

Jan. 6-7, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

Happy Feast Day for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Her special day was Thursday so before I get to anything else let me remind you of her life. Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born 8/28/1774. Her mother died 2 ½ years later. Two years later her older sister, who was 24, died. At age 19 she was married to William Seton. 1 ½ years later she gave birth to Anna Marie. 1 ½ years later her son William was born. 1 ½ years later she ends up with the responsibility of taking care of her husband's seven younger siblings because their parents were gone. Within the next two years she gives birth to Richard and then Rebecca. She now has 11 young people to take care of.

Three years later her husband died at age 35. Elizabeth Ann was 28. 1 ½ years later she joined the Catholic Church because she fell in love with Jesus in the Eucharist. Three years later she opens a school in Baltimore. Two years later she moved north to Emmetsburg and opened the first free school for girls staffed by sisters in the United States. The Sisters were an order of teaching Sisters that she started. It started the trend of the Catholic School system in the U.S. During the next nine years three of her children died. Shortly after that she died on Jan. 4, 1821 at age 46. She overcame a great deal of hardship and yet did great things to help the people around her.

What a life. She was canonized in 1975. Less than six years later our parish was started and named after her. That was in June of 1981. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us.

We will be celebrating her life this weekend, with family activities. Rocky & Bullwinkle cartoons showing in the afternoon from 3-5pm. There will be juice and popcorn. Then we will have a celebration of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton at the 5:30 Sunday Mass. This will be followed by Pizza and games after Mass. Bring your favorite game and mix and match with members of other families to make new friends with people who also like your favorite game. It is only \$1 for the popcorn afternoon and \$5 for pizza night. This is per person or \$20 per family for any and all of it. Obviously any other donations are welcome.

I hope many of you are remembering the line, "Lord, I want to be a Saint, help me not to sin now." This week I want to work on the first part of that line, for to get to heaven it is not good enough to just avoid sins. Sins draw you away from heaven. By not sinning you are not losing ground. But we have to move forward. If we are stagnant we are actually losing ground for the Lord made us to be good for something. That was the lesson of the three servants who received talents. One buried his talents and the master was very angry with him.

During this time when we celebrate our patron Saint who accomplished so much in such a short life, we have to ask, what are we good for? Even the most limited of God's people are called up to give Him glory. Rocks do it in their way. We are made for more than rocks. So what can a person do if their life is truly limited? Many of our shut-ins over the years have been marvelous examples of what is possible. They prayed for so many people. They gave thanks and praise to God, even if it was by praying the rosary or watching Mass for the Shut-ins on TV. They have been prayer warriors. Even that much is a powerful ministry. Stay tuned.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank