

## Interview of Mother Seton

I: Good morning boys and girls. I am \_\_\_\_\_ from the Saint Martha News.

Today we have with us Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, mother, sister of Charity and Saint.

Good morning and happy feast day, Elizabeth.

E: Thank you and good morning to you.

I: When were you canonized, Elizabeth?

E: I was Canonized which means to be declared a saint by the church, September 1975.

I: You were born in New York in 1774 and when you were 18 you married William Seton and were soon blessed with a big family. Tell us about your children.

E: I had 5 wonderful children. Two boys and three girls. Their names are: Annina, William, Richard, Catherine, and Rebecca. When my husband became ill and had to travel to a warmer climate, it was my oldest girl, Annina, who went with us to Italy.

I: Did William's health improve in Italy?

E: No, it worsened, and after a few weeks he died. It would have been one of the saddest times of my life if I had not met the Filicchi's.

I: Who were the Filicchi's and how did they help you?

E: They were friends of my husband's family who invited me to stay with them. While I stayed in their home I learned about the Catholic Faith. I went to church with them and began to think about becoming a catholic.

I: Did you become a catholic while you were in Italy?

E: No, I waited until I got to New York. I thought about it and prayed about it for awhile, then I decided to be baptized in St. Teter's church. Catholics were not well thought of at that time and my friends and relatives turned against me because they didn't want me to become one. I couldn't support my five children in New York so I moved to Baltimore.

I: What did you do in Baltimore?

E: I started a school, but the thing I liked best about Baltimore was that I was free to practice my new religion. I loved the catholic faith and most of all I loved the Blesses Sacrament. It is so wonderful to know the Jesus is really present at mass and communion.

I: From Baltimore you move to Emmitburg didn't you?

E: Yes, I began to meet other women who shared my faith and ideals. Our school grew and grew. We were given money to buy a farm in a beautiful valley in Emmitsburg Maryland. The Archbishop asked us to start a religious community. It was there that the Sisters of Charity first started.

I: Was it difficult to get started in Emmitsburg?

E: Yes, especially the first winter. We were in a building called the stone house. It was cold in the winter. The roof was poorly made and one night during a windy snow storm it snowed right in. When the sisters woke up in the morning some of them had snow on their blankets.

I: It must have been a very difficult time.

E: It was in some ways. We had little to live on, and there was a great deal of work to do. Some of the sisters got ill, and once in a while someone would die. But at the same time it was very wonderful. We were giving our lives to the lord and trying to do his work. We especially enjoyed teaching the children in our growing school. Some children were boarders, which meant they lived with us, and some of the children were day pupils. In this way we were able to give poor children a free education.

I: You are credited with starting parish schools.

E: Well, my school was the first. But St. John Neumann should get credit for doing a lot of work to really organize the schools.

I: You died in 1821 and were canonized just thirteen years ago. It is wonderful to have you as an American saint. Is there anything you would like to say to the children in Saint Martha School?

E: What I would like to say is that each child here should grow up to be a saint. Love God with your whole heart and be kind to everyone around you. God bless you.