

Mother Seton Guild Bulletin

ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE THE CANONIZATION OF MOTHER ELIZABETH ANN SETON

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Our Congratulations to Bishop Hannan!

WE WHO are interested in the Cause of Mother Seton have much reason to rejoice in the honor conferred upon Bishop Hannan by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII. We express our heartiest congratulations upon his elevation to the Episcopate and upon his appointment as Chief Shepherd of the diocese of Scranton.

Bishop Hannan has rendered exceptional services to the Cause of Mother Seton. He has been canonical counselor to the Vice Postulator and has undertaken the arduous duties as Promoter of the Faith in two Apostolic Courts.

The post of Promoter of the Faith in the process of canonization is so important that the success of the tribunal rests upon his shoulders. Because of his official duty the Promoter of the Faith must raise every obstacle against a Cause. By his position he is known as the Devil's Advocate.

His main object is to safeguard the interests of the Church. It is his sacred duty to see that nothing enters into the process that is not absolutely in accordance with truth and to see that everything moves along the line of strict adherence to the formalities and regulations laid down by the Sacred Congregation of Rites. It is important that the foundation is solid before the superstructure of the Process rises. Under his vigilant eye the tribunal builds the case so that a falsehood or collusion becomes absolutely impossible. Under his scrutiny even a pious exaggeration is removed from the factual evidence.

To attain these objectives, saying nothing of the technicalities of law which must be respected, it is evident that a Promoter of the Faith must be a man of exceptional ability. He must be not only an expert in canon

law and have a thorough knowledge of the Process but he must be also a skilled prosecutor in order to formulate questions and to arrive at the truth necessary for the success of the case.

We shall approach the subject by a simple narration of what happened when Bishop Hannan, then Father Hannan, professor of canon law at the Catholic University of America, took over the direction of the tribunal for the investigation of the alleged cure of Sister Gertrude Korzendorfer, a Sister of Charity, New Orleans, 1944.

When in 1945 the Vice Postulator was convinced of the extraordinary cure of Sister Gertrude (1935), having in his possession all the documents, he immediately set himself up as the worst critic and made sure that he would receive every possible objection against the case.

He should anticipate any objections which can later be raised by the officials in Rome. With this in mind the Vice Postulator was guided by Dr. Valerio di Sant'Agnese, who was in the States at that time, and who was formerly the physician of the Italian Royal Family, professor of gynecology in the Roman University and medical expert of the Apostolic matrimonial courts.

Doctors in Philadelphia, St. Louis, New Orleans and Cincinnati studied the reports and submitted their opinions.

When the Vice Postulator was morally certain that any objections could be met, he petitioned Rome for an Apostolic Court to be set up in New Orleans for the canonical investigation. The request was granted.

His Eminence, Cardinal Salotti, the late Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, gave unprecedented privileges, which made another task for the Pro-
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*His Excellency
The Most Reverend Jerome Daniel Hannan, D.D.
Bishop of Scranton*

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
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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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Mistaken Idea To Be Corrected

ON SEVERAL occasions we have been surprised by the thought expressed, even by Sisters, that we must wait until Mother Seton is declared Venerable before we launch wholeheartedly into a Crusade of Prayer for miracles.

It is true that in the experience of the church, miracles generally occur after a Servant of God is declared Venerable.

Yet on these very pages we are narrating a cure of Sister Gertrude Korzendorfer, a cure that may be one of the requisite miracles, and yet this cure took place in 1935.

Miracles can happen any time and, if that be true, then NOW is the acceptable time to put forth all our efforts for these manifestations of Mother Seton's power of intercession before God.

Then why, it is asked, do miracles happen so often after the title of Venerable? The reason is that after Venerable, we put more faith in our prayers, more confidence in Mother Seton's power of intercession.

The fact is, if we were thoroughly convinced that Mother Seton is in heaven, we would put the same faith, the same confidence in our prayers to her NOW as we would after she is Beatified, after she is Canonized as a Saint by the Church.

The title of Venerable, the title of Blessed, the title of Saint will not make her one iota more powerful before the throne of God than she is today, than she was yesterday. These titles are her earthly glory; her heavenly glory is now what she was when she entered the eternal kingdom.

We just celebrated the Feast of All Saints. On the last day we shall find saints, maybe humble unknown individuals in life, who have a greater crown of glory in heaven than some of the canonized saints.

If you believe that Mother Seton is now in heaven, then NOW is the time to pray with full confidence that God may manifest her power of intercession by the performance of miracles!

"Christmas day is begun; the day of our dear Redeemer's birth here, you know, is the day that opened to us the door of everlasting life."—E. A. S., December 24, 1803.

Favors Acknowledged

Andover, Mass.
October 27, 1954

Dear Father Burgio,

I am a non-Catholic but I wish to express my gratitude for the many favors that God has blessed me with through my prayers to Mother Seton. In all my necessities I fly to her—and not without avail!

