

VESPERS *Feast of Elizabeth Seton*

Leader: O God, come to my assistance.
All: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Leader: Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
All: As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.

(Antiphon 1)

Leader: To know and be known by God in the depth of our being is the center of the mystery of Faith.

(Psalm 139:1-15)

Side 1: Creator God, You examine me and know me.
You know if I am standing or sitting,
You read my thoughts from far away.
Whether I walk or lie down, You are watching,
You know every detail of my conduct.

Side 2: The word is not even on my tongue,
O God, before You know all about it;
Close behind and close in front you fence me round,
shielding me with Your hand.

Side 1: Such knowledge is beyond my understanding,
a height to which my mind cannot attain.
Where could I go to escape Your Spirit?
Where could I flee from Your presence?

Side 1: If I climb the heavens, You are there,
there, too, if I lie in Sheol.
If I flew to the point of sunrise,
or westward across the sea,
Your hand would still be guiding me,
Your right hand holding me.

Side 2: If I asked darkness to cover me,
and light to become night around me,
That darkness would not be dark to You,
night would be light as day.

Side 1: It was You who created my inmost self,
and put me together in my mother's womb;
For all these mysteries I thank You;
for the wonder of myself, for the wonder of Your works.

Leader: **Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**
All: **As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.**

(Antiphon 1)

All: **To know and be known by God in the depth of our being is the center of the mystery of Faith.**

(Antiphon 2)

Leader: **Elizabeth Ann Seton found the wellspring of her life in knowing the nearness of her Creator.**

(Psalm 63: 1-8)

Side 1: **God, You are my God, I am seeking You,
my soul is thirsting for You,
a land parched, weary and waterless;
I long to gaze on You in the Sanctuary,
and to see Your power and glory.**

Side 2: **Your love is better than life itself,
my lips will recite Your praise;
all my life I will bless You,
in Your name lift up my hands.**

Side 1: **My soul will feast most richly,
on my lips a song of joy, and in my mouth, praise.
On my bed I think of You,
I meditate on You all night long,
for You have helped me.**

Side 1: **I sing for joy in the shadow of Your wings;
my soul clings close to You,
Your right hand supports me.**

Leader: **Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**
All: **As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.**

(Antiphon 2)

All: **Elizabeth Ann Seton found the wellspring of her life in knowing the nearness of her Creator.**

(Antiphon 3)

Leader: **Courage, serenity, and trust flow from her love into the lives of her daughters.**

(Psalm 23)

Side 1: **God is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
In meadows of green grass You let me lie.
To the waters of repose You lead me;
and there revive my soul.**

Side 2: **You guide me by paths of virtue
for the sake of Your name.
Though I pass through a gloomy valley, I fear no harm;
beside me Your rod and Your staff are there, to hearten me.**

Side 1: **You prepare a table before me under the eyes of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil, my cup brims over.
Ah, how goodness and kindness pursue me
every day of my life.**

Side 2: **And I will dwell in the house of my God forever.**

Leader: **Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

All: **As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.**

(Antiphon 3)

All: **Courage, serenity, and trust flow from her love into the lives of her
daughters.**

(Antiphon 4)

Leader: **Her journey is our journey into the heart of the Church.**

(Psalm 84)

Side 1: **How I love Your dwelling place, Creator of the Universe!
My soul yearns and pines for Your courts!
My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.**

Side 2: **The sparrow has found its home at last,
the swallow a nest for her young,
Your altars, O God, my God.**

Side 1: **Happy those who live in Your house
and can praise You all day long.
And happy the pilgrims inspired by You
with courage to make the ascent!**

Side 2: **As they go through the Valley of the Weeper,
They make it a place of springs,
clothed in blessings by early rains.**

Side 1: **Thence they make their way from height to height,
soon to be seen before God on Zion.**

Leader: **Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

All: **As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.**

(Antiphon 4)

All: **Her journey is our journey into the heart of the Church.**

(Antiphon 5)

Leader: **God, who has begun a noble work in her, will see it to completion in
us – let us praise our God!**

(Psalm 150)

Side 1: **Alleluia!
Praise God dwelling with us in this temple on earth
and in the temple of heaven.
Praise God for such mighty achievements and transcendent greatness!**

