

## LETTER WRITING IN THE 1800's

Elizabeth Ann Seton was a very prolific writer. She kept a journal, and frequently wrote letters to her family and friends. It is good that we have copies of many of these letters because they tell us about her life and the times in which she lived. Look for the copies of her letters in this packet. It may be a challenge to read them because some of the words may appear to be misspelled. Look for differences in how we write today.

Why did people write so much and so often? Think about it: with no computers, no instant messaging, no email, no television or even telephones, writing was the only way to keep in touch and communicate with others, especially when people were separated by distance. With no radio or television to occupy them in the evenings, keeping a journal was also a way to pass the time.

**When you visit the shrine, look for the copy of Mother Seton's *Last Will and Testament*, which is in the White House.** You will see it in her own handwriting with an easier-to-read translation beside it. Some of the following activities are based upon Elizabeth Ann Seton's letters, which are carefully preserved and used here courtesy of the **Archives Daughters of Charity, Emmitsburg Province.**

2 Friday-Saturday & Sunday are past my dear one with many a prayer - many a sigh - rocking & rolling without getting on - Ann is suffering every way - very low spirited - refusing to go on deck - the ladies on board Mrs Smith and her daughter so good to us - coaxing us with almonds & raisins, (you remember poor Sister's human Affections) - Kissior & Rebecca are not half so sick as Ann - said our Vespers during a squall - very fervently you may be sure - This morn. we are again in sight of land and near Cape Henry - ~~also~~ you imagine a mattress forming a seat on all sides good Mrs Smith and her daughter one end poor Ann who we have forced upon deck & the two Darlings all singing "Where & O Where" is my Highland laddie gone" - sometimes begging to go back to Cicil, sometimes stretching their sight towards land where they look for Willy & Dicksey - Mothers heart in firm & steadfast Confidence looking straight Upwards - Oh how many many times has it prepared for death since we came on board - how Ardently does it commit its three darlings Sisters to Him its only hope -

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