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## Biography of Elizabeth Ann Seton

On August 28, 1774, a baby girl was born. Her name was Elizabeth Bayley. Her parents were Doctor and Mrs. Bayley of New York City.

When Elizabeth was still a little child her dear mother died. Then Doctor Bayley became Elizabeth's best friend. She loved her father very much.

She and her father took many walks together. Doctor Bayley saw that his Elizabeth liked to learn. So he became her teacher. He was very happy when he saw Elizabeth growing into a beautiful young lady.

Elizabeth was kind to all, and everyone loved her. She spent much of her time helping the poor and the sick.

How happy young William Seton was when the lovely Elizabeth Bayley said she would be his wife. God blessed them with five children. There were Annina, William Richard, Catherine and Rebecca. For many years young Mr. and Mrs. Seton were very happy with their family. Then God sent Elizabeth two great sorrows.

After many busy days of helping the sick and the poor, Doctor Bayley became ill and died. Soon after that Elizabeth's tired husband became sick. The doctor said that

he should travel on the sea. Mr. and Mrs. Seton, with their eight-year old daughter, Annina, left America to visit friends in Italy. They hoped the trip would make Mr. Seton better.

When they got near Italy they could not land. The people thought that Mr. Seton was sick with yellow fever.

The Seton family had to stay in a strange building for a month. It looked just like a prison. The building was so damp and cold that Mr. Seton did not get better. Elizabeth helped him to see this sickness as God's will.

At last their friends, the kind Filicchi brothers, were able to get the Setons out of that sad place.

Mr. Seton was now so sick that in a few weeks he died. How sad Elizabeth and her little Annina were. Elizabeth wanted to go back to America to her little ones who now had no father. It was going to be a very lonesome trip home.

During her short stay in Italy Elizabeth had read about the Catholic religion. She was not a Catholic. The good Catholic Filicchi family showed her just what good Catholics should do.

When Elizabeth came back to America she and her children became Catholics.

In those days many people in New York did not like Catholics.

Elizabeth had a very hard time. Even her friends and many of her relatives would not speak to her because she had become a Catholic. However, she had found new and great joy in the Catholic Faith.

Now Elizabeth had to earn money to feed and clothe her five children. She went to work as a teacher.

One day a priest asked her if she would open a school for him in Maryland. Elizabeth was very glad to do so.

Soon after that she and the young teachers in the school wanted to serve God as Sisters. They became known as Sisters of Charity. Elizabeth was called Mother Seton. She was the first Mother of the Sisters of Charity.

Saintly Mother Seton died on January 4, 1821.

As years went by other young women became Sisters of Charity. Many schools and homes were opened for all children. The Sisters of Charity also began to take care of the sick in hospitals.

Today when we see a Sister of Charity we thank God for the work started by Mother Elizabeth Seton.

**Mother Elizabeth Seton was canonized in Rome on  
September 14, 1975. She became the first American native-  
born canonized Saint.**

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