

Why Go on a Pilgrimage?

Walk the Path of Our Ancestors

The origin of pilgrimages in Catholic life can be traced as far back as the holy feasts of the Hebrew people. It was of course during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem that our Lord was famously misplaced by the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. The long history of pilgrimages, and the fact that there are pilgrimage traditions even in non-Christian faiths, tells us that the impulse to journey to holy places is innate to the human spirit.

Quite natural it was for the early Christians to visit the sites of Christ's redemptive acts, as well as the places where his first followers shed their blood to make those acts known to the world. At first such journeys were fraught with danger and were thus secret endeavors, but after Constantine made the practice of Christianity legal they could be carried out openly. The popularity of pilgrimages during the Middle Ages of course is widely known, but from the testimony of Saints like Jerome and John Chrysostom, it is clear that the practice of

pilgrimage was established in the Catholic faith from early on (and recommended by these great Saints).

However, it was during the Middle Ages that pilgrimage became a popular practice, and thus it is from this age that we might glean the best guidance for making a spiritually enriching pilgrimage today. Medieval pilgrims were keenly aware of what they were about when on pilgrimage. They filled their time with prayer. And they sought that the pilgrimage would bear real spiritual fruit in their lives.



The Life of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

Mr. and Mrs. William Magee Seton and their oldest child, Anna Maria, 8, embarked on a pilgrimage of faith in the fall of 1803, from New York to Leghorn (Livorno), Italy. The Shepherdess sailed across the Atlantic carrying the Setons to a milder climate which could restore the health of William Magee, 35, husband, father of five children (ages 14 mos. to 8), and prominent businessman. The Setons' journey of hope initiated the chain of events that led to Elizabeth Bayley Seton converting to Roman Catholicism and her remarkable establishment of the first apostolic community of religious women in the United States. The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton stands today where she prayed and worked, offering all her life's joys and sufferings to Almighty God. Today pilgrims continue to discover the natural beauty and peace so familiar to Saint Elizabeth Ann who shares her wisdom with all who visit her valley home, which she called, a "Valley of Blessings."

"You will believe because you know how blessed they are who rest on our Heavenly Father—not one struggle nor despondent thought to contend with—confiding Hope and consoling Peace has attended my way thro' storms and dangers that must have terrified a Soul whose Rock is not Christ."

—Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

The Life of Elizabeth Ann Seton, a Saint for Our Times

Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton was born August 28, 1774, in New York, shortly before the American Revolution. Wealthy and socially prominent, the Bayley and Seton families were acquaintances of famous colonists who molded American history like George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris. Elizabeth's parents were Dr. Richard Bayley, New York's first Public Health Officer, and Catherine Charlton, daughter of the rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on Staten Island. Elizabeth may have been baptized at Trinity Church on lower Broadway, though the Great Fire of 1776 destroyed all records. She was a fervent communicant of the Protestant

Episcopal Church until her conversion to Catholicism 30 years later. In her own words, it was during her youth that her "enthusiastic love of God and admiration of His works" were nurtured. Elizabeth's mother died when she was not yet three. A year later, her father married Charlotte Amelia Barclay, daughter of Andrew Barclay and Helena Roosevelt Barclay. She and her sister Mary Magdalen, spent the greater part of their early years with Uncle Will Bayley, their father's brother, and his large family in New Rochelle and received an excellent education. Elizabeth understood French well.

About 1791, she met William Magee Seton, scion of an ancient Scottish family and heir to the family's considerable shipping and importing interests. Nineteen-year-old Betty Ann married twenty five-year-old William Magee January 25, 1794. The couple were active members of New York's younger social set. Initially living in the Seton family home at 61 Stone Street when expecting their first child, they moved to 27 Wall Street, near the Alexander Hamiltons. Elizabeth describes these years later: "My own home at 20—that and heaven, too, quite impossible!" Anna Maria was born May 3, 1795. William Seton III was born the following year, on November 24. William Magee's father died in 1798, and the young Setons returned to Stone Street to care for Will's younger half-brothers and half-sisters.

