



To Promote the Canonization of Mother Seton

NUMBER 120

EMMITSBURG, MD.

OCTOBER, 1972

The Vice Postulator Reports on Cause

In our May issue of the *Mother Seton Guild Bulletin*, we carried an account of the meetings here in Emmitsburg, February 25-27, of the 25th Conference of Mother Seton's Daughters. At one of the meetings the Sisters and I discussed the promotion of Mother Seton's Cause. It was unanimously urged by the Sisters that I make a trip to Rome in order that I might at firsthand be informed of the status of the Cause and also of any possible means that might be adopted to further it.

This suggestion on the part of the Sisters was more than well received by me. Some months passed, however, before I was able to carry out the suggestion. It was not until the second of May that I left here for Rome. Father Lucio Lapalorcia, C.M., Postulator General of the Mother Seton Cause, met me at the airport. He placed himself completely at my disposal for the duration of my stay and also accompanied me on all the visits indicated.

The most important of my interviews in Rome were with His Eminence Cardinal Bertoli, Prefect, His Excellency Archbishop Antonelli, Secretary, and Monsignor Frutaz, Subsecretary, of the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints. I had an interesting conversation with His Eminence Cardinal Cicognani, and conferences also with the key figures working for Father Lapalorcia in promoting the Cause. It did not come as a surprise that all whom I have mentioned gave us a very warm reception. What impressed the most, however, was to learn, at firsthand, the depth of interest which these men have in the Cause of Mother Seton. I was asked by all concerned to exert every effort to pursue any cases that we have before us that might bear any solid probability of a miraculous character.

Father Lapalorcia, and also some of the members of the Congregation, agreed with me that there were two cases which
(Continued on Page 3)

MOTHER SETON BICENTENNIAL

BY SIDNEY MACMASTERS

YOUR father was probably living during World War II, or World War I, or even during the Spanish-American War. Those shattering cataclysms, wars, cleave history into the dividing eras; the measuring point of new events and past.

Your grandfather or great-grandfather was surely living during the Civil War. And from the Civil War to the Revolutionary War was scarcely 90 years. A generation, explains Webster, is about 30 years. Hardly six generations ago your great-great-grandfather was living in this country or beyond the seas, when America was born.

America is so young—perhaps only three times, four times, six times older than yourself. Not yet 200 years old. Only a little while ago this nation was having the travail of its birth. Only a little while ago the immigrants were hurling the tea cartons into Boston Harbor, and Paul Revere was charging wildly at midnight to alert the revolutionary Americans.

A Babe Is Born

And it was only a little while ago (1774) that another baby was born; so timely, so appropriately, in such providential patterning of time; in New York where the Nation's travail was greatest; where Liberty ever lifts her lamp to light the way in the endless search for peace and freedom.

The little baby, Betsy Bayley, grew into a tiny woman, fragile and five feet tall, who was destined to be a guiding star in the Church Militant.

Yes, in the cities of the teeming millions everywhere, and in the smaller places—the Seton hospitals and the Seton

schools; the Seton day nurseries and the Seton CCD; the Seton social workers, and the works for the Church; helping to change the hopelessness of the former dread word leprosy into the science-conquering Hansen's malady; pitying, loving, caring for the homeless children, the lonely aged.

Chasmed Heart

And all that came from one chasmed heart.

It was only a little while ago that winsome, dark-eyed Betsy Bayley was becoming Mrs. William Seton in New York City. The tiny satin slippers, size one, that she wore that wedding day, are among the Seton treasures in a museum of quaint heirlooms at St. Joseph's Provincial House near Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Mother Seton never died. She never will. Only her body became still for a while for the quick transition from earth to heaven. Like the Mother of God, and the Little Flower, and Pope John XXIII, Pope Pius X, and many of the Saints, she has come back from the mansions of the Church Triumphant to the realm of the Church on earth, and singled out some stranger, some little nobody, to work her spiritual and physical wonders; to strengthen the failing; to assuage the pain, to revive the dying; to save the eyesight; to help with exams; to buy new homes; to find jobs for the weary.

