

Mother Seton Guild Bulletin

ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE THE CANONIZATION OF MOTHER ELIZABETH ANN SETON

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Cardinal Cicognani Named Prefect

HIS Holiness Pope Pius XII, in naming His Eminence, Gaetano Cardinal Cicognani, as Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, has elevated to that high post a Prince of the Church who is known and loved on two hemispheres. He became a member of the College of Cardinals on January 12, 1953.

As priest, scholar and diplomat, he has given a long life of distinguished service to the Church and to the people of his native Italy, of Austria and Spain in the Old World, of Bolivia and Peru in the New World. While he was occupied with his important ecclesiastical duties in his South American offices in La Paz and Lima, he became familiar with the North American Continent as well, and he visited the United States, where his brother, His Excellency, Most Reverend Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate, is one of the most illustrious champions of the Cause of Mother Seton's Canonization.

Born at Brisighella in the Diocese of Faenza, Italy, on November 26, 1881, the new Cardinal Prefect had ministered to the needs of the faithful for many years before going to South America as Papal Nuncio, first to Bolivia, then to Peru. To the Community of Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who had traveled from Philadelphia in the United States to open and conduct a school in Lima, Peru, the Papal Nuncio appeared as a gentle, genial, scholarly priest interested in everything Amer-

ican to such a degree that they thought of him as pro-American.

His next assignment was that of Papal Nuncio to Austria, with headquarters in Vienna, and from there he journeyed to

Madrid, to serve as Papal Nuncio to Spain during the troublous times in that country. It was in Madrid, several years ago, that Father Burgio, Vice Postulator of the Cause of Mother Seton's Canonization, had the honor of meeting the Papal Nuncio, who at that time might have had only a passing interest in the Cause but since his appointment as Cardinal Prefect has come to learn more and more about Mother Seton, her life and accomplishments as the Mother of Many Daughters, the Sisters of Charity.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites governs the Process of Canonization of Saints. As Cardinal Prefect, Cardinal Cicognani presides over the destinies of the candidates for Sainthood. There are approximately 1,200 Causes for Canonization before the Sacred Congregation. Each Cause is examined with the same painstaking thoroughness that would be accorded to it if it were the only one.

To His Eminence, Cardinal Cicognani, we pledge our fervent prayers that God's grace will support him in his heavy burdens and responsi-

bilities. To Our Holy Father, we extend our sincere appreciation for his appointment of a Cardinal Prefect intimately familiar with America and Americans.



His Eminence, Gaetano Cardinal Cicognani

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
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Emmitsburg, Md.

Communities of the Sisters of Charity:

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Marillac Seminary	St. Louis
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Mt. St. Vincent	Halifax
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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
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FAVORS ACKNOWLEDGED

NEW WATERFORD, N. S.—I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to dear Mother Seton for a remarkable cure, experienced about a month after the birth of my seventh baby. As a result of prolonged hemorrhage, a clot of blood formed in my right leg. I immediately began the rest treatment, but in spite of all care, the clot moved to my lungs. The doctors predicted that I might live 24 hours. While the priest was summoned to administer the Last Sacraments, the Sisters in the convent nearby began a Novena to Mother Seton. One of the Sisters pinned a relic of Mother Seton on my gown.

Although I suffered a great deal, I began a gradual improvement. On the ninth day of the Novena I was permitted up. The doctor surprised me when he remarked, "You are very lucky. Not many who have had your ailment have lived to tell the tale." It was then I realized how serious my case was. It was then I became aware of the power of Mother Seton's intercession.

I am now home with all my children. I know that my faith in Mother Seton will never grow cold, but will rather increase as the days go by. May God bless all of you who labor to make Mother Seton known, and may Mother Seton help others as she has helped me.

—(Mrs. A. B.)

MOBILE, ALA.—After the loss of my second child, I was advised by my doctor not to have any more children, because of my blood type. So when I discovered I was to have another child, I was very much frightened. I changed doctors, and again was given no hope for my baby. The new doctor said only prayers could help me. A friend sent me the "Expectant Mother's Prayer." I know it was through Mother Seton's aid that I now have a perfectly normal baby girl. I am most thankful and I hope to help the Cause by reporting this favor granted.

