

# Foundation of Community

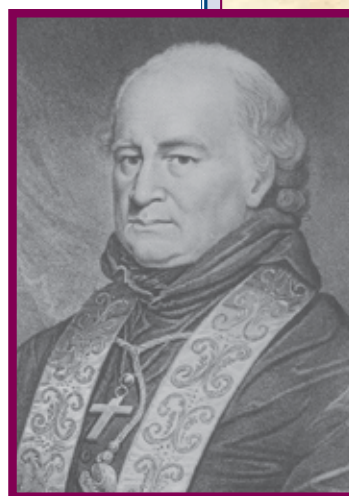
*The Fleming Farmhouse, later known as the "Stone House," was the first residence of the Sisters in St. Joseph's valley in Emmitsburg. In 1810, they moved into a newly constructed home known as the "White House." Painting by Edward Augustus Seton, c. 1810. (Courtesy, Archives, Daughters of Charity, Emmitsburg, MD.)*

While Elizabeth Seton was running her school in Baltimore in 1808-09, she was joined by several young women eager to assist in the school and desirous of living a religious life. With the assistance of Archbishop John Carroll and Rev. William Dubourg, S.S., Elizabeth made plans to establish a religious community. When these women moved into a renovated farmhouse July 31, 1809, on donated property near the small town of Emmitsburg, Maryland, the American Sisters of Charity had their beginnings. By the following spring the growing community moved to a larger house and opened both day and boarding schools.

Within a few years Elizabeth received requests to send Sisters to other cities. In 1814 three Sisters went to Philadelphia to operate an orphanage, and three years later, with membership at 22, the Sisters opened an orphanage in New York City. By the 1820s the Sisters' work spread to cities around the country.



*The Sisters became an integral part of the expanding Church's ministry through their work in schools and orphanages, as shown in this painting by Pietro Gagliardi, c. 1870. (Courtesy of Sisters of Charity of New York.)*



*Archbishop John Carroll was the first bishop of the United States as well as a supporter and admirer of Elizabeth Seton.*



*Margaret George (1787-1868)*

Margaret Farrell George was one of the founding members of Elizabeth Seton's Sisters of Charity. Born in Ireland in 1787, Margaret immigrated to the United States with her family in the early 1790s.

Married in 1808 to Lucas George in Baltimore, she lost both her husband and newborn daughter within 13 months. In February 1812, Margaret

joined the Sisters of Charity

in Emmitsburg where she was a member of the first group to make religious vows. She spent her early years in the Community at Emmitsburg, but later served in New York; Frederick, Maryland; Richmond, Virginia; and Boston before arriving in Cincinnati in 1845.

*Margaret George established this school for girls in Frederick, Maryland.*



*Students arrived at the Congregation's first boarding school, St. Joseph's, in Spring 1810.*

*An 1819 letter from Elizabeth Seton to Margaret George.*

*The Sisters traveled over land, by sea, and by river to their missions around the country.*



*My May! — My Place  
Blessed do all she can to get  
Thy Holy Soul —  
To let civil have all the time she  
can with her parents as she passes  
— take care of Margaret  
exactly as you would of J.B.  
mind that my last junction  
remember all the little things  
I told you in this corner about  
kindness to strangers in the  
true spirit —  
watch carefully to make  
Felicite happy —  
and the health of Scholastica  
who cannot bear to not be on  
could you know —  
I am not uneasy about her  
happiness or yours — you have  
so much to do for our Lord.  
May he bless you as my heart  
and soul wishes you —*