



To Promote the Canonization of Mother Seton

NUMBER 65

EMMITSBURG, Md.

MAY, 1958

## A Gift Becomes a Remedy

By ELIZABETH DOCKMAN

AT A TIME when most young girls of her social position were preoccupied with the business of growing up gracefully, that is learning the various skills set as standards of the day for catching and pleasing a husband, Elizabeth Bayley and her sister Mary had to do some real growing up. Life had not been smooth for them. When Elizabeth was fourteen Dr. Bayley went on what was to be his last trip to Europe. There is no record of what family disagreements went on in that household, nor does Elizabeth ever mention except vaguely what a hard, wearisome life it must have been in some aspects. But Mary Bayley does. Twenty years later when she revisited New Rochelle she wrote to her sister Elizabeth:

"I can hardly describe to you the state of mind I was thrown in by recalling scenes and persons that every year of my life seems to have been somehow connected with. Beginning with the unhappy situation of our Mother . . . our taking refuge in the same place on our father's going to England—the very, very painful events that succeeded our leaving there until we married. Even that eventful step scarcely enabled us to shake off all that was disagreeably attached to our situation before."

There seemed to be a definite break in the already strained family relations when Elizabeth and Mary were forced to retreat to New Rochelle.

Any rift in a household is upsetting, but for one of Elizabeth's highly emotional nature it must have been very near to exquisite torture. There had been day-after-day and year-after-year of mounting tension in that family; and as the half brothers and sisters were born, grew and made their demands, Elizabeth and Mary found their position becoming gradually untenable.

What Mary meant when she wrote of the very, very painful events which succeeded their leaving will remain a mystery. But it is clear that the break in the family must have been a severe one. Mary solved it for herself by marrying Dr. Wright Post in June of the year her father returned. But for Elizabeth there was still to be a long and lonely time.

Surely God had marked her for His own, for while Mary remained bitter and bewailed her fate, Elizabeth grew strong in the virtue of fortitude. Dr. Bayley had been somewhat worried over what he called Betty's secretiveness, for she had begun to set down her thoughts in writing. However, there was no cause to fear that she would become an introvert. Actually it was wonderful mental therapy—a gift from God and one that she used all of her life. And we can thank God for giving it to her, for it is through the prolificacy of her letters and notes that we can get to know a little about her great loving heart. In her letters to Julia Scott, according to the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph B. Code, she reveals herself as a "faithful friend whose love reached out across the years of changes, sorrows, deaths and separations,

until she saw nothing but blue sky and the altars."

There were times when Elizabeth did not or could not write, but we do know that she took up her pen whenever she was able. On March 18, 1800, she confided to Julia that she had never been so busy in her life or she would not have let a period of six weeks pass without writing to her.

That she enjoyed this effort is clear, for she continued in the same letter to say, "My Seton has a great deal of private

writing just now, which he or I must do. And as I am doomed this winter to suffer a great deal of pain both of mind and body, no employment helps me so soon to forget both as writing. I have taken to myself as a comfort what would have been a great trouble to him."

But did she really enjoy writing with all else she had to do or did she willingly and cheerfully offer it up as a small sacrifice for one whom she loved so much? Letters and columns of figures in business ledgers can hardly be termed a spiritual exercise unless they were prompted by love. And prompted by love they most certainly were.

So no matter to which of her letters or records one turns, there can be found love—love of husband, children, father and friends, and the greatest love of all—her love of God.



Mother Seton really enjoyed writing. . . .



**Apostolic Postulation**

FOR THE CAUSE OF  
CANONIZATION  
OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

**Elizabeth Ann Seton**

Foundress of the  
SISTERS OF CHARITY  
IN AMERICA

HIS EMINENCE  
GAETANO CARDINAL CICOGNANI  
Prefect of the  
Sacred Congregation of Rites

HIS EMINENCE  
CLEMENTE CARDINAL MICARA  
Cardinal Relator of the Cause

HIS EXCELLENCY  
MOST REV. FRANCIS P. KEOUGH, D.D.  
Archbishop of Baltimore

VERY REV. LUIGI BISOGGIO, C.M.  
Postulator General (Rome)

REV. SALVATOR M. BURGIO, C.M.  
Vice Postulator

**Mother Seton's Daughters**

*Communities of the Sisters of Charity*

- St. Joseph College \_\_\_\_\_ Emmitsburg, Md.
- Marillac Seminary \_\_\_\_\_ St. Louis, Mo.
- Mt. St. Vincent-on-the-Hudson,  
New York, N. Y.
- Mt. St. Vincent \_\_\_\_\_ Halifax, N. S.
- Mt. St. Joseph \_\_\_\_\_ Cincinnati, Ohio
- St. Elizabeth's \_\_\_\_\_ Convent, N. J.
- Seton Hill \_\_\_\_\_ Greensburg, Pa.



