



**Celebrating 200 Years
Elizabeth Seton
Challenged to Love**

Opening Prayer –

All: O God, our foundress, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, found life in her womanly surrender to your love. Her faith in you released hidden springs of strength and freedom and initiative for the glory of your Church. In the Blessed Sacrament, on the city street, in the classroom and the homes of the poor, she knew your Son, and loved Him.

Her vision of eternity transfigures her sense of the needs of her time, and made her service joyful and farsighted. May our faith, hope, and love grow stronger as we go on serving, praising and thanking you for the heritage she has given us. Amen!

Reading: *On Elizabeth* by Imelda Cooper, SC

Leader: There is a basic element common to all persons:

We come from and are to return to God,
and throughout the “in between”,
we are always loved and accepted.

Today, the Church points out to us
that Elizabeth lived her life in harmony

with God,
listening and responding to the Lord.

All: She did this in joy and sorrow
throughout the short forty-six years
she was given:
as a child deprived of her mother
at an early age,
as a young happily married wife
and mother of five children,
as a widow mourning the loss
of a loved husband,
as a convert rejected by at least part
of her family and friends,
and finally as a vowed religious woman
devoted to the education of youth,
the care of the sick and orphaned,
and always loving the Church.

Leader: She produced a variety of fruit,
but her spirit was the Spirit of Christ
as through faith we know ours to be;
her destiny was life with God
as through hope we know ours to be;
and her challenge was the challenge of
love
as ours is the challenge of love.

All: If Elizabeth says anything at all to us
today,
she calls us to cultivate the life of God
within and among us where we are,

but also to be alert to the Spirit
which at any moment may call us
into the unknown with all its risks and
challenges,
confident that God who began a good
work in us
will bring it to a peaceful and happy
fulfillment
finally in the kingdom.

Elizabeth's Song – by Mary Ann Connolly, SC

Refrain: Free as the wind song moved by God's breath,
A woman familiar with both life and death.
Elizabeth, sister, friend, mother and wife.
Her spirit has touched me, and transformed my
life.

1. Her love of the earth and her passion for God blest the world with the energy of a lightning rod. And the wind that blows through us from her love so divine invites us to change in these changing times.
2. She knew well the great cost of following her call. She lost friends and family to say yes to it all. Her story reminds us to take that risk too with the promise that we will be transformed anew.
(Refrain)
3. Let me capture her spirit and keep setting it free so the world will know Pentecost through God's love in me. Let me live out her vision for the children of

earth and pray all those who meet her will long to give birth.

4. The seedlings of Charity nourish body and soul, and our love of the Eucharist will make our lives whole. Let us celebrate this woman who dared to follow her heart so we will know God and God's love we'll impart.
(Refrain)

5. Her story continues, her passion unfolds as we search for God's reign and the plans that God holds. Let us give joyful witness and invite all to share in her transforming spirit that we spread everywhere.

Litany of Charity –

Leader: Many persons serve others, sometimes quietly and simply. They are the people we turn to in times of trouble. The role of service to others need not be noticeable to be effective. Whatever the fashion, loving service makes the love of Jesus alive in a world desperate for that love. Elizabeth knew this and lived it and we are called to do the same.

Response: *The Charity of Christ*

L: In our loneliness

A: the charity of Christ embraces us

L: In our quest for authenticity

A: the charity of Christ creates us

L: In our desire for love
A: the charity of Christ overwhelms us

L: In our brokenness
A: the charity of Christ heals us

L: In our emptiness
A: the charity of Christ fills us

L: In our cowardice
A: the charity of Christ encourages us

L: In our weariness
A: the charity of Christ re-creates us

L: In our comfort and complacency
A: the charity of Christ challenges us

L: In our uncertainty
A: the charity of Christ reassures us

L: In our searching
A: the charity of Christ seizes us

L: In our longing for community
A: the charity of Christ gathers us

L: In our reluctant service
A: the charity of Christ prods us

L: In our hesitation to reach out
A: the charity of Christ missions us

L: In our need to minister
A: the charity of Christ guides us

L: In our desire to serve
A: the charity of Christ compels us

L: In our witness to the Gospel
A: the charity of Christ speaks in us

L: In our enthusiasm
A: the charity of Christ impels us

L: In our business and activity
A: the charity of Christ centers us

L: In our care for the poor
A: the charity of Christ drives us

L: In our hunger for justice
A: the charity of Christ nourishes us

L: In our zeal for the Kingdom
A: the charity of Christ enflames us

L: In our vision of the future
A: the charity of Christ dreams in us

L: In our love for one another
A: the charity of Christ lives on

Ritual – Anointing for the service of love.

Closing Prayer –

We thank you God for allowing Elizabeth Seton to walk among us on Earth. She was a living message of your gentle love. May her love for you inspire us in our living and loving each day.

Closing Song – *When Charity and Love Prevail* M252

