in Florissant.

Monsignor Jack Schuler of present day St. Ferdinand Parish was the Master of Ceremony aided by and Fathers Keller and Driscoll and there were many other priests in attendance including Monsignor Mark Ullrich of Sacred Heart who's parish the Shrine is now located in.

Friends of Old St. Ferdinand Shrine president Geri Debo presented gifts of appreciation to Rosemary Davison, Mary Kay Gladbach, Mary Keeven & Father Patrick Driscoll for their contributions to the preservation of the Shrine.

Mayor Thomas P. Schneider noted that Florissant has always valued the Shrine and thanked the Archdiocese for taking a renewed interest in it. He shared biographical accounts that Mother Duchesne loved Florissant with a kind of vehemence for its solitude and in her eye it had the quality of hospitality and that we still have that asset. He shared quotes of admiration and awe of Rose Philippine Duchesne that were made by the famous missionary Priest Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J. who was ordained at St. Ferdinand. Fr. DeSmet said in 1847 "After a visit with her at St. Ferdinand I had the conviction that I was with a truly living saint...I should not be surprised if she were some day raised to our alters." The Mayor said that our children have taken the lessons learned in Florissant on tolerance and hospitality to all corners of the globe returning some of the grace that was brought here by St. Rose Philippine Duchesne and Father DeSmet.

Everyone was delighted to hear an announcement at the end of the evening that Mark Cusomano will host this tremendous event at Kemoll's again next year.

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