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.

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.