



To Promote the Canonization of Mother Seton

NUMBER 84

EMMITSBURG, MD.

MARCH, 1963

## MOTHER SETON BEATIFIED

### Pope John XXIII Attends Brilliant Ceremony in St. Peter's at Rome



BLESSED ELIZABETH ANN SETON

*This new portrait, by Sister Mary Andrew, S.C., of Mount St. Vincent-on-Hudson, adorns the cover of the official pamphlet life of Mother Seton distributed at the Beatification Ceremonies.*

MOTHER ELIZABETH ANN BAYLEY SETON was beatified in St. Peter's Basilica at Rome on Sunday, March 17, 1963. She is the first native-born American citizen to attain this high honor.

Several thousand Americans, including Very Rev. John P. McGowan, C.M., Vice Postulator of Mother Seton's Cause, the Mothers General of the six communities stemming from her original foundation, and hundreds of her religious daughters, were part of the huge crowd that jammed the vast church.

#### Cardinal Pontificates

His Eminence, Paul Cardinal Marella, Archpriest of St. Peter's Basilica, celebrated the Solemn Pontifical Beatification Mass. In the afternoon His Holiness Pope John XXIII was carried into the basilica to assist at Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament given by His Excellency, Most Rev. Lawrence A. Shehan, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore, the diocese where Mother Seton died, and to pray before a painting of the new "Blessed."

#### Papal Audience

Immediately following Benediction, Our Holy Father gave an audience to the American pilgrims and the next morning, Monday, March 18, he granted a special audience to the Mothers General of Mother Seton's communities. A Reception for the American pilgrims was held at the North American College that afternoon, and His Eminence, Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, was host at a dinner for Mother Seton's Sisters in the ballroom of the Hotel Grande.

#### Solemn Triduum

A Solemn Triduum in honor of Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton, consisting of Solemn Pontifical Mass and a sermon, began in the Basilica of SS. John and Paul—Cardinal Spellman's titular church—on Tuesday, March 19. The Triduum was held at 6 P.M. on Tuesday and Wednesday; and at 9:30 A.M. on Thursday, to accommodate the American pilgrims, who left for Paris at noon on that day.

His Eminence, Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Papal Secretary of State, was celebrant of the Pontifical Mass on the first day.

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*Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton,  
pray for us.*





**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

ARCADIO CARDINAL LARRAONA, C.M.F.

Prefect of the  
Sacred Congregation of Rites

HIS EMINENCE

CLEMENTE CARDINAL MICARA

Cardinal Relator of the Cause

HIS EXCELLENCY

MOST REV. LAWRENCE J. SHEHAN, D.D.

Archbishop of Baltimore

VERY REV. LUIGI BISOGGIO, C.M.

Postulator General (Rome)

VERY REV. JOHN P. MCGOWAN, 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  
MOTHER SETON GUILD  
EMMITSBURG, MARYLAND

**BEATIFICATION CEREMONIES**

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Cardinal Cicognani did much to advance the Cause of Mother Seton during the twenty-five years he served as Apostolic Delegate to the United States. The sermon was preached by Very Rev. James F. Cunningham, C.S.P., Rector of *Santa Susanna*, the American Church in Rome.

**American Cardinal**

His Eminence, Joseph Cardinal Ritter, Archbishop of St. Louis, celebrated Pontifical Mass on the second day of the Triduum. The motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity's United States Western Province is located in Cardinal Ritter's diocese. Very Rev. John P. McGowan, C.M., Vice Postulator of Mother Seton's Cause, preached the sermon.

On the third day of the Triduum, His Eminence, Arcadio Cardinal Larraona, C.M.F., Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, was celebrant of the Pontifical Mass.

**Italian Translation**

An Italian translation of the recent biography *Mrs. Seton, Foundress of the American Sisters of Charity* by Rev. Joseph I. Dirvin, C.M., was presented to Pope John at the special audience held for the Mothers General on Monday morning, March 18. Father Dirvin's pamphlet *Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton* was distributed in English, Italian, French and Spanish versions to all attending the Beatification ceremonies.

