

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON



EARLY LIFE

Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born on August 28, 1774 in New York. She was born into a wealthy family. Her father was a well-known surgeon who cared for immigrants who came to the United States. Elizabeth grew up in the Episcopal Church.

Elizabeth married William Seton on January 25, 1794. William was a wealthy businessman and shortly after they married Elizabeth and William moved to a residence on Wall Street in New York. The couple had five children, and took in William's seven half-siblings when his father passed away.



BAPTISTM



In 1803, William's health began to decline and the couple traveled to Italy for treatment. It was not successful, and William died on December 27, 1803. However, while in Italy, Elizabeth was introduced to the Catholic faith and after returning to New York, was baptized on March 14, 1805.



FIRST SCHOOL

Elizabeth was urged by a priest to open a Catholic school for girls in Baltimore, MD. This school is considered to be the beginning of religious schools in the United States. Soon after opening the school, Elizabeth and two others decided to create a sisterhood, known as the Sisters of Saint Joseph. While still caring for her own children, Elizabeth took a vow of poverty for one year, which turned into a lifetime of devoting her life to God.



CANONIZATION



In 1812, the Sisters of Saint Joseph were renamed the Daughters of Charity of Saint Joseph. Motherhouses were opened in Philadelphia and New York, and eventually 17 other locations. Elizabeth passed away in 1821 of tuberculosis, at the young age of 46. She was canonized on September 14, 1975 and was the first native-born American to be canonized a saint. Her feast day is January 4 and she is the patron saint of Catholic schools.