Central Office

**Mother Seton Guild**

EMMITSBURG, MD.

*Guild Membership*

Yearly \_\_\_\_\_ \$1.00  
Perpetual \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00

Deceased May Be Enrolled

Address all communications to  
REV. SALVATOR M. BURGIO, C.M.  
Vice Postulator

**WHY MIRACLES?**

By REV. SALVATOR M. BURGIO, C.M.

FOR A CANONIZATION the Church demands miracles, the number varying in accordance with the type of the Process. The Beatification of Mother Seton would normally require four miracles, but her title of Foundress will dispense with one of these miracles.

Notwithstanding the thorough study of the life of Mother Seton which will prove her heroic virtues, the Church before raising her to the honors of the Altar asks God to prove she is in Heaven by the performance of miracles through her intercession.

These miracles, usually cures, must be indisputable. They must be phenomenal events far beyond the forces of nature or medical science. They must be so extraordinary that there can be no doubt that only God's power could cause such a recovery.

The most difficult point to prove in an alleged miraculous cure is the fact that such a favor was obtained solely through the intercession of Mother Seton. Not only must it be certain that Mother Seton's help was implored but that the assistance of other Saints was excluded.

It is preposterous to imagine that God would work a miracle under such conditions if Mother Seton were not in Heaven. Miracles give evidence of His approval for her glorification.

FAME OF SANCTITY

Miracles also prove the fame of Mother Seton's sanctity. They challenge our faith and confidence in her power of intercession. When life depends upon a

miraculous cure, when all our fortune will be lost except for some extraordinary circumstance—when we are face-to-face with such critical conditions—then and only then is our trust in Mother Seton tested. If we place our life and our fortunes completely in her hands with confidence that her answer is what God wishes, then our faith acclaims her fame of sanctity. We must accept disappointments with the same childlike simplicity as we would a favor granted. In all prayer we submit always to God's Holy Will. "God's Will Be Done" is easy to say but very difficult at times to accept.

The following favors came under my personal observation and are here presented as manifesting Mother Seton's power of intercession. Some graces were granted speedily, others were slow in coming. The emphasis lies in the fact that these graces were obtained by the very means necessary for first class miracles, namely prayer and sacrifice, confidence and perseverance.

Jeanette sat by the bedside of her son who was tortured with a serious ear infection. It was eleven in the morning. The doctor gave until one o'clock to decide whether an immediate operation should be performed.

In her distress she remembered a colored picture of Mother Seton which I had given her. She withdrew it from the bottom of a drawer and pinned it on the wall facing her son. She prayed in her own words to Mother Seton and promised among other things, in the event the favor was granted, that she



*Mother Seton wrote...*

"It is a sweet thought to dwell on, that all those I most tenderly love, love God, and if we do not meet again here, there we shall be separated no more. If I have lost them now their gain is infinite and eternal. How often I tell my William, 'When you awake in that world, you will find nothing could tempt you to return to this; you will see that your care over your wife and little ones was like a hand only to hold the cup, which God himself will give if He takes you.' Heavenly Father, pity the weak and burdened souls of thy poor creatures who have not strength to look to Thee, and lift us from the dust for His sake, our resurrection and our life, Jesus Christ our adored Redeemer."



would always keep her picture in an honored place in her home. By noon the infection cleared up and in the afternoon the boy was out playing ball. Mother Seton's picture, nicely framed, occupies a conspicuous spot!

Robert is a highly intelligent person not given to hallucinations. I say this for what follows. He suffered from high fever, severe sore throat and was in painful agony. He was depressed and in this moment of desperation he thought of Mother Seton. He spoke to her:

"Mother Seton, I have never prayed to you. I turn to you now to help me. Please relieve me of my suffering. If you do I shall be always devoted to you; I shall help your Cause. Please, please, help me."

As he kept on praying, suddenly he felt gentle hands touching him lightly and as they soothingly passed over his face, his pains completely disappeared—he was cured! He prayed in his own words, but he prayed with confidence.

On one Sunday morning I visited some relatives. What brought me there I cannot tell. It was not the first time that for the good of the Cause I found myself in a place I least expected to be.

My cousin, Jacqueline, then nineteen, had an attack of pulmonary embolism. I accompanied her to the hospital. She was resigned to God's Will if die she must. We all prayed to Mother Seton. In a short time, much to the amazement of the doctors, the clot disappeared.

