

Mother Seton Guild Bulletin

ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE THE CANONIZATION OF MOTHER ELIZABETH ANN SETON

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Mother Seton and Bishop Bruté--Part II

WRITING in her *Journal* on February 18, 1812, Elizabeth Seton made her first mention of Simon Bruté, although they had met seven months earlier and he had frequently visited the struggling little religious community in the interim. She was recording that Saturday morning a heartening episode in the last illness of her daughter, Annina. "What a smile was on her face all that long hard trial," she wrote, and then went on to add about "telling her that Mr. Bruté was much pleased she was now a Sister of Charity." For Annina, Mother Seton's oldest daughter, not yet 17, was the first professed member of St. Joseph's Community, having taken her vows on what was to prove her deathbed.

During her long illness, the "Angel of the School," as she was affectionately known by the children of the village, whom she had instructed in religion, was a constant source of edification to all members of the community, to her devoted mother, and to Mr. Bruté, who brought to her the strength and consolation of her Eucharistic Lord in Communion as her mother knelt in fervent prayer at the bedside.

How Elizabeth Seton was inspired by Annina's "peace, resignation and contentment of soul truly consoling—not suffering a tear to be shed around her," is evident in the concluding words of a letter to a friend: "Poor mother, you will say; and yet, happy mother! You can well understand this: for me, dear friend, to see her receive the last Sacraments with my sentiments of them, her precious soul stretching out towards heaven, the singular purity of her life, of which I could give you the most amiable proofs, my calculations of this world,—all, dear friend, combine to silence poor nature."

On March 8, four days before the end came, Mother Seton wrote in her *Journal* that Annina prayed "until Mr. Bruté came. . . .

He told her he would say Mass for her—suggested many things for the moment; to which she replied with all her soul, although a little before he came she had appeared to wander. When Mr. Bruté left her for the altar, she called after him, and earnestly repeated, she prayed for all, all her dear Sisters, for the Seminary, and for all, as he had suggested."

Once Mrs. Seton lent Annina's notebook to him. When he returned it, she found written in it "some little thoughts" which were later de-

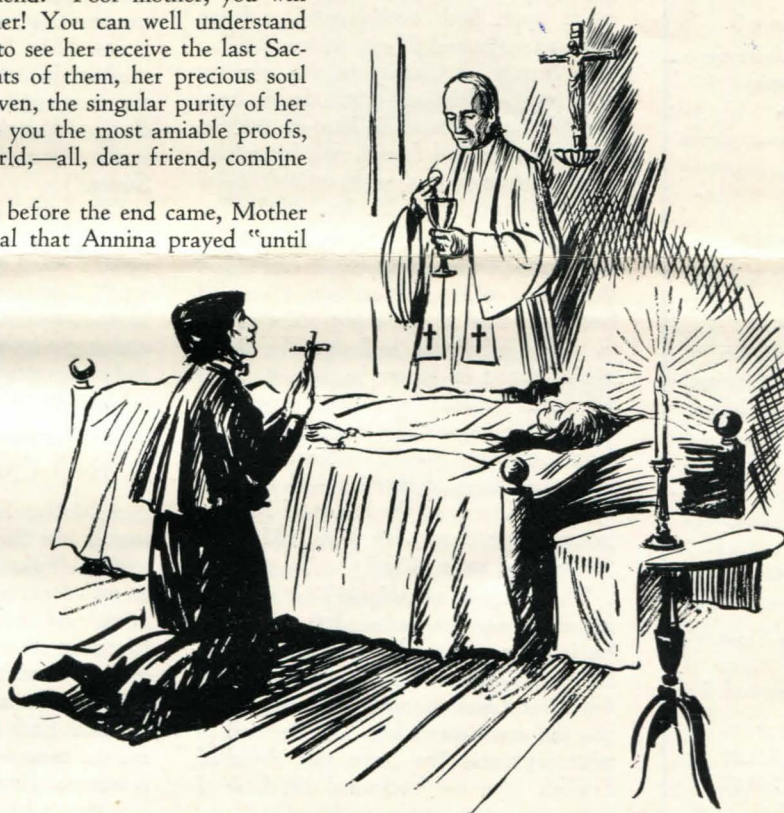
scribed as "sweet, full of true charity, fragrant of the good odor." They were in Br. Bruté's unconnected French, mingled quaintly with English, with which he was not yet too familiar.

Elizabeth needed divine compassion at this time, and her tender woman's heart also longed for human sympathy. Simon's delicate understanding softened her bereavement. He was not then stationed at Emmitsburg. He was still laboring at St. Joseph's Mission on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, his first assignment on his arrival in the United States after sailing from France on June 10, 1810. In July of the following year, he had visited the Mountain, where Mr. Dubois, another French priest, had built a college, now Mount St. Mary's, on a site picturesque then as now, but in surroundings much more primitive than they are today. From its high elevation, Simon had his first view of St. Joseph's Convent in the Valley, two miles away. What he saw was the humble birthplace of the American Sisters of Charity. Attracted to the spot, he walked there, and met Elizabeth Seton.

Much later he wrote, "I first saw Mother in 1811. She read with me the 'Following of Christ' to form my English pronunciation—marked out especially the Chapter 21, Third Book."

That was the first of many visits to the new community, visits during which he helped to minister to the spiritual needs of Mother Seton and her family as well as the group of Sisters she was drawing around her, and she, in turn was a source of inspiration to him as she helped him to master a new language.