A Part of America

For Blessed Elizabeth Seton, by some strange, sweet design of Almighty God, is an integral part of America; she belongs to America in a special way; she is representative and typical of all that is best and loveliest in America's youth, and America's women, and all who serve. She

(Continued on Page 2)



Apostolic Postulation

FOR THE CAUSE OF
CANONIZATION
OF THE BLESSED

Elizabeth Ann Seton

Foundress of the
SISTERS OF CHARITY
IN AMERICA

HIS EMINENCE
PAOLO CARDINAL BERTOLI
Prefect of the
Sacred Congregation of the Causes
of the Saints

HIS EMINENCE
LAWRENCE CARDINAL SHEHAN
Archbishop of Baltimore

V. REV. L. GIUSEPPE LAPALORCIA, C.M.
Postulator General (Rome)

REV. SYLVESTER A. TAGGART, C.M.
Vice Postulator



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 21727

Bicentennial

(Continued from Page 1)

is, more than all others, a symbol of America's compassion and vast charities for all the world.

She never died that cold January night in the White House in the Valley, while her Sisters sang her favorite hymns amid the falling tears. She lifted up gladly to welcome as a friend, the beckoning beautiful Angel of Death, opening wide for her the Gate of Heaven, where her heart-hunger for the Eternal would be satisfied, and that she might go and rest a little while.

After having rested, she came back to earth, and has spent these 151 years in loving labor, and she is seen not only in the garb of her many Sisters from Coast to Coast, but she has actually been seen alive, visibly and truly, as surely as one dares to declare.

Beautiful Experience

A Protestant wrote this letter to the Rev. Joseph Dirvin, C.M., author of the most detailed book on Mother Seton. It was published in the *Mother Seton Guild Bulletin* of April, 1968, as follows:

"On a recent visit to the public library I had the good fortune to come upon your book, *Mrs. Seton*. The reading of it was an overwhelming experience for me because it clarified and made significant an experience, an occurrence which took place at Easter time in 1965.

"Since reading the book I have learned that Mrs. Seton has been beatified and is presently under consideration for canonization.

"I am not of the Catholic faith, but it is my understanding that a record is kept of miracles or incidents reported in relation to and subsequent to the death of the blessed one under consideration for this honor.

"I, therefore, feel it my duty to report the beautiful experience which was granted to me, in the hope that it will reach your hands and perhaps prove to be a link in a chain of similar events to form a pattern.

"On March 17, 1964, my precious son Daniel passed away unexpectedly. The following Sunday was Easter, and would have been his 32nd birthday, and in recalling it, one of the blackest days of my life.

Darkest Hours

"In the darkest hours I repeated over and over the 23rd Psalm, which seemed to relieve my feeling of desolation, and constantly prayed that God would grant to me some proof of eternal life and the

assurance that my son still lived and all was well with him.

"Then, a year later, on Easter morning in 1965, in my bedroom there suddenly appeared before my astonished gaze the quaint, slender little figure of a woman standing in front of a chest of drawers and beside a picture of Michelangelo's 'Pieta.'

"The lady was clothed in a very plain floor-length dress the color of old gold, and around her waist was a belt from which hung some very heavy beads. On her head was a little ruffled cap of the same gold color as the dress, and in the hand of her upraised arm she held a gold cross.

"Although she did not speak, my impression was that, on account of her garb with the beads and the crucifix, she belonged to a holy order. The cap and her dress were like those worn in Colonial times, so I assumed she belonged to that period.

"After gazing at her for a few seconds and having somewhat recovered from my initial shock and wonderment, I had the presence of mind to thank and bless her for coming, as I instinctively knew the intention of her visit was to give me comfort.

"At the time of my experience the name of Mother Seton was impressed upon my mind and in the days following, while recollecting the incident, it came to me again and again.

"I looked up the name of Mrs. Seton in my desk encyclopedia and found she was the founder of the Sisters of Charity. I had faith that some day the reason for her appearance to me would be revealed; and I felt so touched and honored by her visit that I cleared the top of the chest of drawers where the blessed one had stood, of all my personal articles and made it into a little altar in front of which I prayed and meditated.

"Words cannot describe the happiness and delight I felt when at last I came across your beautiful book of Mother Seton, which is a monument to her virtuous and wonderful life. The reading of it was a tremendous emotional experience for me, as you so vividly portrayed her anguish at the loss of so many of her loved ones, and then the final blow of losing her darling children.

"You also relate the heart-rending episode of Mother Seton standing desolate at her darling Anna's grave and praying and crying out in anguish '... to pity a poor, poor Mother so uncertain of reunion.'

"That she should come to comfort me, another poor bereaved mother, bringing the assurance of eternal life, bridging and transcending the gap of time and

space, is a gift for which mortal words cannot express my heartfelt and everlasting gratitude.

Respectfully yours,
Mrs. A. T."

Tour of Shrines

On Corpus Christi Sunday, 1947, this writer, fond of the Emmitsburg environment, had the pleasure of showing visitors, a mother, aged 54, and her daughter, 24, around the Valley Shrines.

