



**From the Pastor  
The Epiphany of the Lord  
January 7, 2018**

The Feast of **Saint Elizabeth Ann Bailey Seton** has passed [she is honored on her death date: **January 4, 1821**], but today we reflect on her orations. First a little history; born on August

28, 1774 into a wealthy, New York City Episcopalian family, she married William Seton, a successful shipping magnate who cohosted a gala for George Washington, so she probably danced with our first President; after William contracted tuberculosis, they sailed to Italy, staying with Catholic business friends, where she became enthralled with Catholicism.

After William died [she is depicted in a **widow's black dress and cap**], she converted, was rejected by her family and went from riches to rags; a widow at 29 with five children, she began a free Catholic School for girls [she is portrayed with **schoolchildren**] and founded the **Sisters of Charity** to staff it. Both her sons joined the U.S. Navy [as Patroness of the Sea Services, she is seen with **sailboats**] and one son was lost at sea; two of her daughters died from tuberculosis before she herself died at just 46 years of age. Here are her orations.

**Collect - Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious**

*O God, who crowned with the gift of true faith Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's burning zeal to find you, grant by her intercession and example that we may always seek you with diligent love and find you in daily service with sincere faith. Through our Lord Jesus Christ ... and ever. Amen.*

**FINDING GOD IN THE DARKNESS.** Having lost her own mother when she was just 3 years old, she found great comfort in Catholicism's great respect for our Blessed Mother, whom she made her own mother. Having experienced Protestantism's 'morph' into sect after sect, she found stability and security in our hierarchical structure and the apostolic succession of our Pope and Bishops. And having been left empty by the watered-down, symbolic meaning of what Protestants call 'the Lord's Supper,' she was filled to overflowing by our insistence on the Lord's Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar. With such diligent love and openness, we, too, can find God in every form of darkness.

**Prayer over the Offerings - Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton**

*Lord, we ask that you look graciously upon our gifts placed on your altar in celebration of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, and grant by the power at work in this sacrifice, that we may be more deeply inserted into the mystery of your Son. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**TO BE INSERTED INTO CHRIST.** Saint Paul said: *"This saying is trustworthy: If we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him."* [2 Timothy 2:11-12a] Mother Seton exemplified these words in the many ways she rose above adversity, difficulty, tragedy and failure. Like many Saints, her road to heaven was often rocky and winding, wind-swept and fog-encrusted, dangerous and uncharted. Yet she united her woes to Christ's sufferings and found new life, even in times of sickness and death. May we also unite all our woes and 'deaths' to the sacrificial gifts we place on the altar.

**Prayer after Communion - Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton**

*As we partake of the sacrament of our salvation, while recalling the memory of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, we humbly ask you, O Lord, that we may be inflamed with a burning desire for the heavenly table, and by its power consecrate our life faithfully to you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**STRENGTH FROM THE EUCHARIST.** One pitfall of **rituals** is that they can so easily become **rote** if we are not aware of and attentive to the deeper meaning of our sacred rites and their biblical basis, they can easily become meaningless, purposeless or even superstitious actions. That is why we need to constantly remind ourselves that each holy Mass is a foretaste of what awaits us in heaven, that each Mass gives us a **taste** of what we will [hopefully!] fully enjoy in heaven, and that every 'sacred mystery' is a gold mine of spiritual treasure we must mine and refine. In 2018, what will you do to better understand and celebrate the 'sacred mysteries' of our Catholic faith? **Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton**, pray for us!

**With God's love and my prayers,**

*Father Mike*

**Very Rev. Michael J. Kreder, KHS**