Three more children were born to Will and Betty: Richard, Catherine and Rebecca. Elizabeth seized every opportunity to share her personal service and worldly abundance with the city's needy, especially poor widows with young children. She along with her friends was a founding member of the Society to Aid Poor Widows with Young Children in 1797. The country's undeclared war with France took its toll on the Seton-Maitland Company shipping business, and the firm was forced into bankruptcy. In August 1801, Elizabeth's beloved father died tending yellow fever victims. The most crushing blow came when tuberculosis afflicted William Magee. To restore his health, he and Elizabeth decided on a "change of air" and a visit to business friends, the Filicchi brothers, Antonio and



Photo courtesy of Daughter of Charity Provincial Archives, Emmitsburg, MD

Filippo, at Leghorn, Italy. Eight-year-old Anna Maria accompanied them. William's health seemed to improve during the 7-week voyage, but upon arrival at Leghorn, port authorities quarantined them for a month in San Jacopo Lazaretto. Eight days after his release, William Magee died in Pisa. Antonio and Amabilia Filicchi opened their home to the young widow and her daughter. For the first time, Elizabeth was exposed to Roman Catholicism and found the Filicchis' deep faith to be one which corresponded perfectly to her soul's needs. Elizabeth and Anna, now called Annina, sailed to New York six months later. Joyfully reunited but the little family faced much reduced circumstances. During the next year, Elizabeth examined the Catholic faith thoroughly, her conscience and emotions in turmoil. Most disheartening were her unsuccessful efforts to support her family by teaching and related jobs; her leanings toward Catholicism repulsed the families she tried to serve, and misunderstandings led them to withdraw their children from her tutelage. Her final decision to enter the Catholic Church brought total alienation from all but her dearest friends and relatives.

On March 14, 1805, at St. Peter's Church on Barclay Street, she made her profession of faith and on March 25 received Holy Communion for the first time as a Roman Catholic. She was confirmed there a year later by Bishop John Carroll. Elizabeth



(Top) Mother Seton's Stone House where she founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's in 1809. (Above) The White House where Mother Seton and her twelve Sister companions, two pupils, her sister-in-law, and three daughters moved in February 1810.

accepted the invitation of French émigré Sulpician priests, notably Rev. William Dubourg, to establish a girls' school in Baltimore. On June 16, 1808, she and her daughters arrived at their new home on Paca Street, adjoining St. Mary's College and Seminary. By September, Elizabeth was ready to receive her first students. In December, her first spiritual daughter, Cecilia O'Conway of Philadelphia joined her. The following spring, her sisters-in-law, Harriet and Cecilia Seton, visited her from New York. On March 25, 1809, Elizabeth made private vows of chastity and obedience for one year and received the title, "Mother." The infant community adopted a simple black habit and white cap (later changed to black) to become the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's. Samuel Sutherland Cooper, a well-to-do 39-year-old seminarian became interested in Elizabeth's endeavor and offered \$10,000 to purchase the old Fleming farm in Emmitsburg for the charitable mission of Sisters of Charity.

Cooper envisioned that "this establishment will be made at Emmitsburg, a village 18 leagues from Baltimore, from whence it will spread over the United States." Elizabeth and a few companions arrived in Emmitsburg about June 24, 1809, but their home was not yet ready. Rev. John Dubois offered the hospitality of his log cabin on St. Mary's Mountain. Six weeks later, on

July 31, the community began living a regular way of life as Sisters of Charity in the Stone House in the St. Joseph's Valley. Sixteen women and children occupied its four rooms. With two new arrivals the Stone House literally overflowed. Construction on St. Joseph's House, known today as the White House, was begun. The basic log structure welcomed its first day pupils on February 22, 1810. In establishing the school, Mother Seton became a pioneer of free Catholic education. A free school for girls, St. Joseph's was conducted by the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's with the blessing and support of Archbishop John Carroll, local clergy and satisfied parents. On May 14, as a source of needed revenue, five boarders were admitted, the number growing to 30 by year's end. One year after Mother Seton's death in 1821, there were about 80 boarders, and 60 Sisters living in the White House.

A favorite refuge of Mother Seton was the natural grotto and mountain stream on St. Mary's Mountain, two miles to the southwest. The rugged, craggy terrain provided an ideal setting where seated on a low, smooth rock, Mother Seton taught catechism to the children of the mountain parish.

As early as 1810, the Sulpicians proposed the Daughters of Charity, cofounded by Saints Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac in 17th century Paris, to be the model for an American community of Sisters of Charity.

The Vincentian mission, spirit, and apostolic service attracted Elizabeth. She wrote to a close friend, "If you recollect the system of the Sisters of Charity before and since the Revolution in France, you will know the rule of our community in a word..." The following year, Mother Seton wrote, "Our community increases very fast,

and no doubt will do a great deal of good in the care of the sick and instruction of children which is our chief business."