They were very shy, and my usual gift of gab was not working its usual charm. I could see they were refined. I wondered at their reticence, almost their fear of speaking. But we were in the Cemetery then, and I think one of Mother Seton's daughters—maybe Becky—must have given the shy lady a poke.

Then her tongue was loosened and she spoke: "We are converts. I was born in a Southern state where we hated and feared the Catholics. That was a word we scarcely dared utter.

Mystical Experience

"When I was 14 I attended a Protestant 'seminary,' that is, we went to church on Sunday and had some religion in between. One day I was coming down the marble stairway, and had just reached the main floor, when I observed a lady with a beautiful, welcoming smile coming toward me.

"She was all dressed in black, with a little, short cape, and a ruffled cap. She had almost reached me, and I awaited her, when—Dear God! she disappeared! Just disappeared like a vision that was there, and then wasn't there. Could I be dreaming? No, no, it was too real! I knew it was some strange, mystical experience, but could not understand why it came to me.

"For a long time I was pondering and wondering. I dared tell no one about it, lest they think me crazy. But after three years I confided it to my sister, and begged her never to tell.

"When I grew older I married a non-Catholic—as bigoted as the rest of us. We moved to Virginia. We had four children; the oldest is now twenty-six. Our youngest was named Henry.

"Henry was a bright little boy, and we were proud of him. But after a while, in his second grade, something odd seemed to happen. All his precocity vanished. He didn't seem able to learn anything. We were well-nigh heartbroken, and our pride was badly hurt when the Principal of the school visited us and said Henry would have to go back to the first grade.

"That was just too much for us. Bigoted though we were, my husband and I, after much debate, decided to try

the Sisters' school. Wonderful to relate, after a short time there, Henry's strange dumbness disappeared, and he began to forge ahead.

Leads to Conversion

"This so gratified me—and my husband, too—that I privately decided to become a Catholic, and Henry wanted to become a Catholic, too. At the end of the year the two of us were quietly received into the Catholic Church.

"But I forgot to tell you that during that time, though we were somewhat isolated in Virginia, I began to receive books and leaflets and pamphlets about Mother Seton, from some unknown source. I know that sounds spooky, but it is the truth, and had much to do with my decision to become a Catholic.

"But how was I to keep it secret, and yet fulfill my obligations for Sunday Mass? I knew I must tell my husband. I resolved to do so that day. His fury was terrible. He forbade me, ever in my life, to enter a Catholic church.

Source of Strength

"And a great strength came to me. I said to him calmly: 'I have loved you faithfully. You have meant much to me. Do not make me choose between you and my religion.'

"He said nothing more about religion after that, and did not interfere in any way with my newfound Faith. Then a year later, to my utter astonishment, my oldest son said to me, 'Mother, I have a nice surprise for you. I have been studying the Catholic religion, and I have secretly just become a Catholic. Now all the world may know.'

"Strange, strange to relate, this daughter here became a Catholic in another year. Then our other child, entirely of his own accord, without any persuasion on my part. But what touched me and rejoiced me most of all happened just this last year.

Can Worship Together

"My own dear husband came to me, took my hand, and said, 'Darling, you and the children have given me such wonderful example in the way you go so faithfully to Sunday Mass, no matter how bad the weather, so I, too, have become a Catholic! And now we can worship together in the same true and eternal religion!'"

No names are to be disclosed concerning this true and beautiful story of a family of six that came one by one into the Church founded by Christ.

And so she lives, that dear Mother Seton, who has a special fondness for

(Continued on Page 4)

Vice Postulator Reports

(Continued from Page 1)

seemed to deserve further investigation. It was agreed that on my return to the United States I would try to pursue these investigations.

In one of these cases I encountered an obstacle which is so formidable that I do not think it worthwhile to pursue the case any further, at least for the present time. The doctors concerned in this case did not feel that they could testify that no natural means could account for the cure involved. Such a statement before a diocesan tribunal would, of course, disqualify the case as miraculous.

The second case in question was that of Mr. Carl Kalin, formerly of Yonkers, New York, and now residing in Florida. As many of our readers will likely recall, an account of Mr. Kalin's cure was published in detail in three of our past issues of the *Bulletin*, namely, November 1964, April 1966 and June 1966.

Thanks to the help of those persons in Rome who have been working with Father Lapalorcia, I was able to learn in great detail all the history of the case. I was enabled in particular to evaluate the chief difficulty. We were all agreed that on my return home I would undertake to obtain additional depositions which, hopefully, would overcome this particular difficulty. I was to be given the assistance of one of the men from Rome who would be highly qualified to carry out this task.

