



On this past Saturday, 51 women and men from diverse backgrounds were honored for the way in which they emulate the spirit of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in their day-to-day ministries. This took place in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the place where Elizabeth founded the congregation in 1809. The ceremony, incorporated in a paraliturgical service, was held in the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth. The Bishop of the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pa., Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, D.D., presided.

Among those honored were three of our own: Mary Jo Mersmann, director of the Associate Program; S. Judith Metz SC, archivist for the Congregation as well as author and Seton scholar; and Timothy Moller, Chief Financial Officer for the Congregation. The three were nominated by the Leadership Council last fall as deserving of this award. After review by a Bicentennial Committee the Council was informed of those chosen as deserving recipients. Each congregation belonging to the Sister of Charity Federation was invited to nominate worthy candidates.

The Medal Award honorees represent a diverse and world-wide group of people who have contributed in a significant way to social services, education, health care, promoting the awareness of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, or spiritual formation in the spirit of the Seton Legacy of Charity. The various categories represented by the awardees includes: Sisters of Charity, Daughters of Charity and other women religious, clergy, lay men and women, and several groups.

The Saturday ceremony was an opportunity to publicly give recognition to Medalists. A testament of each recipients' accomplishments was read as the honoree came forward to receive the inscribed medal. Recognizing women and men who portray characteristics of Elizabeth is a very direct way of acknowledging the strong influence of our Foundress. In their own personal lives and in their many-faceted positions, they are actualizing the values and virtues Elizabeth taught on the very grounds where we were gathered.

The Medal Award Ceremony is one of the many scheduled events throughout 2009 to celebrate the bicentennial of the arrival of Mother Seton to Emmitsburg. It was the first Federation-wide bicentennial event for the Sisters of Charity to participate in away from Mount St. Joseph. Sisters Barbara and Georgia attended as well as spouses of the recipients, Kathy Moller and Barry Mersmann. We congratulate and thank Judy, Mary Jo and Tim for their ongoing example of dedicated service in the spirit of Elizabeth.