Louise had a growth in her arm pit. Her doctor lanced it. Again it grew and again it was lanced. The doctor warned that if it appeared the third time he would have to operate. It did appear again, larger than before. She turned to Mother Seton, placed a prayer card over the growth and prayed in her own words with complete confidence. The growth vanished!

Mildred, in her early thirties, never had the usual monthly periods. Her condition baffled the best specialists and all doctors affirmed her case was hopeless. For years she prayed to Mother Seton. A few months ago her favor was granted and now a blessed event is expected. It was worthwhile to persevere in prayer for so great a Grace.

If it took years to obtain the last favor certainly the cure of Mrs. Dockman's lacerated finger was accomplished in a split second. This was featured in the BULLETIN published last October—no words were spoken—the contact of the hair relic of Mother Seton with the painful finger effected an instantaneous cure. Simple confidence even anticipated a prayer.

I regret space limits the telling of so many other marvelous and wondrous favors granted to those who pray to Mother Seton with confidence and perseverance.

## *Favors Acknowledged*

Jackson, Mich.—

A year ago I sent you a frantic message asking for spiritual assistance for our daughter, Judine, who seemed hopelessly ill and very near death from a rare sickness and its complications. At the time I wrote, she had been in a coma for three days and four nights and the doctors and nurses had told her father and me to prepare ourselves for the worst. Today, this message is one of Thanksgiving, for Judine recovered. Judine's sickness was termed mononucleosis infection, which I understand is commonly called glandular fever and ordinarily is not considered serious, either in its acute or chronic stages. However, according to our doctor and co-doctor, neither had seen a case climax as this one did. She had been put into the hospital for observation and tests on Christmas night, having had a flare-up of chills and fever the night before. The X-rays and tests proved nothing except the mononucleosis infection being present. The next evening she was seized with convulsions and went into the coma and then meningitis set in. Then before she regained consciousness, phlebitis had developed in her right leg. Her doctor told me that from what medical history he could find on mononucleosis and its rare reactions none had been known to recover after lapsing into a coma. I was told that the case made medical history. We will always believe that Mother Seton interceded with The Father Almighty in this case.—(Mrs. J. R. M.)

IRVINGTON, N. J.—When my daughter-in-law returned home from the hospital with their new baby, her three-year-old son refused to eat for five days. The doctor was planning to take him to the hospital for intravenous feeding. I prayed to Mother Seton for help for the family because the mother was becoming quite ill from worry. At the end of the fifth day he asked for something to eat. I am sure Mother Seton answered our prayers. (Mrs. F. S.)

NEW YORK, N. Y.—I had an abscess in my ear and the doctor said that unless it opened in the morning I would have to go to the hospital. A friend of mine lent me a relic of Mother Seton, and just before I left for the doctor's office in the morning, I applied the relic to my ear. By the time I arrived at his office the abscess had broken. I would like to have a relic of Mother Seton for my own use. (Miss M.R.)



Sister Frances Genevieve rewards the promoters who procured the highest number of subscribers to the MOTHER SETON GUILD BULLETIN—St. Mary's School, Nutley, N. J., brought in over 500 New Members!

# 1809 - SESQUICENTENNIAL - 1959

The year 1959 will be a historic one for the Cause of Mother Seton. It will mark the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Sisters of Charity in America. In 1809 she came to Emmitsburg and from the tiny seed she planted God gave the increase of numberless daughters—cornettes and black caps, who labor for the glory of God, and the Salvation of souls in all works of charity and education. Today there are over ten thousand Sisters of Charity in over eight hundred houses spread far and wide across the continent and in fields afar.

This event should be a great incentive to spur

greater efforts to raise this valiant American woman to the honor of the Altar.

The Mother Seton Guild would appreciate articles from Sisters on the importance of the sesquicentennial to the individual, to the community, to the country, etc.

Schools should increase their activities and all should put forth their best efforts to make Mother Seton better known and loved.

We shall welcome all contributions to make 1959 a gala year.



*Elizabeth Seton Kindergarten features Mother Seton in a float for the Rodeo Parade, in Tucson, Arizona.*

## Mother Seton Guild

Emmitsburg, Maryland

Form 3547 Requested

The Mother Seton Guild, as the Apostolic Postulation, is the official organization for the Cause under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, Rome.

Guild members not only share in the noble work of making Mother Seton better known and loved by means of literature, etc., but their membership subscriptions and donations make possible this promotion.

The MOTHER SETON GUILD BULLETIN is issued quarterly to Guild members.

A New Subscriber to the BULLETIN Is a New Friend of the Cause!