Elizabeth Bayley Seton, age 46, died on January 4, 1821, in the room adjoining the chapel in the White House. On her deathbed, she whispered a message for her spiritual daughters: "Be children of the Church, be children of the Church." Mother Seton was buried in the original graveyard of the Sisters of Charity, St. Joseph's Cemetery, next to her daughters, Annina and Rebecca, and her sisters-in-law, Harriet and Cecilia. Her remains were transferred to the Mortuary Chapel in 1846 until the 1962 canonical exhumation in preparation for her Beatification. Her sacred relics were enshrined above the main altar in Saint Joseph College chapel April 18, 1963, and five years later transferred to the new chapel of the Daughters of Charity at St. Joseph's Provincial House, January 4, 1968, known now as the Basilica of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. The remains of Elizabeth Bayley Seton repose permanently in the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg.

During her lifetime, Saint Elizabeth Ann saw the beginning of the fulfillment of Samuel Cooper's dream—having sent Sisters to Philadelphia (1814) and New York (1817) to care for orphans and educate children.

Today her legacy includes the Sisters of Charity Federation of North America whose member congregations of Sisters, Associates, and collaborators serve people living in poverty through varied ministries.

Pope John XXIII, referred to Mother Seton as "the flower of sanctity which the United States of America offers to the world" at her beatification, March 17, 1963. Pope Paul VI issued the decree December 12, 1974, authorizing her canonization and proclaimed her Saint Elizabeth Ann, the first native-born canonized saint of the United States. Thousands witnessed the canonization Mass celebrated in St. Peter's Square, Rome, September 14th during the Jubilee Year of 1975.

Sister Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., Vincentian Scholar-in-Residence, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

Prayers for Your Pilgrimage

We have provided the following prayers that pilgrims to The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton may find useful. Some of them were written by Mother Seton herself, and some are personalizations she made of traditional prayers she loved. Other prayers included here are from the treasury of the Church and from Scripture. We've also included a Novena to Mother Seton.

How to Gain an Indulgence During Your Visit

Why Indulgences? Every sin a Christian commits does two things: it harms or in some cases destroys our relationship with God; and it attaches us more deeply to sin. While the Sacrament of Reconciliation heals the first of these wounds, it does not completely heal us of the second consequence. This disordered attachment, much like an addiction, makes one inordinately attracted to an action or habit of sin that is detrimental.

Another term for the attachment to sin is “the temporal punishment due to sin,” which is strange in that it is not really a punishment, but rather a consequence of sin. Since we may not enter heaven with this disordered attachment to sin, we need penance to purify us from them. This penance can occur either on earth or in purgatory.

This is where indulgences come in. The Church has been made the steward of a treasury of spiritual goods that come from the merits of Christ and the Saints. It can dispense from this treasury for the removal of these temporal punishments—our debt for our sinfulness. An indulgence is a dispensation by the Church from this treasury. The indulgence may be applied to the penitent’s own soul or applied to a soul in purgatory. While a partial indulgence removes some, but not all of one’s attachment to sin, a plenary indulgence removes all temporal punishment for one’s sins.

Typically there are several requirements that must be met in order to gain the indulgence. In this case they are these:

- 1.) Be truly penitent for your sins
- 2.) Within eight days of your visit to the Shrine, receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist

- 3.) Pray for the intentions of the Holy Father
- 4.) In the Basilica, participate in a sacred celebration, or remain for a congruous period of time in prayer and pious meditation, concluding with:
 - a. The *Our Father*
 - b. The *Profession of Faith*
 - c. Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary and, if possible, to the Holy Apostles and Patron Saints.

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton’s Version of the Memorare

Remember, O most pious Virgin Mary, that no one ever had recourse to you, implored your help, or sought your mediation without obtaining relief. Confiding then on your goodness and mercy, I cast myself at your sacred feet, and do most humbly supplicate you, O Mother of the Eternal Word, to adopt me as your child and take upon yourself the care of my eternal Salvation. O let it not be said, my dearest Mother, that I have perished where no one ever found but grace and Eternal Salvation. Love me, my Mother.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton’s Version of the Anima Christi

Soul of Jesus, sanctify me.
Blood of Jesus, wash me.
Passion of Jesus, comfort me.
Wounds of Jesus, hide me.
Heart of Jesus, receive me.
Spirit of Jesus, enliven me.
Goodness of Jesus, pardon me.
Beauty of Jesus, draw me.
Humility of Jesus, humble me.
Peace of Jesus, pacify me.
Love of Jesus, inflame me.
Kingdom of Jesus, come to me.
Grace of Jesus, replenish me.
Mercy of Jesus, pity me.
Sanctity of Jesus, sanctify me.

