



CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Diocese of Wilmington

For 180 years - A legacy of caring service

CATHOLIC CHARITIES 180TH ANNIVERSARY OPENING PRAYER SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Leader: Catholic Charities' roots can be traced to 1830 when the Sisters of Charity arrived in Wilmington to set up St. Peter's Orphanage for Girls, which eventually moved to an old estate in Bellefonte now known as Seton Villa.

As the foundress of the Sisters of Charity, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton has a special connection to Catholic Charities. Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821), was canonized September 14, 1975. She was the first native born American to be canonized by the Catholic Church.

OPENING PRAYER

All: Lord God, you blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton with gifts of grace as wife and mother, educator and foundress, so that she might spend her life in service to your people.

Through her example and prayers, may we learn to express our love for you in love for our fellow men and women.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READING: ISAIAH 58: 6-11

Reader 1: This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke;

Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am! If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech;

If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday;

Then the Lord will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (FROM PSALM 34)

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

Leader: I will praise him for what he has done; may all who are oppressed listen and be glad! Proclaim with me the Lord's greatness; let us praise his name together!

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

Leader: I prayed to the Lord and he answered me; he freed me from all my fears.

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

Leader: The oppressed look to him and are glad; they will never be disappointed. The helpless call to him; and he answers; he saves them from all their troubles. His angel guards those who have reverence for the lord and rescues them from danger.

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

Leader: Find out for yourself how good the Lord is. Happy are those who find safety with him.

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

Leader: The good man suffers many troubles, but the Lord saves him from them all; the Lord preserves him completely; not one of his bones is broken.

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

Leader: The Lord will save his people; those who go to him will be spared.

All: I will always thank the Lord; I will never stop praising him.

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 JOHN 3: 16-18

Reader 2: This is how we know what love is: Christ gave his life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for our brothers! If a rich person sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against his brother, how can he claim he loves God? My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

LITANY TO SAINT ELIZABETH SETON

Leader: Elizabeth, Loving Daughter

All: Encourage in all children obedience and love

Leader: Elizabeth, Troubled Teenager

All: Speak to today's confused, sometimes abused young people

Leader: Elizabeth, Faithful Wife

All: Grant gifts of love and generosity to all spouses

Leader: Elizabeth, Caring Mother

All: Share your mother's heart with all parents

Leader: Elizabeth, Grieving Widow

All: Look with compassion on all bereaved wives

Leader: Elizabeth, Loyal Friend

All: Teach us to share friendship generously

Leader: Elizabeth, Heroic Searcher of Truth

All: Guide all who, with fear and doubt, seek the way

Leader: Elizabeth, Courageous Convert

All: Strengthen the newly baptized as they embrace the faith

Leader: Elizabeth, Sorrowing Mother

All: Console those parents suffering the loss of a child

Leader: Elizabeth, Steadfast Religious

All: Inspire young women to follow in your path

Leader: Elizabeth, a Woman for All Women

All: Bestow your charism of love and service on all women today

*M. Irene Fugazy, S.C.
Sisters of Charity, Mount St. Vincent, New York*

PRAYER BY ST. ELIZABETH ANN

All: Our Father, you would not willingly call on us to suffer. You say all things work together for our good if we are faithful to You. Therefore, if You ordain it: through disappointment and poverty, sickness and pain, even shame and contempt and calumny, You will support us with the consolation of Your Grace and compensate us for any temporal suffering by the possession of that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: O Father, the first rule of our dear Savior's life was to do Your Will.

Let His Will of the present moment be the first rule of our daily life and work, with no other desire but for its most full and complete accomplishment.

Help us to follow it faithfully, so that doing what You wish we will be pleasing to You.

ALL: Amen.