In the recent hurricane in New England, I prayed for strength. Neighboring houses were badly damaged and trees fell. I was fearless, a God-given gift of Mother Seton.

When in Jenkintown some time ago a Catholic friend introduced Mother Seton to me. My devotion to her brought about my heart's desire. My daughter, who lost her fiance in the war, later on made an ideal match with someone worthy of her.

Another answer to prayer was the cure of my husband who suffered severely from acute bursitis. He had three treatments at the hospital with no improvement. I kept praying to Mother Seton for him and, to his surprise, the morning after a night of agony, he was able to move his arm and to shave without pain. He was startled and said to me, "Edith, did you by any chance pray to Mother Seton?"

I said "Yes," to which he answered, "You will have me praying to Mother Seton yet."

In gratitude for Mother Seton's many favors, I try to interest others in her. May I express my pleasure in reading the BULLETIN which I pass on to others.

May God bless your work so that Mother Seton may some day be proclaimed a Saint for America.

With regards, I remain
Respectfully,
E. R.

Hoboken, N. J.—Enclosed is a "thank you" to Mother Seton for an increase in salary. I asked Mother Seton to intercede for me concerning this request. I promised her the first week's increase, so please accept the enclosed as my thanksgiving.—(Miss C. M. H.)

Chicago, Ill.—I promised a donation to be used for the Cause of Mother Seton and also promised to acknowledge the favors received. I am happy to say that I am recuperating nicely from a major operation. A wayward boy for whom I've been praying has more or less straightened himself out with God. We shall continue our prayers and good works for the Cause.—(Mrs. E. W.)

Tenafly, N. J.—As a small token of gratitude, I am sending the enclosed donation.

I asked Mother Seton's help in a business matter and a favorable condition followed my plea.—(Mrs. R. B.)

Children of Mary Petition Pope to Speed Cause

THE Eleventh Conference of Mother Seton's Daughters of Charity was held at Mount St. Vincent on Hudson October 6 and 7 with His Excellency, the Most Rev. John M. McNamara, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, presiding as moderator.

Since 1947 the conferences have been held by the Sisters of Charity in a concerted effort to promote the cause of beatification of Mother Seton, their foundress.

Magnificent reports were read from the various communities of their promotion in the Cause in their respective fields of endeavor.

Read, too, was the beautiful letter sent by His Eminence, Francis Cardinal Spellman, to His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, in behalf of Mother Seton's Cause. The letter was signed by most of the American Hierarchy.

At the Tenth Conference held in Emmitsburg, each community pledged to send to His Holiness a petition signed by the Children of Mary who would visit Rome on the occasion of the Marian Year. The communities narrated their presentation at the New York conference.



The above photograph shows the Superior General, Very Rev. William M. Slattery, C.M., presenting the book of names from the Emmitsburg Community to His Holiness.

Congratulations to Bishop Hannan!

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motor of the Faith.

When the rescript letters, with all due formalities, were presented to His Excellency, Most Rev. Joseph Rummel, Archbishop of New Orleans, the Process of investigation began.

The Archbishop appointed the five judges and other members of the court and graciously granted the request that Father Hannan be the Sub-Promoter of the Faith, giving the title of the Promoter to the Officialis of the Archdiocese.

The process for a miracle of investigation rests on three important props, the Vice Postulator, the Promoter of the Faith and the Doctor Expert whose duty it is to attend the sessions to safeguard the interests of medical science. The Doctor Expert was the late Dr. Major Seelig, nationally-known cancer expert, Jewish by faith and an agnostic by conviction who did not believe in miracles. All these qualities made him a most desirable defender of science. The doctor was a charming character who gave his arduous services graciously and gratuitously.

The judges, five in number, perform a great duty. They must be of the highest dignity and competence. The chief judge of the New Orleans tribunal was His Excellency, Most Rev. Charles Greco, Bishop of Alexandria. With five keen minds focused upon the testimonies submitted to the court, it is evident that every detail necessary was extracted from each witness.

All questions must be submitted to the presiding judge who alone puts the question to the witness.

The notaries perform a herculean task. All questions and answers are written in long hand and corrections are made before the session is signed and formally closed. The notaries

must then make a transcript of everything for Rome. The original documents are kept in the archdiocesan archives.

In regard to the Vice Postulator! In the excellent thesis written by Rev. Damian J. Blaher, O.F.M., (*The Ordinary Process in Causes of Beatification and Canonization*), we read: "It has been rightly said that the duties of the Postulator are indeed serious and require much diligence, care, study and labor; it can be said and not without reason, that almost the entire direction of the investigations pertain to him. Therefore, he can spare no labor, study or pains in the fulfillment of his duties." In truth, then, the Vice Postulator in this case occupies a most important position. He is, under God, the prime mover of the whole undertaking.

