

## Section 5: Saints and Shrines

Elizabeth Ann Seton is important in history because she was the *first American-born saint*. A saint is someone who has been recognized as having lived a very holy life (see the definition on the vocabulary page). In the Roman Catholic religion, a person is recognized as venerable, blessed (beatified), and saint (canonized).

One of the requirements for sainthood is that several **miracles** are recognized as occurring through the intercession of a holy person. The miracles that were officially attributed to Elizabeth Ann Seton by the church were:

- (1) Gertrude Korzendorfer, a Sister of Charity, whose cancer of the pancreas disappeared in 1935;
- (2) Ann Theresa O'Neill, a young child, who recovered from acute, lymphatic leukemia; and
- (3) Carl Kalin, who recovered from a rare form of encephalitis after being close to death.

In 1974, Pope Pius VI waived the traditional requirement for a fourth miracle, and on September 14, 1975, Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton was officially declared a saint.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Each of us is called to be a saint. Do you know what a saint is? List the qualities you think a saint should have.
2. Make an "I am a saint" poster. On the poster list or draw the qualities you share with Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.
3. Make a saint booklet or collage: "A saint is someone who \_\_\_\_."  
Collage: print the sentence on paper and illustrate, cut out pictures from magazines, or bring in family pictures that illustrate the way a saint acts. Example: picture of sharing, praying.  
Booklet: Write a sentence describing a quality of a saint and illustrating it. When everyone is finished, put the papers altogether into a booklet.
4. A saint is someone who listens to God and does what God wants even when it is difficult. What qualities do you think made Elizabeth a saint? What difficulties did she go through in her life? Could you be a saint?

See the definition of a **shrine** on the vocabulary page. Occasionally the word is used to describe a memorial. People sometimes make a shrine in their homes or other places to honor their loved ones.

In 1991, the church in Emmitsburg in which St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is entombed was given the title of "**minor basilica**." The term basilica is a special designation given by the pope to certain churches because of their antiquity, dignity, historical importance, or significance as a center of worship and devotion. The honor given to the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is a recognition of the importance of her contribution to the development of the Catholic Church in the United States. Today there are more than fifty minor basilicas in the United States. There are only four major basilicas in the world, all located in Rome, Italy.

## ACTIVITIES

1. In the White House, there is a chapel that Mother Seton and her community used to pray and celebrate Mass. Look up the definitions of a *chapel* and a *basilica*. What are some differences between the White House chapel and the Seton Shrine's Basilica? What are some things that could be found in both?
2. Name up to three shrines that you have visited and compare them to the Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.
3. In 1991, Pope John Paul II declares that the church is a minor basilica. What do you know about Pope John Paul II? List at least three facts about him.
4. One of the stained glass windows in the Seton Shrine's Basilica shows the Daughters of Charity performing works of mercy. Research what these works of mercy are. How many are there? Talk about what types of good deeds you might do.