Purity of Jesus, purify me.
Cross of Jesus, support me.
Nails of Jesus, hold me.
Mouth of Jesus, bless me.
Amen.

A Prayer for Mercy by Mother Seton

Lord Jesus Christ, who was born for us in a stable, lived for us a life of pain and sorrow, and died for us upon a cross, say to God in the hour of death: “Father, forgive,” and to your Mother, “Behold your child,” and say to us, “This day you will be with me in paradise.” Dear Savior, leave us not; forsake us not. We thirst for You, the fountain of living water. Our days pass quickly along; soon all will be consummated. To your hands we commend our spirit, now and forever. Amen.

A Prayer of Devotion to “The Will” by Mother Seton

O Father, the first rule of our dear Savior’s life was to do your holy will. Let His will of the present moment be the first rule of our daily life and work, with no other desire but its full and complete accomplishment, so that doing what You wish, we may remain completely faithful to you. Amen.

Novena Prayer to Mother Seton

by Rev. Robert Stone, C.M.

O God, You hear our prayers and listen to the prayers the Saints make on our behalf. We turn to Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton and humbly ask her to bring to you these intentions we now make.

[Pause for intentions.]

God of all consolation, You know our needs; to our weakness you are no stranger. We who are afflicted and poor trust in your mercy and love.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us.

Amen.



The Pontifical Council for Promoting the Year of Faith has Designated the Nicene Creed as the Prayer of the Year of Faith

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Prayer for the Year of Faith

by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops

O God our Father, in Jesus you call all Christian families and homes to be signs of living faith.

By the light of the Holy Spirit, lead us to be thankful for the gift of faith, and by that gift may we grow in our relationship with Jesus, your Son, and be confident witnesses to Christian hope and joy to all we meet.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing of the Scrips

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, who in unspeakable mercy came down from Heaven to seek the sheep that were lost by the deceit of the devil, and to carry them back on your shoulders to the flock of the Heavenly Country; and did commend the sons of Holy Mother Church by prayer to ask, by holy living to seek, and by persevering to knock that they may more speedily find the reward of salvation; we humbly call upon you. Be pleased to bless these scrips that whosoever for the love of your name shall desire to wear it on pilgrimage to seek the aid of the Saints with the accompaniment of humble prayer, being protected by the guardianship of your right hand may be found fit to be granted the joy of eternal life through you, O Savior of the world, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Here let the scrips be sprinkled with Holy Water and given to each pilgrim by the Priest.

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ receive this scrip, that you may in safety reach the shrine to which you travel and there find nourishment for your earthly pilgrimage; and after the accomplishment of your journey return to us in health and joy. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

The ancient Jesus Prayer was developed by the Desert Fathers of the 3rd and 4th centuries from the often repeated prayer of the Psalms, "Kyrie eleison" or "Lord, have mercy on me." It is also derived from the Gospels, particularly from the prayer of the blind man in Luke 18:38–39.

The spiritual classic The Way of the Pilgrim tells the story of a man whose entire life was transformed by continual mental repetition of this simple prayer.

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Psalms 130

Out of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord!

Lord, hear my voice!

Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Psalms 119–132 were chanted by Hebrew pilgrims as they journeyed to Jerusalem