Side 2: **Praise God with blast of the trumpet, with lyre and harp,
with drums and dancing, with strings and reeds,
with clashing cymbals and with clanging cymbals!**

Side 1: **Let everything that breathes praise God!
Alleluia!**

Leader: **Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

All: **As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.**

(Antiphon 5)

All: **God, who has begun a noble work in her, will see it to completion in
us – let us praise our God!**

(Isaiah 44: 3-4)

Reader 1: **I will pour out water on thirsty soil, streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my spirit on your descendents, my blessings on your
children. They shall grow like grass where there is plenty of water,
like poplar trees by running streams.**

(Hymn)

Reader 2: **Gracious God, our foundress, Elizabeth Ann Seton, found life in her surrender to Your love.
Her faith in You released hidden springs of strength, freedom and initiative for the glory of Your Church.
In the Blessed Sacrament, in the city street, in the classroom and the homes of the poor, she knew Your Son, and loved Him.
Her vision of eternity transfigured her sense of the needs of her time, and made her service joyful and farsighted.
With her faith may we go on serving, praising and thanking You for the heritage she has given us.**

All: **Amen.**

Leader: **Grace is poured out upon your lips.**

All: **Thus God has blessed you forever.**

(Antiphon)

Leader: **Happy is she who has believed that God's words to her will be fulfilled.**

All: **My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit rejoices in God, my savior,
Who has looked upon the lowliness of His handmaid,
for behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed
because the One who is mighty has done great things for me.
Holy is God's name.
God's mercy is from generation to generation
toward those who fear Him.
God has shown might with His arm,
Scattering the proud in the conceit of their heart.
The mighty have been put down from their thrones
and the lowly have been exalted.
The hungry have been filled with good things
And the rich sent empty away.
God has given help to His servant Israel,
Mindful of the mercy promised to our ancestors,
toward Abraham and Sarah and their descendents
forever.**

Leader: **Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

All: **As in the beginning, so now, and will be forever. Amen.**

(Antiphon)

All: **Happy is she who has believed that God's words to her will be fulfilled.**

(Intercessions)

Leader: **Knowing that Elizabeth found her strength and consolation in her "Dear God", we entrust our own needs and longings as we present our petitions.**

Spontaneous prayers, each concluding with

"We pray to the Lord".

All respond: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Renewal of Commitment)

Leader: **We stand together today, as a Community of Charity, sisters of Elizabeth, daughters of the Church, to remember, to reinvigorate, to refresh and renew our commitment:**

All: **True to the spirit of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton,
Margaret Cecilia George,
and all who share our heritage,**

Sisters: **We, Sisters of Charity,**

Associates: **And we, Associates,**

All: **are called to be faith-filled women of the Church,
To reliance on the Spirit,
and to life through love and friendship.**

Sisters: **We vow our lives,**

Associates: **We commit our lives**

All: **to our God, with Whom we walk
in humility, simplicity and charity.
As pilgrims we pray for the wisdom
to know the needs of our sisters and brothers
and we dare to risk a caring response.**

**In the name of the Most Holy Trinity,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I ...**

Each, in turn, speak aloud your own name. ("Sister __" or "Associate __")

All: **freely recommit myself today
to the service of God and God's people
as a member of this Community of Charity.**

Sisters: **To witness to the kingdom of God,
I freely promise to live in community
and vow to God poverty, consecrated celibacy and obedience,
according to the Constitutions of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati.**

Associates: **To participate in the spirit, vision and work
of the Sisters of Charity,
and to use our talents and abilities in collaboration;**

All: **living the gospel values and serving God's people.
May we always walk in mutual support and love.
We ask the continuing grace of God
that we may keep faith with the commitment we freely renew today.
May what we have said together be what we do together.**

Leader: **Our Father,**
All: **Who art in heaven ... etc.**

Reader 3: **Let us pray:
Loving God,
You blessed Elizabeth Seton with gifts of grace
As wife and mother, educator and foundress,
So that she might spend her life in service to Your people.
Through her example and prayers
May we learn to express our love for You
In love for all our brothers and sister.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

Leader: **May God bless us, protect us from all evil,
And bring us to everlasting life.**

All: **Amen.**