They were kindred spirits. No one saw so clearly into her soul as did the saintly priest who was to Elizabeth Seton both a spiritual father and a son. Each was so sensitive to the spirit of the other that words were often unnecessary when they were together. Indeed, his conversation was filled with brilliant, half-finished phrases. Sometimes, French was intermingled with the English and Simon's pronunciation of the new tongue (Continued on Page 2)



Mother Seton and her Spiritual Director, Father Bruté.

Mother Seton Guild

Emmitsburg, Md.



REV. SALVATOR M. BURGIO, C.M.

*V. Postulator for the Cause of
Mother Seton*

THE MOTHER SETON GUILD, as the Apostolic Postulation for the Cause of Canonization of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, Foundress of the Sisters of Charity in America, is part of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in Rome.

The Guild is, moreover, an organization established in 1939, with the approval of the Holy See, to promote the Canonization of Mother Seton in every way possible, by means of literature, religious articles, etc.

The Bulletin is issued quarterly.

Membership in the Guild includes the privilege of receiving copies of the *Bulletin* gratis.

Address all communications to
Central Office of the

Mother Seton Guild

Knights of Columbus Building
Emmitsburg, Md.

Communities of the Sisters of Charity:

- St. Joseph's College . . . Emmitsburg
- Marillac Seminary . . . St. Louis
- Mt. St. Vincent-on-the-Hudson . . . N. Y.
- Mt. St. Vincent . . . Halifax
- Mt. St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio . . . Cincinnati
- Convent Station . . . N. J.
- Seton Hill . . . Greensburg

The expenses involved in the Cause are met by the donations of the clients of Mother Seton, and by the membership subscriptions to the Guild.

- Yearly Subscription . . . \$ 1.00
- Perpetual Membership . . . \$10.00
- Deceased may be enrolled*

Mother Seton and Bishop Bruté--Part II

(Continued from Page 1)

was often faulty. In order to improve himself in this respect, he read aloud in Mother Seton's hearing.

In the beginning, too, he wrote his first English sermons on pages with wide margins, on which Mother Seton wrote her corrections and revisions. Her profound knowledge of Sacred Scripture proved most helpful when they discussed the meanings of various passages in the Bible. She had underlined and annotated many of these.

Late in September of that year, 1812, Simon was transferred to Mount St. Mary's. While at the college, he taught Latin, French, and Natural Philosophy, and assisted Mr. Dubois in missionary work and in the spiritual direction of the Sisterhood in the Valley. He took the place of Mr. Dubois in saying Mass at the Concert.

In recording Mr. Bruté's transfer to Emmitsburg, the Rt. Rev. Robert Seton, D.D., a nephew of Mother Seton and editor of her *Memoirs, Letters and Journal*, quotes the biographer of the French clergyman, the Rt. Rev. J. R. Bayley, as follows:

"Mr. Bruté's humility, piety and learning made him a model of the Christian priest, and the impression his virtues made upon both ecclesiastical and lay students surpassed all oral instruction. . . . The Sisters of Charity in this country also owe a debt of gratitude to him. Mother Seton found in him an enlightened director and friend, and his advice and influence were most beneficial to her young community at St. Joseph's."

Sometime during the year 1813, Mother Seton and Mr. Bruté exchanged Bibles as a token of friendship. Hers had been presented to her eight years earlier by Antonio Filicchi, in Italy. The Bruté Bible, bound in brown leather, is much worn and faded. Tear stains appear on one of the pages. The notations on the front page were written by Simon. In the lower left hand corner he had written: "This Bible was in the hands of Mother Seton at her death, 4th Jany, 1821, and had been so since 1813."

That Simon considered his sermons imperfect may be gathered from one of his letters to Bishop Flaget. He describes his preaching as bad, blundering, and filled with grammatical errors, although this did not depress him and he worked with eagerness "to force this dreadful English into my backward head, or I must renounce forever to know it."

The ejaculatory character of his writ-

ing is seen in two notes he wrote to Elizabeth. In one of them he wrote:

"Six o'clock in the evening. I am just from Benediction. My Mother!!! I have thought of all—thoughts unbounded. The *Adoremus in Aeternum*—The *Gloria Patri*: Sicut erat (1) in principio; (2) nunc; (3) semper. Oh, what a life, if only we made a proper use of it! Courage, my soul; Magnify the Lord with Mary. Oh, simplicity! Pure abandon, purest intentions, fervor in little things, daily watchfulness, till the great cry: 'Lo! the Spouse!' The cross and the altar—communion and eternity."

And in the other:

"At ten read the Epistle. Oh, fullness of suffering and devotedness! How ashamed in reading it! even in America, and so far away from all I love. Alas, ashamed. What do I? All around, what an empire of sin! But I, how comfortable and easy-minded, indeed, in the midst of these ruins of souls. A fine little spot! Yet, all over the country, does not heresy, Catholic ignorance, and sin reign abundantly. What left? The (one word illegible)? No, a tender, calm abandon. His holy will alone. "Read that Epistle, O Mother! and be a mother to your good foundation, but pray also for the poor useless priest. (In a footnote, commenting on this sentence, Archbishop Seton wrote: "Mr. Bruté was noted for his exceeding great humility. He was probably the most useful priest whom the French clergy—that noblest body of men in the world—have ever sent to the United States.")"

"Read the Gospel word by word: mysteries: adore, bless, love. An abyss of delight, a world of instruction. Jesus in each word, seen and felt; but how to make Him manifest! Yet this must have been and ought to be the whole of my offering and consecration to Him and His Church. Oh, pray, pray ye all."