Cardinal Spellman led the official American pilgrimage, which was sponsored by the Mother Seton Guild. Travel arrangements were under the supervision of Fugazy Travel Bureau of New York.

**Pilgrimage Details**

The pilgrimage was divided into two main groups—one group leaving New York by air on March 13 and 14, and returning by air on March 27; the other group leaving New York by air on March 15 and returning by air on March 21.

The first group of pilgrims, besides their stay in Rome, visited Lisbon, Fatima, Paris, Lourdes, Chartres, Versailles, Dublin and Killarney. One of the highlights of the pilgrimage was a Mass cel-

ebrated in the Chapel of the Miraculous Medal Apparitions in Paris by Cardinal Spellman.

The second group spent the entire time in Rome.

**AN EDITORIAL**

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Father John P. McGowan, C.M., the present Vice Postulator of the Cause, who has borne the backbreaking labors, the exhausting travel, the intricate negotiations, demanded by the final steps toward beatification. Father McGowan had his reward in St. Peter's Basilica on March 17.

The contributions of the Postulators General of the Cause—the late Father Giuseppe Scognamillo, C.M., and the present Postulator, Father Luigi Bisoglio, C.M., cannot be forgotten. Throughout the past twenty-five years they advanced the Cause prudently and industriously at the Holy See through the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

And, most important of all, Mother Seton's religious daughters, who have prayed for 142 years that God would glorify their foundress. Throughout all those years many others have joined them in their prayers, notably, during the past quarter century, the members of the Mother Seton Guild.

All these people, all these works, all prayers, have gone into the wonderful thing the Church did on March 17, when it declared Mother Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton "Blessed."

She would have been appalled at such activity in her behalf. Indeed, with her humility, self-effacement and bubbling sense of humor, she would have laughed outright, that anyone should take her so seriously, should think so much of her!

Yet, with all the laborious collating of documents, all the painstaking research, all the careful study and considered judgment, this glorious day could never have been, without her simple, modest, dedicated, holy—heroically holy—life. When all is said and done, only one person brought about the glorification of Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton—herself.



*Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton,  
pray for us.*



## AN EDITORIAL

ELIZABETH SETON died on January 4, 1821. She was sorely missed. As Father Simon Gabriel Brute, her spiritual director and dear friend, wrote on May 5 of that year to Antonio Filicchi, who above all others was responsible for her being a Catholic:

"She leaves more than fifty Sisters to survive her, to regret her and to follow in her footsteps—forty of them at St. Joseph's, the others at the Mountain, in Philadelphia and New York."

It was a modest appraisal of what she had accomplished. Actually, she had started something that could not stop, she had caught hold of the eternal wheel of God. Today, 142 years later, there are 11,000 Sisters of Charity in six communities; countless schools like that first one in Emmitsburg; countless orphanages like those begun by her in Philadelphia and New York; countless hospitals like the one that was, in 1821, but a dream in her soul; countless child care centers, infant homes, refuges for unwed mothers; countless houses of charity that she had not dared to dream of—yet they are all hers. They stem logically and legitimately from the tiny, ineradicable dream in the heart of a young widow who left New York to give it, somehow, reality.

All these results of her dreaming and planning, great as they are—in souls cared for and saved, in buildings, in sheer acreage—are nothing, compared to the magnificent, unconquerable, mortified, love-driven soul that inhabited Mother Seton's frail, disease-wracked body. Her soul was a jewel. A rare diamond of a soul, flashing and flawless. A soul crammed to capacity with divine grace. A soul that, very simply, loved God and the neighbor as much as it could.

A soul that has, long ago, reaped its heavenly reward. A soul that, today—despite the cautious minds of men—has found the ineffable recognition of beatification.

After the lordly ceremonies of March 17 in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls at Rome, we may now call her Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton.