With the magnificent cooperation of His Excellency, Archbishop Rummel, success crowned the heroic efforts of the court in the investigation of this alleged cure. The true success ultimately rests in the declaration of a miracle by His Holiness.

Since the Vice Postulator has studied the case thoroughly, interviewed the fourteen doctors on the case and gathered all the information necessary, he was able to present to Father Hannan very intimate knowledge of the whole cure with every detail possible. The Vice Postulator mentioned the doctors as witnesses to be called, what was to be expected from each in the line of testimony, their strong points and weak ones, and all this served as additional data for the Promoter of the Faith.

Here is seen the intimate link between the Vice Postulator and the Promoter of the Faith. At the beginning of the sessions the Promoter of the Faith and the Vice Postulator must part. The latter must remain on the outside, this for obvious reasons.

Synopsis of Case of Sister Gertrude

On January 5, 1935, Sister Gertrude Korzendorfer, a Daughter of Charity of the Western Province of the United States, submitted to surgery for cancer of the pancreas at the Hotel Dieu, New Orleans, La. The malignant growth was so far advanced as to be inoperable. After surgeons had removed a particle of tissue for biopsy, the abdomen was sutured. The case was one hundred per cent fatal.

Prayers were being offered by the orphans to God through Mother Seton's intercession for her cure. The Sisters of Charity in New Orleans began a novena of prayer.

The next day she felt neither pain nor nausea, relished food, and regained her strength and weight in a short time.

For seven and a half years she labored as administrator of De Paul Sanitarium, a large hospital for the insane, housing 250 beds. She never had a recurrence of her malady and died suddenly August 20, 1942, at Villa Saint Louise, Normandy, Mo., from pulmonary embolism, a pathological condition in no way related to her former affliction.

An autopsy showed no signs of cancer and disclosed no evidence of a scar in the pancreas where the tumor had been located.

The formalities of the court are so rigorous, there are so many reasons for excommunications and invalidities, that except for expert handling on the part of the Promoter of the Faith, the members of the court could easily emerge from a session, striped like so many zebras with excommunications!

Father Hannan, having digested all the material in the documents and having reviewed the reports of the Vice Postulator, secretly formulated all the questions to be asked by the presiding judge of each witness. Other questions from the judges and Doctor Expert (which can be asked only through the Presiding Judge) developed with the testimony given.

This particular tribunal, which ran about twenty days, demanded

every ounce of physical energy and required the utmost skill on the part of Father Hannan. He worked until the wee hours of the morning in preparation for the next session which usually began at ten in the morning and lasted until four or five and sometimes until seven o'clock in the evening.

At the conclusion of the tribunal twenty-five pounds of documents were signed and sealed with all formalities and forwarded to Rome. This is simply the first step of the long march of canonical procedure before the case reaches its final judgment, which is pronounced only by the Pope.

The tribunal was set up to gather all the material possible on the case so that the following three points could be proven beyond any shadow of a doubt:

1—THE NATURE OF THE DISEASE BEFORE THE CURE:

Proven by the testimonies of the doctors who operated upon Sister Gertrude. They found the cancer on the head of the pancreas so far advanced as to be inoperable.

The actual diagnosis of cancer is proven by the particles of tissue taken on the border line of the malignant growth and the unaffected part of the pancreas.

2—THE ABSOLUTE CURE FROM THE DISEASE:

Sister Gertrude died seven and one-half years after the cure from pulmonary embolism.

A complete autopsy proved that the pancreas was entirely free from any signs of malignant growth. Slides showing the pancreas tissue prove the statements made in the autopsy report.

3—THAT THE CURE WAS EFFECTED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF MOTHER SETON:

This is proven by the testimonies of the Sisters and orphans. Not only must it be proven that Mother Seton's intercession was invoked but it must be proven that no prayers were said to other saints.

After the close of the tribunal the Promoter of the Faith assured Father Burgio that he felt confident that the court had attained the above objectives. More than that he could not say.

The above sidelights give slight indication to the depth of gratitude due Bishop Hannan. May his efforts be blessed by the success of this case being one of the accepted miracles for Mother Seton's Beatification.

Again to Bishop Hannan, our prayers, our gratitude, our felicitations—AD MULTOS ANNOS!

Holly-Glow

BY MARY LOUISE CALLAHAN

*Beneath the holly tree
a bird with broken wing
is hiding. O recall
Elizabeth one spring
the bird which tumbled from
its nest? You wept until
you found its home. O pray
for refugees, the ill,
the old, the young, the poor
and all who stand outside
the door of peace. O pray
for all this
Christmas-tide.*

*Elizabeth, your love
is warm as holly-glow
cheering timid things
playing in the snow.*