New Club in Nova Scotia

A Mother Seton Club has been organized in the Sacred Heart Academy, Meteghan, Nova Scotia, with Rose Comeau as president; egina Theriault, vice president, and Louise Theriault, secretary. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, when three girls, previously nominated, give accounts of favors received. Each member is pledged to pray for the canonization of Mother Seton. It is reported that the formation of the club was inspired by the reading of the BULLETIN.

Reported Cure of Bulbar Polio Victim

DETAILS of what is reported as a remarkable cure through the intercession of Mother Seton come from Bronxville, New York. Under the conditions prescribed in the accompanying reference to the decrees of Pope Urban VIII and other pontifical legislation, the following account of the cure gives a medical history of the case in chronological order, with collateral mention of the prayers to Mother Seton in italics.

John Connors, an athletic young man, three inches over six feet in height, and weighing 200 pounds, had enjoyed excellent health during the nearly 17 years of his life—he was born January 20, 1932—when he went to Spring Lake, N. J., to spend a weekend holiday over Labor Day, 1948. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. James P. Connors, of 51 Northway, Bronxville. His father is an electrical contractor.

Sunday, September 5th: He played tennis and swam in the pool. That night, instead of remaining for the holiday on the following day, he returned to his home. In the automobile, homeward bound, he complained that he did not feel well. He suffered an attack of nausea.

His health seemed to be good and he lived a normal life during the following three days.

Thursday, September 9th: He went to school, came home ill, suffering from violent nausea, and was confined to bed. Dr. Walter Sullivan, who was summoned, diagnosed the case as possible bulbar poliomyelitis, a type of polio reported to have a high mortality rate, with 60 per cent of the cases fatal.

Saturday, September 11th: He was sent to Lawrence Hospital, Bronxville, where the first spinal test for polio was negative, and the consulting physician made a diagnosis of possible pneumonia.

Sunday, September 12th: Dr. Sullivan ordered another test for polio. The report was positive. The patient was immediately sent by ambulance to Grassland Hospital, where polio cases are treated. The disease affected the young man's skull, lungs and voice. He could not wrinkle his brow. An arm was partially paralyzed. After an examination, Dr. Edward Loftus, of Grassland Hospital, said: "He barely has a fighting chance." There was a general feeling of hopelessness, since the intensity of the attack of the type of bulbar polio with which he was afflicted usually takes its toll within 24 hours.

Monday, September 13th: There was no improvement. Oxygen was administered.

On this day, Mrs. Edward T. McGetrick, John's aunt, went to St. Gabriel's School, Riverdale, N. Y., to solicit the prayers of Sister Imelda, of the Sisters of Charity of Mount St. Vincent on the Hudson. Sister Imelda promised her that the Sisters and children would immediately begin to pray to Mother Seton, and the Sisters of Charity of the community started a novena for John's cure through the intercession of Mother Seton. Giving a touched relic to Mrs. McGetrick, Sister Imelda said: "You must have great faith and pray very hard." On her return from the school, Mrs. McGetrick asked John's mother: "Are you sure you are praying very hard to Mother Seton?" Mrs. Connors replied: "Josephine, I prayed so hard on my knees to Mother Seton last night



JOHN CONNORS

that I actually saw her standing in front of me, although I have never seen a picture of her."

Tuesday, September 14th: Hope for John's recovery was abandoned. Dr. Win Wetters, chief of the hospital staff, took over the case. The patient was anointed.

The touched relic of Mother Seton was pinned to John's gown, and later to his pillows. Prayers were begun.

Wednesday, September 15th: A remarkable improvement set in. The doctors were amazed. Dr. Wetters said: "I never saw a case like it in my life. I can't understand it." John was fed intravenously at first, then went on a soft diet of strained food.

Tuesday, September 21st: Mrs. McGetrick reported to Sister Imelda: "Oh, Sister, the doctors say that John is doing fine and is going to be completely well."

And Sister Imelda replied: "Isn't that wonderful! We ended the novena today."

Wednesday, October 6th: John went on full diet.

Today: John Connors enjoys very good health, weighs 185 pounds, and is an honor student at Iona College, New Rochelle, N. Y. Within a month after his discharge from the hospital, he was able to wrinkle his brow. His voice is improving more rapidly than the doctors anticipated. He has regained full use of his arm.

Model for Every State

Felicitations to the children of St. Anthony School, conducted by the Sisters of Charity in Cincinnati, Ohio, for the February issue of their school paper, "The Truth," dedicated to Mother Seton as the model for every state of life—wife, mother, widow, convert, teacher, religious, and servant of God.

As promoters of Mother Seton's Cause, the pupils are showing a fine spirit of enthusiasm, with each one pledged to pray daily. Pamphlets, prayer leaflets, and instructive literature explaining the life and virtues of Mother Seton have been distributed to friends and relatives in an effort to interest as many as possible in praying for her canonization.

"We know," say the children on the first page of the six-page paper, devoted entirely to the Cause, "that by arousing interest in Mother Seton we are helping to inspire many to imitate her virtuous life, so they, too, may become bearers of the truth. We also hope by our contributions to this paper to show our love and admiration for our dear Mother Seton." Here's the table of contents:

A Woman of Courage, by Ronald Wellman; Was Mother Seton a Christop-her? (the prize-winning essay on this subject) by Donald Bramkamp; Mother Seton's Trust in God, by Melba Scully; A Holy Person, by Susan Leuvolink; Blessed Are the Poor, by Rose Marie Heiselman; Mother Seton, by Donald Kindt; Our Saint, Mother Seton, by Bobby Ross; A Real Christopher, by Charles Horstman; "Do What You Think Is Right," by Judy Wolf; The Deeper Significance of Prayer, by Carol Moorman; Mother Seton's Work, by Richard Von Hoene; A Good Christop-her, by Roberta Lou McDonough, and three entries in the Poet's Corner: Praise to Mother Seton, by Nancy Nies; To Mother Seton, by Jane Bramkamp, and Faithful Servant of God, by Mary Bramkamp.