Create a Reminder



Create a Reminder of Your Journey

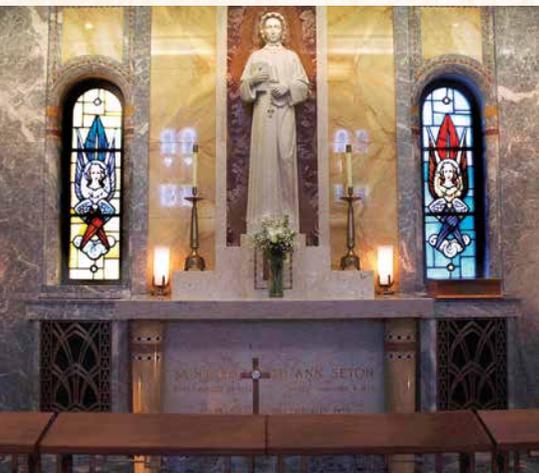
Medieval pilgrims wore a “scrip”—an emblem that let others know that they were on a pilgrimage. The form of this emblem varied according to the pilgrimage’s destination. A cross of palms signified Jerusalem; a seashell Compostela; a key would mean Rome. For your pilgrimage to The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, your group might wish to adopt a scrip of its own. Though in medieval times the scrip helped guarantee safe passage and hospitality for the pilgrim, today your scrip will serve as a constant reminder of the purpose of your journey.

Prayer of course is an essential part of a pilgrimage, but don’t let your destination be the only place where it happens. It’s important to begin your journey, whether long or short, with a prayer and a blessing of the pilgrims. This would also be a good time for a blessing of your scrips, a prayer for which is included in this packet. Along the way, medieval pilgrimage groups sometimes sang hymns while they walked. Though your group is not likely to be traveling on foot, singing hymns while you travel by car or bus is an excellent way to keep your group’s focus on the spiritual nature of your

journey. While you are at the Shrine, be sure that there is time in your group’s day for both public and private devotions.

Some medieval pilgrimages were made as penances; however, even those that were not had a penitential flavor to them. The journey was usually difficult and lacked comforts. This was an expected and even desirable part of a pilgrimage. Why? Because a chief purpose of a pilgrimage was spiritual growth. And it was understood that for spiritual growth to happen, repentance is needed. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). It would be well then for modern pilgrims also to incorporate a penitential aspect in their pilgrimages. Including the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the day’s activities is one way to do this. Also, since even modern travel has its share of inconveniences, pilgrims can be encouraged to offer up any difficulties on their journey for their own and their loved ones’ interior conversion.

We hope this information will help you plan a prayerful time of renewal for your group, and we look forward to welcoming you to the Shrine of the first native-born American Saint.



Sample Itineraries

Weekday Itinerary with Scheduled Mass

10:00 Self-guided tour of museum, gift shop, film, etc.

11:00 Guided tour of grounds

12:00 Lunch (spiritual reading)

Free time for private devotions

1:30 Mass

Regularly scheduled Masses at the Shrine are Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

2:15 Reconciliation

Departure

Saturday Itinerary with Private Mass

10:00 Self-guided tour of museum, etc.

11:00 Guided tour of grounds

12:00 Lunch (spiritual reading)

1:00 Reconciliation

Free time for private devotions

2:00 Mass (with your priest)

Departure

Sunday Itinerary with Scheduled Mass

10:00 Tour of grounds

11:30 Lunch

Free time for private devotions

1:30 Mass

2:15 Adoration

3:00 Benediction

3:15 Tour of museum

4:30 Departure

Itinerary with Visit to Grotto of Lourdes

10:00 Tour of grounds

11:30 Lunch

12:15 Tour of museum, etc.

1:30 Mass (offered Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday)

2:15 Departure for Grotto



Pilgrimage During the Year of Faith



Your Visit During the Year of Faith

Pope emeritus Benedict XVI has decreed that the Church will observe a Year of Faith between October 11, 2012 and November 24, 2013. This is a time for Catholics throughout the world to rediscover and share with others the precious gift of Faith entrusted to the Church, as well as the personal gift of faith that each has received by God's grace.

As part of the observance of the Year of Faith in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Archbishop William Lori designated The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton an official Year of Faith pilgrimage site. Because of this, visitors to the Shrine are eligible to gain the great spiritual gift of a plenary indulgence.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, an indulgence remits the "temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven." Under certain conditions, the Church is able to dispense this remission from the treasury of spiritual merits of Christ and the Saints. (CCC 1471)

"I see faith as a gift of God to be diligently sought and earnestly desired..."

—Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton



JOIN

AS WE

Rejuvenate, Renew, and Reignite our Spiritual Lives with a

Retreat to
THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

*Located on the peaceful grounds where
Mother Seton lived and labored.*

Pray at the Tomb of Mother Seton

Celebrate Mass in the Magnificent
Mosaic-filled Basilica

Tour the Spiritual Grounds and Historic
Homes Where Mother Seton Lived

Enjoy Delicious Catered Meals
in Peaceful Surroundings

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

