

Veronica Palm's Essay on Saint Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton

5th grade

Many good men, women, and even children have devoted their whole lives to serving their church and country. They do their duties as Catholics whether they are priests, or nuns, husbands or wives young or old. The United States of America was very blessed to be home to Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton. She lived a quiet, humble, and simple life. She was unimportant in the eyes of the world, and yet her faith and hard work have had lasting impact on her church and country. She went through some very challenging things in her life, but always remained faithful to God, her children, and her fellow sisters. She was a wise mother superior and is the patron saint of all converts.

She was born in New York City in the year of 1774. In her early life Elizabeth remembered a war going on around her family and herself. She was raised Episcopalian. When she was young her mother and baby sister died. She and her older sister Mary did not feel close to her stepmother. She loved to go to dances when she was in her teen years. At one of these dances she met William Magill Seton. They spent more and more time together and called each other Will and Elisa. One day William asked Mr. Bayley if he could marry Elizabeth. Mr. Bayley accepted and so did Elizabeth. Soon after, Elizabeth and Will were blessed with a daughter and named her Anna. Then came William Jr. and Catherine. Soon after that William's parents died. William had to take in his younger siblings. When young Richard was born, he almost died because he could not breath. Mr. Bayley, a trained doctor, saved his life minutes after he was born.

Will got sick and Elizabeth brought him to another country where it was warmer, and she was told he would get better. Since he was sick, they were quarantined in a damp, dark cell and Will's

sickness got worse, and he died Elizabeth had no way to pay for food and clothing for her children, so she started a school. Elizabeth stayed with some Catholic friends and was amazed by the faith of the Filicchis family, especially the little children's piety and she was driven to God in the Eucharist. She went to a Latin Mass one day with a friend and said it sounded like Heaven itself. Her Catholic friend, Amalia, explained the Mass to Elizabeth and she wept for joy because she had found a religion that said that God's love was so great that he sent his only son to die a most horrible death so that humans in all of there sin can spend eternity with him in heaven.

She was baptized along with her children and some of her sisters-in-law and after she was baptized nobody came to her school because she was Catholic. People threw rocks at the school building, and she was sometimes attacked. Her own family shut her out and would not ever look at her. She moved to Emmitsburg, Maryland and was planning to join an order, but a kind priest said that he wished a new religious order would be started. She was devoted to education, and started a school, but most of the people were too poor to pay and so only seven girls joined. Some families could not send their daughters to school because they were needed at home.

Elizabeth gave girls a way to learn when learning was scarce and only for boys. She also started the first religious order in North America. But she had no money and no home. A Catholic priest let them stay at his home. As the order grew, they could not fit in the small house. They built a school building that would also work as a home, but fleas got through the chipped walls and bit the sisters until they were purple. Many of the sisters died from diseases, even Anna, Mother Seton's oldest daughter. She persevered through these hardships and fulfilled her vocation.

Mother Seton changed her church and country because she started the first religious group in North America. She brought learning to girls, she is one of the best models of patience, and she showed that even the people who seem smallest in the world can make the biggest changes. She offered all her joys and sufferings to God. Some of her students would write to Elizabeth, even after they graduated from

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her school to ask about important things like dating, marriage, cooking, discipline and many other things that young women would ask. She not only was influential in the lives of her students, but made her mark on the church by starting a new order of teaching nuns, and on her country by creating educational opportunities for many young Americans.

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