FAVORS ACKNOWLEDGED

CLEVELAND, O.: "Dear Father: My son was out of work when the company went out of business. I prayed to Mother Seton, and he got a very good job a week before Christmas. I also prayed that my eyes would get better; they have improved a lot." (Mrs. M. F.)

DETROIT, MICH.: "Dear Father: Last winter my husband was seriously ill with rheumatic fever. I promised a donation if he would recover. I made a novena and my prayers were answered. The first \$10 I get I will send to forward Mother Seton's Canonization." (Mrs. R. M.)

PATERSON, N. J.: "Dear Father: My mother was seriously ill, and her doctor, while not completely certain, feared an incurable condition. I immediately made a Novena of Masses and Holy Communions in honor of Mother Seton, praying that upon further examination, the doctor's findings would prove less alarming. Shortly after the completion of my Novena, Mother was examined again and the doctor reported that we had nothing to worry about whatsoever." (Mrs. M.)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.: "Dear Father: I should like to report two favors received through the intercession of Mother Seton. After being without employment for about six weeks I finally secured a good position. The other favor concerned a little baby born without hip sockets. There was a danger that the child would never walk if the sockets did not develop. After about two months of treatment the baby was pronounced well and discharged by the doctor. I am enclosing a contribution to the Mother Seton Guild. I shall continue to pray for her canonization." (Miss M. G.)

DETROIT, MICH.: "Dear Father: I want to take this opportunity to thank Mother Seton for helping me when I needed help most. In May of this year, my little girl, age five, was taken ill, with a serious kidney disorder, complicated by pneumonia, and had to be rushed to the hospital where we learned she had gone into heart failure, and the doctor said all we could do was to hope for the better and pray for the child. The sisters at St. Mary's Hospital began praying to Mother Seton when they first heard of Barbara Ann's illness. The child was also given a relic. In a few days she showed great improvement. She was able to go to school this fall. Thanks to Mother Seton for her help and prayers." (Mrs. S. F.)

MASPETH, N. Y.: "Dear Father: My daily prayers to Mother Seton have been answered at two different times, first in getting the proper supports for my daughter's weak feet, and second, in obtaining the correct shoes for her. I shall continue to pray for the Beatification of Mother Seton." (Mrs. M. W.)

NEW YORK, N. Y.: "Dear Father: A member of the Guild, I take pleasure in acknowledging a very great favor received through the intercession of Mother Seton. I think it important to know that our friend is powerful in Heaven and that the cumulative effect of her intercessions is significant." (Dr. G. McE.)

MANITOWOC, WIS.: "Dear Father: One of our Sisters who has been troubled with a skin disease of a stubborn nature is wearing Mother Seton's relic and invoking her aid. She has changed doctors and it seems the correct diagnosis is being developed, 'thanks to Mother Seton,' she maintains. Will you kindly send us some literature relative to Mother Seton?" (Sister M. B.)

BROOKLYN, N. Y.: "Dear Father: I have been granted a favor from Our Dear Lord through the intercession of Mother Seton. Several years ago I suffered a nervous condition and at time of delivery my baby girl died. For several years I feared the same plight and lived in torment. One day I confided in my dear aunt, the late Sister Miriam Alacoque, Sister of Charity. She consoled me with the thought that there is no greater glory than to live the hereafter with God. Since then God has blessed me with a beautiful baby boy. I made a daily novena prayer for expectant mothers to Mother Seton for 8 months.

"Please send me prayers to Mother Seton for protection of my family and to be a devout and holy mother. I will be well blessed through them." (Mrs. G. K.)

BEDFORD, MASS.: "Dear Father: Enclosed is Postal Order for \$5.00 which I promised if I should be cured of a severe pain after a serious heart attack. I have not been bothered for more than a year now." (Mrs. W. E. B.)

PITTSBURGH, PA.: "Dear Father: I am writing to thank Mother Seton for a great favor. I had a very bad stomach ailment and doctored for a long time. Did not have any relief. A Sister made a novena to Mother Seton and my trouble left me. Through the intercession of Mother Seton I am entirely cured. Many thanks to Mother Seton." (Miss R. A. S.)

RIVERTON, ILL.: "Dear Father: About two years ago I was given a small piece of cloth which had touched the relics of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, together with a prayer for her Beatification, combined with intercession for a certain favor. My baby became seriously ill last month. One night he had mild convulsions and a fever of 104.2. I interceded with Mother Seton, promising that if my baby fully recovered, I would write to the Guild of the favor received, as well as pray for her Beatification for some time. My baby has fully recovered and is as healthy and robust as ever, thanks, I'm sure, to Mother Seton's intercession. Thanks again to Mother Seton's intercession and God's great mercy and kindness." (Mrs. F. J. S.)

HUNTINGTON 2, W. VA.: "Dear Father: I am enclosing \$1.00 for a thanksgiving for a favor received from Mother Seton. Please pray for my intentions." (Mrs. P. S.)

