Call to Worship
200th Anniversary
October 25, 2009

Good afternoon and welcome to this holy and festive gathering. In the name of all the Sisters of Charity, I want to thank you for joining us for this liturgy as we celebrate Elizabeth Seton's founding of the Sisters of Charity in 1809 in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

We chose this day to close our year of celebration because it is the Sunday closest to October 28, the date in 1829 when the Sisters arrived in Cincinnati from Emmitsburg at the request of Bishop Fenwick.

For the past 180 years our community has been part of the fabric of the life of the Church, this city, our country and beyond. It is truly an occasion to celebrate.

Today we thank God for the life and ministries of our congregation and for the Sisters of the other communities who are part of Elizabeth Seton's legacy. In keeping with our motto, the charity of Christ has urged us on and has been our motivating force as we ministered and remained faithful to God's call.

We are happy that several Daughters of Charity from Emmitsburg and several Sisters of Charity from Seton Hill in Greensburg, Pennsylvania could be with us for this liturgy. The Cincinnati Charities have very close connections with these two congregations since we came from Emmitsburg and helped found Seton Hill.

Just as Elizabeth Seton heard the word of God and responded to a call, we hear in today's Gospel the story of Bartimaeus, who begged to be freed of his blindness. The people in the crowds tell Bartimaeus to take courage because Jesus is calling him. Then we hear the question of Jesus, "What do you

want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus asks for sight and because of his faith, his sight is restored and he follows Jesus.

Like Bartimaeus, may our eyes be opened so that we can see the path to follow Jesus. And like Elizabeth, we may be open to the grace to respond to God's call just as she did 200 years ago.

Let us praise God in this Eucharistic liturgy for the call we have received. We pray for the courage to keep answering that call into the future.

Barbara Hagedorn, SC