—(Mrs. C. W. L.)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—Since I last saw you, I had been reciting the Novena Prayer daily for my father's conversion. Happily, his reception into the Church took place Christmas Eve. I wish to thank Mother Seton through you for her intercession.—(E. M. B.)

CHICAGO, ILL.—My daughter, a student nurse at the time, was determined to marry a man she met on a blind date, an undesirable son of anti-Catholic par-

ents. So I went to Mother Seton, asking her to help Mary, as she had helped her own daughter. The Sisters and many more joined me in storming heaven to break up an unhealthy affair. The answer to our prayers came swiftly. Mary stopped seeing the man. Those who knew about the situation call it a miracle that this man was so dramatically removed from Mary's life. Mother Seton always answers my prayers. I hope my dear Heavenly friend will soon be befried.

—(Mrs. I. T. M.)

Dr. Major G. Seelig

DEVOTEES of the Cause of Mother Seton's Canonization will gratefully remember the late Dr. Major D. Seelig as the Doctor Expert who, although Jewish by faith and agnostic by conviction, stated at the conclusion of the Apostolic Court Session, investigating the cure of Sister Gertrude Korzendorfer, in New Orleans in 1945:

"I don't believe in miracles, but if by a miracle the Church means a cure which medical science cannot explain, then you have it in this case."

He had previously said that the experience of the Court procedure was the greatest in his life. He was deeply impressed by the solemnity, the formalities, and the thoroughness of the investigation. The cure of Sister Gertrude, as reported in an earlier issue of the MOTHER SETON GUILD BULLETIN, is now under consideration by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in Rome.

A Doctor Expert in the Apostolic Court investigating an alleged miracle must be a recognized authority in the disease under consideration. Dr. Seelig excelled in the field of pathology and was highly qualified for the responsibility placed upon him.

Fourteen doctors had been summoned to testify. It is the duty of the Doctor Expert to defend the science of medicine and to keep the record free of any evidence not in accord with scientific standards of medicine, the forces of nature, and medical skill. He is required to challenge the statements of doctor witnesses who seem to favor the verdict of a true miracle.

Dr. Seelig rendered a great service to the Court. He reluctantly accepted travel expenses, but refused any remuneration for his services, a generous refusal in which he was joined by all the other doctors. May he rest in peace!

She Wrote and Wrote . . . to Help Others

By *Mary Louise Callahan*

ELIZABETH SETON, who sleeps in the valley at the foot of the blue hills, left no books for posterity. Yet, paradoxically enough, she was a prolific writer with a fluent, exquisite style. Many books have been written about the Servant of God, books which would have surprised her had she seen a preview of them in her lifetime. Since her death in 1821 many biographers have told the story of the convert-widow and how she founded a great order of Sisters in America. Elizabeth, indeed, would have been amazed if she had known all they would say about her . . . the school children . . . the Church . . . the ill . . . the poor . . . the orphans . . . all those whom she had helped in her lifetime. And she, who disliked praise of any sort, would have frowned a little and her beautiful eyes would have grown dark like the eyes of her French Huguenot grandmother, Mary Bayeux Charlton.

Elizabeth left no books—that would be a task for others! But she did write letters, hundreds of them which winged their way from city to city, from state to state and, yes, across the far reaches of an ocean. Even though letter writing was one of her chief pleasures, Elizabeth's main objective in writing them was to help others . . . to give advice . . . to encourage . . . to console . . . to admonish. In all her letters one can find traces of an esthetic temperament and a religious ideal. As a young girl she searched her innocent soul in a little diary which she kept from day to day, teaching herself at the same time to express herself properly on paper.

But it was in the summer of 1811, when the Mother Superior of Saint Joseph's met the mercurial Simon Bruté, that her literary talents were directed towards a loftier goal with a deeper religious significance. It was during the vacation period when they met briefly for the first time at the convent. They read together excerpts from "The Following of Christ" and Mother Seton realized immediately that the young missionary was having difficulty with the English tongue.