"She Gave Him Far More"

"Sister, I have been studying your pamphlet about Mother Seton as well as the books Father Foley so kindly loaned me. I have fully decided to join the Church and since making this decision I have felt a great relief. I feel certain that as I continue my instruction, I shall know more and more happiness. Even though for the past few years I have put up a front of feeling carefree, down deep at times I have been very miserable. The desire to know God came to me only recently, when I realized how completely unworthy I was to expect any help from my Maker. My association here with the Sisters here at Providence, especially you, has brought to light many of the finer things of this world and the life to come. A little thought of me in your prayers will be gratefully appreciated. May the Lord bless you and your obedient servant, David Foster."

The writer was a lad of 22, who came to the hospital frequently for blood transfusions. The Sister of Charity to whom his note was addressed (Sister E. T.) had discussed with him the idea of asking Mother Seton to intercede for his cure, but, she wrote, "Mother Seton gave him far more, our holy religion." He became a Catholic and enjoyed the consolations of the Faith before he died.

Mother Seton as a Nun

BY MARLENE OGILVIE

Before I begin to tell you about Elizabeth Bayley as a nun, I want you all to join with me as I turn the pages of her noble life which show forth all the gentleness and kindness of her many heroic deeds.

Elizabeth helped the poor, sick and suffering bodies, as well as souls. No act was too lowly for her to perform, nothing too small to be offered to God whom she loved so intensely.

The people knew and loved Elizabeth, and after the misfortune of her husband's death, and her return to New York, her indomitable courage and zeal soon inspired a few young ladies to assist her in her new work; that is, the founding of a small religious community with Elizabeth Ann Seton as superioress.

Now we have Elizabeth as a superioress of a religious community, from the belle of New York, or from being the wife of an influential business man. As a Sister consecrated to God, she knew the joy of binding herself to Him, by the golden chains of her vows, as so many of her religious followers are doing today.

Beginning a religious community was no light task for Elizabeth, she had extensive responsibilities. Under her leadership, however, the community grew considerably in size and fervor. Adapting the rules which Saint Vincent had given to his daughters of Charity, they pledged themselves to the work of education, exemplified by Mother Seton.

As might be expected, Mother Seton cherished a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin and as a special tribute of love and veneration she promised Our Blessed Mother that her spiritual daughters would ever bear her name. In accordance with this pledge the Sisters of Charity all assume the name of Mary with their religious habit, though in some cases it is not used. Another of the chief characteristics of her piety was her love of the cross. Her religious teaching was based upon this to a very great extent.

Time elapses and we find that by God's grace, the community has branched out to localities far distant from Emmitsburg. Yes, indeed, a flourishing community, inspired by Mother Seton, who, on January 4, 1821, was called to meet her God, and to live with Him a life she had merited a hundred fold during her resplendent life on earth, marked by many outstanding achievements. Shortly before her death she lived much alone with God. Some of her last letters to her beloved son William, breathed sadness, and a note of farewell, a calm, showing com-



Students of Grade 10, Mount Saint Vincent's, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

plete resignation had given place in her heart to perfect unity of her will with His. Her last words were "Jesus, Mary, Joseph."

Thus we know that Mother Seton died in perfect unity with Christ as she had always lived with Him even during her very early childhood days. She was always content to leave to the Infinite Wisdom all things great or small. We feel sure, that it is her ceaseless prayer, as it is that of all the many happy spiritual daughters who surround her, that its members may ever retain the humble, generous, mortified spirit of that chosen band who, over one hundred years ago, toiled up the heights of Emmitsburg and amid poverty, privation, and sacrifice up-speakable, founded in joy and gladness, the Sisters of Charity.

After reading this, I am certain you will feel as thousands of others do, that the cause for Mother Seton's canonization is a worthy one. Our story has ended and our prayers, sacrifices and acts have begun—to hasten the day when this truly great Catholic woman will be raised to the dignity of Sainthood.

* * *

The foregoing was one of the papers presented in a symposium on the life and virtues of Mother Seton, at Mount St. Vincent Academy, Halifax, N. S. The program was introduced by Delbra Ash-

ford, and the other papers were: "Mother Seton's Childhood," by Serena Buck; "Mother Seton as a Teenager," by Mary Collins; "Mother Seton as a Wife," by Mary Rita O'Brien; "Mother Seton as a Mother," by Edith Savage; "Mother Seton as a Social Worker," by Patricia Leggatt; "Mother Seton as a Teacher," by Verna Phalen; and "Mother Seton's Sanctity," by Vera Hicks. The prize was won by Marlene Ogilvie; Vera Hicks received Honorable Mention.

At the close of the symposium, Marie Grady appeared as Mother Seton with Mary Ritcey, Margaret More, Shirley Crocker, and Jean Crocker, displaying posters that illustrated jackets of books on Mother Seton.

Concerning Reported Cure

In reading the report of the cure of John Connors on Page Three, please be mindful of the following:

In obedience to the decrees of Urban VIII, dated March 3, 1625, and June 16, 1631, as well as to other similar Pontifical legislation, no other credence is to be given to this account of the cure here described than that which is given to human authority. Moreover, the account given is in no way an anticipation of the decision of the Holy See to whom alone is reserved the authority to pass on the nature of such cures.

Spiritual Growth of Children Fostered

From first grade to college, pupils in schools conducted by the Sisters of Charity of New York have engaged in numerous activities in honor of Mother Seton during the current school year. The programs have had a twofold objective, to promote her cause by arousing interest in her story, and to foster the spiritual development of the children through the influence of Mother Seton on their lives.

In the sketch, "A Woman of Courage," given by the First Graders of St. Charles Borromeo School, Brooklyn, on December 17, 1948, there were 19 boys and girls portraying the scene in which Lorraine and Patricia, with their cousin, Father John, visit the home of Mother Seton and tell about her life and the varied works of the Sisters of Charity.

