

RELIC

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON

- ❖ Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American saint, was born in New York City as Elizabeth Ann Bayley in 1774. She was raised as an Episcopalian and when 19 years old married William M. Seton, heir to a wealthy NY family.
- ❖ With her sister-in-law Rebecca, she went on missions of mercy to help poor widows and children of New York, earning them the nickname the “Protestant Sisters of Charity.”
- ❖ When her husband contracted tuberculosis in 1803, the couple sailed for Italy so he could recuperate. Months later, in Pisa, her husband died. Even then, she continued to believe that the tragedies set before her would one day lead to some good.
- ❖ While in Italy, Elizabeth was taken in by her husband’s friends, and introduced to Catholicism. Upon returning to New York, she joined the Catholic Church.
- ❖ Looking toward a new future, Elizabeth and her five children moved to Maryland, where she opened a school for girls and formed a community based on the rules of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of France. The rule was officially adopted – and the Sisters of Charity became America’s first congregation of women religious.
- ❖ Elizabeth was named Superior, and she worked to establish St. Joseph Academy, a school for indigent children in Emmitsburg, Maryland.
- ❖ For the remaining years of her life, Mother Seton as she was called, and the Sisters Worked tirelessly to teach children and establish orphanages, including one in New York. Through their love of Christ, they brought education to the poor and set the groundwork for the parochial school system in the United States.
- ❖ Today six groups of sisters trace their origins to Mother Seton’s initial foundation.
- ❖ For the last three years of her life, Elizabeth felt that God was getting ready to call her, and this gave her great joy. Mother Seton died in 1821 at the age of 46, only 16 years after becoming a Catholic. She was canonized on September 14, 1975.