Shortly before this he had written to his friend, Father Benedict Flaget, "I am trying to learn practically my English. I have said Mass and preached, bad preaching as it may be, in six different places. This must force this dreadful English into

my backward head or I must renounce forever to know it. . . . On Monday I will be making English and blunders on my Eastern Shore. . . ."

The angelic young priest had only been in America about a year and was struggling with the English language on the Eastern Shore of Maryland where he was stationed for a short while. As time went on, he improved very little in this respect. Not that he wasn't brilliant enough to learn another language readily, but "Blessed Gabriel," as Mother Seton sometimes called him, was much too impulsive to take time out to learn all the proper expressions and phraseology of a foreign language. His quick mind was always racing ahead of his speech.

Father Simon called Elizabeth his "other mother," even though she was but five years his senior, and declared gratefully to her: "You whom I like to call mother here, as I call one in France (his own mother was living in 1811) . . . you have so well helped me better to know, yes better still, a priest of his as I was, to know my happiness and desire, but alas (I), so vainly desire to impart the same to others to know and love and say Jesus. . . ."

Simon had so much in his heart but he couldn't say it in this new land. In France it was different! Words fell from his lips brilliantly and easily in his home country. It was easy to speak at the University of Paris where

he was the most brilliant among many brilliant students. He had won the coveted Corvisart Prize as a student in medicine in an oral examination before an impressive medical board. He had won over Laennec, famous physician in medical annals. It was easy to talk when he pleaded with Napoleon to release his friend, Collin, from the French prison after the Revolution . . . but here, here in America . . . how almost impossible it was to say just what he was thinking.

This was the reason Elizabeth became a sort of amanuensis to Simon who became, at a later date, spiritual director to her community. He, in turn, helped her, for he introduced the foundress to some of the greatest writers and saints of the Catholic Church and she, in turn, translated the writings from the French and imparted much worthwhile spiritual material to her community.



Patricia Toppa

Father Bruté asked Elizabeth over and over again to help him develop his lectures for classes at the college and to work out his sermons. He would send outlines of his discourses to the valley asking Elizabeth to fill in the spaces between with the proper English phrases and thoughts. He asked her to "blot out and write down better, principally when this poor French-English will be quite unamendable." In other words, if she could make nothing of his notes, he gave her permission to rewrite them correctly in her own way.

Mother Seton would complete Father Bruté's written meditations. It was easy for her to do this as her mind, one might say, was cast from the same mold as Simon's. She decoded his cryptic French messages turning them into sermons lyrical in beauty. Although she is recognized as the "eternal womanly," Elizabeth had been trained by her physician-father, Dr. Richard Bayley, and she had a strong mind.

Even so, Elizabeth was an artist when it came to expressing herself in words or on paper. Once the thoughts of Simon came out in words of hers like this: "Cover yourself in prayers and communions with His precious blood, as the little birds when they see the rising storm and coming rain they dip into the Ocean . . . and as the saint who said Strike strike indeed, but where can you find a place my Jesus not covered with your own blood."

Archbishop Marechal, after a visit to St. Joseph's in 1818, exclaimed to Father Bruté "how bewitching her conversation" always was. "*Elle a une maniere unique,*" Simon replied, "*de peindre et d'exprimer ce qu'elle veut dire.*"

She helped the priest-professor at the Mountain with his sermons but they didn't have time to go over the catechism together. The students seemed to know this as they liked the sermons which he delivered every Sunday but couldn't understand the catechism which he explained at vespers.

Mother Seton translated the works of Jean Jacques Olier, the founder of the Society of St. Sulpice, of which Simon was a member. She also translated the following: Life of St. Vincent de Paul; Life of Mademoiselle Le Gras; the "Antiphons of Advent" by Avrillon; St. Ambrose's "Treatise on Virginity"; "Interior Peace" by Lombez; various passages from the works of Berthier; portions of St. Theresa's works; parts of DuPont's "Meditations"; commencement of the "Life of St. Ignatius"; letters; passages from "Pere Judde"; a portion of the "Conferences of St. Vincent de

Paul"; a portion of the "Conferences of St. Francis de Sales." The superior enjoyed making these translations, many of which were suggested by Father Bruté.