The Eighth Grade of Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, East 115th Street, presented a more elaborate performance on December 7, 1948. Here 28 boys and girls participated in a program which included "Glimpses of Mother Seton's Earthly Pilgrimage," thoughts from her writings, a hymn to Mother Seton, and the dedication of her cause to Mary Immaculate. At the close of the assembly, each class received a silhouette of Mother Seton.

A typical high school program presented by the Dramatic Club of Holy Cross Academy, West 42nd Street, in February 1949, took the form of a panel on Mother Seton. Six panel members reviewed Mother Seton's childhood, her youth and early married life, her sojourn in Italy, her conversion, her life in Emmitsburg, and the work of her spiritual daughters today. Questions were invited from the student body, and a lively discussion followed.

Students of the College of Mount Saint Vincent commemorated the anniversary of Mother Seton's death, January 4th, by a fifteen minute dramatization of scenes from her life, broadcast over the Fordham University FM radio station on January fifth.

Several school papers have carried articles about or devoted entire issues to the cause of Mother Seton.

The Resurrection Review, the mimeographed publication of Resurrection School, Rye, carried, in its February 1949 issue, a "news article," "Former New York Debutante Opens First School," bearing the date-line "Emmitsburg, February 22, 1810." This article, which has four pen-and-ink illustrations, describes the school and also recounts the impor-

HARP MUSIC

(For Mother Seton)

You were a harp God played on:
We heard the cadences
Along our years,
Merry as water in the sun,
More beautiful
Than mountains held in snow,—
A song to lift the heart
Above the stars.
God played you,—
Stilled the singing strings,
But let the music lie,—with love,
Upon our land.

SISTER CECILIA, S.C.

tant events in Mother Seton's life.

The January 1949 issue of *The Angelus*, mimeographed paper of Saint Gabriel's School, Riverdale, was devoted entirely to the cause of Mother Seton, and had a special editorial staff composed of six members of the Eighth Grade, four of the Seventh, and two of the Sixth. The cover design is a pen and ink sketch of Mother Seton's profile over the New York skyline. The issue is built around "Four Januaries," January 25, 1794, her wedding day, January 8, 1804, her entrance into the Filicchi home, God's instrument in her conversion; January 6, 1805, her decision to become a Catholic; and January 20, 1821, her last day on earth.

The Pelican, published by Blessed Sacrament High School, West 70th Street, features in every issue a "Mother Seton Corner," consisting of a picture of Mother Seton and a quotation from her writings.

Each program offered to both participants and audience an incentive to continued prayers and good works for the early beatification of the foundress of the Sisters of Charity in the United States.

Explaining Mr. Bruté

Some of the earliest missionaries in America were from France, where a priest is known as "Monsieur l'Abbe." The French word "Monsieur" corresponds to the English "Mr." and so these early missionaries were addressed as plain "Mr." instead of by the more cumbersome title of "Mr. Abbot." It could not be expected of the average early American to know that the French "Abbe" and the English "Abbot" are derived from the Syrian "Abba," meaning "Father." The word "Father" was established as the salutation for priests after the arrival of Irish and Italian missionaries. That explains the frequent mention of "Mr." Bruté in our current series of articles.

Saintly Life in "Picture" Drama

Being "framed" can have more than one meaning. The Journalism Class of Our Lady Victory High School, Portsmouth, proved this on February 28, when they brought Catholic Press month to a close by presenting a series of "Pictures" in the auditorium of St. Joseph's School, Norfolk.

In his introductory speech Lemuel Mitchell, editor of the *Victory Chronicle*, stated that one function of the Catholic press is informing the public of such things as the furtherance of causes for canonization, and that on this occasion they as student journalists wished to imitate this one particular phase of the press service. In pursuance of this object they brought to their neighbor school the life story of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton in a series of dramatic monologues and tableaux.

A large picture frame occupied the center of the stage; and as each picture was unveiled, successive speakers told the story depicted by the framed tableau. The first "picture" showed tiny Elizabeth Bayley pointing to heaven as she told her little sister of the joys awaiting them there when they should be reunited to mother and baby sister already there. Succeeding pictures showed Elizabeth as the center of admiring attention from would-be suitors; as the happy wife of William Magee Seton when she and her sister-in-law delighted in the title of "Protestant Sisters of Charity," and as the devoted mother of her five little children. In contrast to these happy settings came pictures of dying William's detention in the Lazaretto at the Italian port; Elizabeth as a widow visiting an Italian church; Elizabeth the convert making her abjuration at St. Peter's Church, New York. The final group of pictures showed Bishop Carroll blessing "Mother" Seton and her young community; Mother Seton in the midst of her little Emmitsburg family; her son William meeting with Father Bruté and learning of his mother's death. The last picture was the familiar one of Mother Elizabeth Seton, Servant of God, used on prayer leaflets.

Other speakers besides Lemuel Mitchell were Glendora Roots, David Gamell, Garland Paige, Gloria Taft, and Mildred Williams. As the pictures concluded Mother Seton's own hymn "Jerusalem" was sung as a chorus.

The one-year old O.L.V. band made its second appearance in Norfolk on this occasion under the direction of their instructor and leader, Mr. Al Solito.

The Magnificat of Elizabeth Ann Seton—II

MARY: "My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Saviour." (Luke i.46-47.)

