



THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton
The First Native Born Saint of the United States of America

333 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
Phone (301) 447-6606
Fax (301) 447-6061

Annual Pilgrimage for the Sea Services *A Eucharistic Celebration in Honor of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton*

Emmitsburg, Maryland, August 19, 2009 – Members of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Merchant Marine, and the public will come together on Sunday, October 4, 2009, to honor Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, “Patroness of the Sea Services”. The Annual Pilgrimage for the Sea Services is hosted by the Daughters of Charity, and supported by a committee of retired Naval Officers and their spouses, chaired by Admiral James D. Watkins, USN (Ret). The Mass begins at 3:00 p.m. in the Basilica at the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, 333 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, Maryland. Open to the public. The Seton Shrine will be open between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. for tours.

Admiral Watkins has been closely associated with the Seton Shrine and the Daughters of Charity since 1977 when, with then Chief of Navy Chaplains John O’Connor (later John Cardinal O’Connor, Archbishop of NY), he worked to proclaim the newly canonized Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton as “Patroness of the Sea Services” because of her link to the Navy through her two sons. Admiral Watkins also helped to establish the annual day of prayerful observance through the Navy Chaplains Office. In 1994 due to the increasing demands of a small Navy, the event was discontinued; but through the efforts of Admiral Watkins and his dedicated group, it was reinstated in 1998. Today military personnel and their families join together to seek Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton’s intercession for the safety of all those in the sea services.

The principal celebrant and homilist for the Mass will be Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland, D.D., of the Diocese of Savannah and the USCCB’s National Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea. His Excellency will be joined by several concelebrants including Reverend Monsignor John L. FitzGerald, Ph.D., Captain, Chaplain Corps, U.S. Navy, (Ret.), the Apostleship of the Sea of Baltimore.

The Naval Academy Catholic Midshipmen Choir from Annapolis, Maryland will provide the music for the liturgy.

Presentation of the Colors will be by the Ceremonial Guard, Military District Washington, D.C.

Additional information can be obtained by calling the Seton Shrine office, 301.447.6606 or by email at office@setonshrine.org.

About the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton:

Nearly 200 years ago, Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton founded the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph’s, the first new community for religious women to be established in the United States. She also began Saint Joseph’s Academy and Free School, the first free Catholic School for girls staffed by Sisters in the United States. Her enduring legacy of nearly 200 years includes six religious communities with more than 5,000 members, numerous schools, social service centers, and hospitals throughout America and around the world. Her works led to her canonization on Sunday, September 14, 1975, in Saint Peter’s Square, by Pope Paul VI. The first citizen born in the United States to be canonized, her remains are entombed here in the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. Visit our web site, www.setonshrine.org to learn more about the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Contact:

Karen Harding, Director of the Shrine Phone: (301) 447-6606 Email: kharding@setonshrine.org

Continuing the Legacy of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton 1809-2009

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The opening celebration of the Mass.