How much has gone into this day! Not alone the life lived fully, exhaustively, humbly, devoutly. Not alone the heart plunged into the Heart of Christ. Not alone, especially, the will, the stubborn, lively, gifted will, effaced in the brighter, stronger Will of God.

All this was over, done with, completed, on January 4, 1821. Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton had said in effect, at two o'clock in the morning of that day, "It is finished. I have done the work Thou gavest me to do."

So—not this alone.

But the slow, careful gleaming of proof that a saint had died on that January 4.

It began soon enough. Mother Seton was scarcely in her grave, when the saintly Brute urged her grieving Sisters: "Gather the fragments, lest they be lost."

The letters, the jottings, the journals. From her desk; from the handbags and carefully guarded letter cases of her Sisters and her Catholic friends, who killed a part of themselves in giving them up; from her Protestant relatives and intimates, who surrendered them willingly, strangely driven by a force they did not understand; from God Himself—for some of her writings were providentially preserved, and lost, and found: like the huge packet of her letters to Julia Scott, discovered by chance some fifty years after her death, and handed over casually to fill out the growing picture of her holy life.

The first biography, that "Bible of the Cause" compiled by Father Charles I. White from her writings and the testimony of living persons who had known her; and published thirty-two years after her death. The expanded *Life* written fifteen years later in the French tongue she loved by Madame Helen Bailly de Barberey. The *Memoir, Letters and Journal of Elizabeth Seton* brought out in the following year by her grandson Archbishop Robert Seton. The popular *Life* by Agnes Sadlier, printed in 1905.

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## AN EDITORIAL

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Madame de Barberey's biography, revised and edited by Father Joseph B. Code in 1927. Father Code's edition of Mother Seton's letters to Julia Scott, published in 1935. And—notice how the tempo quickens—the biographies by Katherine Burton O'Neill, Sister Mary Regis Hoare and the unfortunate Leonard Feeney; the revision of Father White's book by the Sisters of Charity of New York; the Seton novel, *Heart in Pilgrimage*, by Evelyn Eaton and Edward Roberts Moore; and the Emmitsburg trilogy that began with *As the Morning Rising*.

Then, in 1951, the great historical work of Dr. Annabelle M. Melville that smoothed the path for the scholars of the Sacred Congregation of Rites; and, in 1958, Sister Rose Maria Laverty's *Loom of Many Threads*, that traced the fascinating genealogy of the holy little woman; and, in 1962, the authoritative, human, written-in-love biography by Father Joseph I. Dirvin, C.M.—*Mrs. Seton*.

All these helped along the Cause of Mother Seton—as did the countless pamphlets, brochures, prayer leaflets, articles and histories of her religious daughters—by making her known to the world, and to America in particular. They were applications of the age-old truism: "To know her is to love her."

But there is more. None of these thousands of dedicated pages would have had the least effect toward Mother Seton's beatification, were they not used wisely by the devoted men and women who, officially or unofficially, were committed to bringing her to the definitive notice of the Church. Fathers Bartholomew Randolph, C.M., and William Hctor, C.M. That incomparable scholar, Father Charles L. Souvay, C.M., who was rewarded for his labors by being given the honor to preside as Superior General over Mother Seton's daughters. Their Eminences, Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Francis Cardinal Spellman, and the late Dennis Cardinal Dougherty—who worked indefatigably to bring the holy Mother to the altars.

Father Salvator M. Burgio, C.M., first official Vice Postulator of the Cause, who labored for twenty years, despite chronic ill health, in making Elizabeth Seton known all over America; and who had the honor of helping to introduce her Cause officially in 1940, and of buttressing it by acquainting Rome with her writings and her wonderworking. It was no accident that—just weeks after Father Burgio's death following a long, agonizing illness—Mother Seton's Cause *leaped* forward.

Auxiliary Bishop John McNamara of Washington, blessed for his lifelong enthusiasm for Mother Seton's glorification by being laid to rest beside her precious remains in 1960.

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### 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.

**PRAY FOR THE CANONIZATION OF BLESSED ELIZABETH ANN SETON**