MOTHER SETON: "At last, Amabilia, at last God is mine and I am His! Now, let all go its round, I have received Him . . . And when He came, the first thought I remember was: 'Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered!' For it seemed to me my King had come to take His throne and, instead of the humble, tender welcome I had expected to give Him, it was but a triumph of joy and gladness that the Deliverer was come and my defense and shield, and strength and salvation made mine for this world and for the next." (The day of her First Communion.)

When Mary sings that her soul magnifies the Lord, she means that her whole being is absorbed in praising, glorifying, and adoring God; for, to "magnify the Lord" is to form the highest and largest conceptions of His greatness and goodness—to frame those conceptions into the estimation, and then to pour out this praise in whatever is open to the heart and soul. This is that "emptying of self," productive of the love of God; a love which, in turn, deepens humility; for the soul delights in effacing itself before Him whom she loves.

When Mother Seton speaks of the tumultuous reception her Sacramental God received instead of the "humble, tender welcome" she had thought to offer Him, she but proves how much greater her humility was than she reckoned. Consider her situation at this time. A young widow with five children for whom she must make provision; cast off because of her conversion to the Catholic Faith, by her husband's wealthy family; in delicate health and then totally ignorant of the paths in which God would have her walk: she yet has no petitions to present, no requests to make, no fears to have assuaged, no hopes to be revived. Humility rendered her faith more active, more firm, more enlightened, causing her mind to embrace what it could not see nor understand. Here Mother Seton merited the beatitude bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin in the words of St. Elizabeth: "Blessed art thou that hast believed; because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord." (Luke i:45.)

Pride is the source of doubts, of disturbed misgivings; pride fears a mitigation or a loss of independence; pride must make provision against foreseen defeats, and, if it has recourse to a Higher Power, does so only to petition for its own vic-

tory. Humility leaves all to His love and His wisdom as well as to His power. Humility says, with Mother Seton, "My God is my strength and salvation for this world and for the next." Here, there is no frantic petitioning for this or that; no detailing of how God's strength is to be manifested; no prescribing the form salvation is to take. Humble faith says, in effect: "It is well, my God, because Thou didst do it."

The triumph of joy and gladness flooding her soul in its first intimate contact with her Eucharistic God, is a triumph of hope deep-rooted in humility. Here she exemplified the truth of the saying of St. Vincent de Paul: "Just as we cannot believe too firmly in God; neither can we hope in Him with too much confidence." How should she have been filled with joy and gladness, did she not rely upon the power and liberality of God, without thought of her own merits? Convinced that, if left to her own resources, she would inevitably be lost, Mother says confidently with the Psalmist: "The Lord will save them because they have hoped in Him." Humbling herself before Him, she anticipated, by her sentiments, the blessings which were the object of her hope.

The axes of this chosen soul's spiritual orbit are, on one hand, an intimate conviction of her powerlessness to attain perfection or to prosper God's work in souls; and, on the other, an unshaken hope of finding everything in the grace of Christ Jesus. Later in life, while under the pressure of many trials, she was to write mental and most heartfelt praise and serenely to her little daughter, Rebecca: "O, if I did not see our Lord in all and trust all to Him, what an aching heart I should have. But, not so. I look all the while to our purification and then our Eternity, so long for love and enjoyment."

Merrily she writes to a friend: "If I succeed, I bless God. If I do not succeed, I bless God; for then it will be right that I should not succeed." Here we have what St. Ignatius refers to in those who have attained to the third degree of humility: "Complete self-effacement, so that God alone lives and reigns in them." Only the humble soul can look upon success and failure with the same eye. She "magnified the Lord"—yes, because, through the medium of her humility her own soul took on heroic proportions, since she fulfilled St. Augustine's condition for greatness: "Do you desire to be great? Begin by becoming little."

MARY: *He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid: behold from henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed.*

MOTHER SETON: *The greater my unworthiness, the more abundant is His mercy.*

He who is our All, has ways of consoling His little atoms.

Our God is God. I am the happiest creature in the thought that not the least thing can happen but by His will and permission.

The tender name of 'Mother' salutes me everywhere, even from lips that have never said to me the common salutation among strangers.

There is every hope that it (the Community) is the seed of an immensity of future good.

Now then, you will laugh when I tell you that your wicked little sister is placed at the head of a community of saints.

"Humility is truth." When our Lady sings: "He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid," she refers not to an acquired virtue which it would ill become the possessor to proclaim; but rather to her lowliness, her obscurity, her low and poor estate, the insignificance she ascribed to herself to an even greater degree than that which the world ascribed to her. It is in this profound conviction of the nothingness of self, that an abiding attitude of humbleness is formed, from which exterior acts of humility spring. Hence, this virtue has been well defined as a "Supernatural virtue which, through self-knowledge, inclines us to reckon ourselves at our true worth and to seek self-effacement and contempt."

The holy Mother of God, untainted by original sin, could not find, as other creatures can and do, in her own conduct, additional motives for humility. In her, the virtue was simply the acknowledgment of the true worth of all things: God's worth, creatures' worth, and their proper relations, one to another. From this flowed, as a necessary consequence, a constant preference for God's Will—a complete union of her will with the Divine Will. This Mary voiced, not only in her Magnificat, but on down to her last words recorded in Holy Writ: "Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye." (John ii:5.)