Shortly after my return to the United States, this man also came to this country, and we set out to complete the task which had been assigned to me.

After several interviews with those connected with the Carl Kalin case here in the States, depositions were prepared and eventually sent to Rome.

From one point of view there might be some regret that almost nine years have passed since Mr. Kalin recovered from his illness. There is, however, a good side: nine years have indeed passed, and it can be asserted that the cure has been complete. While this factor by no means proves that the cure was miraculous, it at least removes one possible obstacle—there has been no recurrence of this disease.

At this time I do not know how long it will take for the authorities in Rome to handle the depositions presented to them. I need not tell you that there cannot be any successful issue to all of these moves without the help of God and the kind intercession of Blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton. I shall be more than grateful for your kind prayers.

Bicentennial

(Continued from Page 3)

Protestants, for she was a Protestant for 31 years, and only 16 years a Catholic. You will find her in the byways of Virginia, and on the highways in New York, that Little Bride of the Satin Slippers.

Out of the vast heart of that tiny, tubercular woman, out of the abyss of God's great love, using her as an instrument of His mercy, love, compassion and service are pouring forth at every hour of the day and night, to bring Souls to Heaven.

Such is Elizabeth Ann Seton—America's most beloved woman.

This article is reprinted from the July 9, 1972, edition of "Our Sunday Visitor" with the kind permission of the editor, Rev. Albert J. Nevins, M.M.

Sidney MacMasters is a free-lance writer who has lived for several years in Baltimore.

AMERICAN CATHOLIC
HERITAGE RECORDING
"Elizabeth Seton, Mother and
Nun" (\$2.98)
also
BLESSED ELIZABETH ANN
SETON
STATUES, MEDALS,
PRAYER CARDS
and
BOOKLETS
MAY BE PURCHASED
from the
MOTHER SETON GUILD
Write for price list.

FAVORS REQUESTED

through the intercession of

BLESSED ELIZABETH ANN SETON



"Employment"—Augusta, Ga.; Chicago, Ill.; Belleville, N. J.; Newark, N. J.; Glen Ridge, N. J.; Mahwah, N. J.; Hamtramck, Mich. "Sale of Home"—Suffolk, Va.; Arabi, La.; Cherry Hill, N. J. "Return to Church"—Tafton, Pa.; New York, N. Y. "Drug Problem"—Alameda, N. M.; Riverdale, N. Y. "Special Family Intentions"—Novato, Calif.; Newark, N. J. (2); Mattuck, N. J.; Troy, N. Y.; Staten Island, N. Y.; Cherry Hill, N. J. "Special Cures"—Teaneck, N. J.; Fort Lee, N. J.; Ringoes, N. J.; New York, N. Y.; Brooklyn, N. Y.; Hillcrest Heights, Md.; St. John, N. B.; Tafton, Pa.; Cherry Hill, N. J. "Health for Family"—New York, N. Y. (3); St. John, N. B.; Wellesley Hills, Mass.; Lecanto, Fla.; North Arlington, N. J.; Chicago, Ill.; Altoona, Pa.; New Kensington, Pa.; San Diego, Calif.; Garfield, N. J.; Chicago, Ill.; Liverpool, N. Y.; Cherry Hill, N. J.; Clearwater Beach, Fla.; Paola, Kan.; Hamtramck, Mich.; Lackawanna, N. Y. "Special Intentions"—Harrington Park, N. J.; North Arlington, N. J. (2); Wellesley Hills, Mass.; Brooklyn, N. Y.; New Orleans, La.; Long Island City, N. Y.; Scranton, Pa.; Westchester, Ill.; Manasquan, N. J.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Kansas City, Mo.; New Orleans, La.; Baton Rouge, La.; Jersey City, N. J.; Orange, N. J.; Mars, Pa.; Brown Mills, N. J.; Spencerport, N. Y.; Akron, Ohio; Hillcrest Heights, Md.; Bronx, N. Y.; Dayton, Ohio; Madison, N. J. (2); Tenaflly, N. J.; Oak Park, Ill.; Yonkers, N. Y.; New York, N. Y.; Hollis, N. Y.; Lackawanna, N. Y.; Deerfield Beach, Fla.

Mother Seton Guild

Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727

Address Correction Requested

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

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.

Non-Profit Org.

U. S. POSTAGE

PAID

Emmitsburg, Md.

Permit No. 20

PRAY FOR THE CANONIZATION OF BLESSED ELIZABETH ANN SETON