It would be hard to say who received the most help during the friendship of Father Bruté and Mother Seton. She was a mother to him and soothed his bruised spirit more than once. She shattered his melancholy moods with a bright philosophy of her own which abandoned itself to the will of her Beloved, as she called Our Lord.

Once she came as near as she could to rebuking Simon, who was both priest and friend. She said: "All is a true mystery to me in your disposition . . . much greater than any of Faith. A man of your particular principle on paper, who has evidently the most dear and special graces, not given drop by drop as to other souls, but poured over your head in a daily torrent. . . . Yet I seldom see you but in such wild enthusiasm of your own particular impression of the moment that

Reverend Mother M. Evaristus

MOTHER Seton's Cause lost a zealous, devoted promoter through the death of Reverend Mother M. Evaristus Morgan, former Mother General of the Halifax branch of Mother Seton's Daughters. Quiet and unassuming, she did great things for the Sisters of Charity in her humble way. She strove to promote love and devotion among the members of the Community, not only during the period when she occupied the office of Mother General with distinction, but in the years before that and down through the last days of her life. May God reward her generous spirit with a richness of heavenly merits! May her gentle soul rest in peace, and let perpetual light shine around her!

you can see nothing, hear nothing, but that one object, or else quite reserved, hurt and anxious because you have not been consulted in things which spoke for themselves."

Back and forth went their notes . . . from mountain to valley . . . from valley to mountain . . . one encouraging the other, advising, instructing, consoling, thanking. In the quaint, half-finished jottings Simon sent to his "other mother" one can almost see a true picture of his life and hers as they both sought perfection in their way of life.

One could not speak of their literary efforts at all without mentioning the word "eternity," which worked its way

in a golden thread through the tapestry of their letters and meditations. Simon, perhaps, had started using it before Elizabeth, but she had quickly plucked the word, like a rare flower, from the garden of the French priest's soul, sensing immediately its value above all the others. When he talked or wrote to her of eternity she was not afraid at all. How fortunate she was to have had such a spiritual director during the critical days of her community's beginning. He would end a note like this: "O immense Eternity! Beautiful Eternity! Glorious . . . Never-ending . . . Delights . . . peace . . . love. . . . And what society!"

Elizabeth's notes sometimes touched his heart for, after reading one of them, he exclaimed, "My Mother, Not quite tears, but half so, and heart melting within when reading these pure, angelical effusions and timorous cases of conscience. . . ."

And when he gave her the Third Volume of St. Theresa, he wrote: "My dear Mother, in giving you this third volume I experience a moment of consolation, in the hope the good your soul can draw from it, for yourself and for others. . . . Read, consider, taste, pray, translate with affection. . . ."

During their twelve years of friendship, the scholarly priest kept in touch with Elizabeth whether he was at the Mountain . . . in Baltimore . . . or in France. At the college there was a wonderful library, filled with rare volumes from his own library in Brittany. His contact with these tomes enabled him to widen Elizabeth's spiritual horizon.

She was grateful to him as long as she lived. The gentle mystic who wrote to her from his "lonely corner" on the Mountain had understood her perhaps better than any priest had ever done. She never forgot his words when they first met: "We have, perhaps, one and the other, the same trouble of soul, without communicating it to each other. . . ."

When he sailed for France she wrote to him: "I read again the hundred direction papers of the two years past with yet greater delight than the first reading and gather new courage and stronger faith as when they were first applied—the Grace as present as when they came fresh from the hot press of the burning heart."

Elizabeth Seton wrote no books, yet in her small writings and letters one can follow the history of the Early Church in America. One can feel the birth pangs of the New World as it throws off the shackles of a foreign government. And, most of all, one has glimpses of her saintly soul in its progress heavenward.