Faithfully, and with that unerring spiritual instinct characteristic of her, did Mother Seton imitate the Blessed Virgin in finding in her own unworthiness her best claim to God's mercy. The first three

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Mother Seton and Bishop Bruté--Part II

WRITING in her *Journal* on February 18, 1812, Elizabeth Seton made her first mention of Simon Bruté, although they had met seven months earlier and he had frequently visited the struggling little religious community in the interim. She was recording that Saturday morning a heartening episode in the last illness of her daughter, Annina. "What a smile was on her face all that long hard trial," she wrote, and then went on to add about "telling her that Mr. Bruté was much pleased she was now a Sister of Charity." For Annina, Mother Seton's oldest daughter, not yet 17, was the first professed member of St. Joseph's Community, having taken her vows on what was to prove her deathbed.

During her long illness, the "Angel of the School," as she was affectionately known by the children of the village, whom she had instructed in religion, was a constant source of edification to all members of the community, to her devoted mother, and to Mr. Bruté, who brought to her the strength and consolation of her Eucharistic Lord in Communion as her mother knelt in fervent prayer at the bedside.

How Elizabeth Seton was inspired by Annina's "peace, resignation and contentment of soul truly consoling—not suffering a tear to be shed around her," is evident in the concluding words of a letter to a friend: "Poor mother, you will say; and yet, happy mother! You can well understand this: for me, dear friend, to see her receive the last Sacraments with my sentiments of them, her precious soul stretching out towards heaven, the singular purity of her life, of which I could give you the most amiable proofs, my calculations of this world,—all, dear friend, combine to silence poor nature."

On March 8, four days before the end came, Mother Seton wrote in her *Journal* that Annina prayed "until Mr. Bruté came. . . .

He told her he would say Mass for her—suggested many things for the moment; to which she replied with all her soul, although a little before he came she had appeared to wander. When Mr. Bruté left her for the altar, she called after him, and earnestly repeated, she prayed for all, all her dear Sisters, for the Seminary, and for all, as he had suggested."

Once Mrs. Seton lent Annina's notebook to him. When he returned it, she found written in it "some little thoughts" which were later de-

scribed as "sweet, full of true charity, fragrant of the good odor." They were in Br. Bruté's unconnected French, mingled quaintly with English, with which he was not yet too familiar.

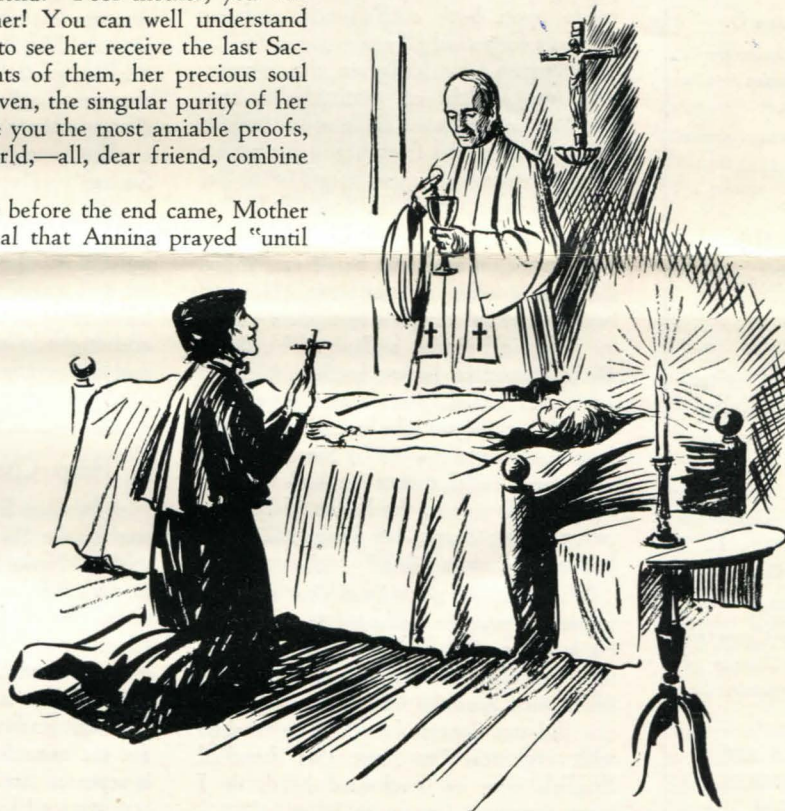
Elizabeth needed divine compassion at this time, and her tender woman's heart also longed for human sympathy. Simon's delicate understanding softened her bereavement. He was not then stationed at Emmitsburg. He was still laboring at St. Joseph's Mission on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, his first assignment on his arrival in the United States after sailing from France on June 10, 1810. In July of the following year, he had visited the Mountain, where Mr. Dubois, another French priest, had built a college, now Mount St. Mary's, on a site picturesque then as now, but in surroundings much more primitive than they are today. From its high elevation, Simon had his first view of St. Joseph's Convent in the Valley, two miles away. What he saw was the humble birthplace of the American Sisters of Charity. Attracted to the spot, he walked there, and met Elizabeth Seton.

Much later he wrote, "I first saw Mother in 1811. She read with me the 'Following of Christ' to form my English pronunciation—marked out especially the Chapter 21, Third Book."

That was the first of many visits to the new community, visits during which he helped to minister to the spiritual needs of Mother Seton and her family as well as the group of Sisters she was drawing around her, and she, in turn was a source of inspiration to him as she helped him to master a new language.

They were kindred spirits. No one saw so clearly into her soul as did the saintly priest who was to Elizabeth Seton both a spiritual father and a son. Each was so sensitive to the spirit of the other that words were often unnecessary when they were together. Indeed, his conversation was filled with brilliant, half-finished phrases. Sometimes, French was intermingled with the English and Simon's pronunciation of the new tongue

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Mother Seton and her Spiritual Director, Father Bruté.