

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

Our First U.S.A. Native Saint

We undoubtedly have had hundreds of thousands of saintly United States citizens who in the 200 years of our Nation's history have found our native soil no obstacle to their desire to do God's will. And that is what sanctity is all about. My memory is filled with saints that I have known personally — relatives, friends and neighbors whose presence has been an inspiration. Some have preceded us in death. Others walk among us, still taking seriously what the Lord appointed as our universal vocation — personal sanctity.

Yet, despite this awareness of so many Americans clothed in virtue, I received the news of the Church's official recognition of one of us as worthy of canonization with great joy and gratitude. On Dec. 12, Pope Paul VI announced that Mother Elizabeth Seton who founded the American Sisters of Charity will be officially proclaimed a Saint worthy of recognition and imitation by the whole Church. We rejoiced in 1946 when Frances Xavier Cabrini became our first canonized citizen. But she was an import transplanted from Italy where, canonized saints are numerous. Elizabeth Seton is as American as apple pie. In fact, she was one of our very first citizens in our American history.

Born in New York City in 1774, just a few days before the First Continental Congress

met, she was a third generation offspring of an American family. She lived in New York through its six-year British occupation during the War of Independence and she was there, too, during the trying years after the American victory when our leaders were struggling to hold this newborn nation together.

She attended President Washington's inauguration in New York, and her future husband was the chairman of arrangements for the first President's inaugural ball. She was married to William Seton at the age of 19 and life seemed to offer her all the advantages of prestige and social prominence. But 11 years later, she was a widow left with five young children to support.

She was converted to Catholicism in 1805 and that cost her a painful alienation from relatives and friends. She accomplished so much in the remaining 16 years of her life that seven Congregations of Sisters of Charity today honor her as their Mother and foundress, and the late Pope John XXIII hailed her as a pioneer in the Catholic School system.

She had opened a school in Maryland to support herself and her family and gathered around her a group of women dedicated to the teaching and social mission of the Church, who keep her spirit very much alive in the Church today.

In her rite of beatification in 1963 Pope John called her an authentic daughter of this nation. In her own life, she embraced the Cross as the inevitable prelude to glory. In the final months of her life when she was

dying of several ailments, including cancer, she had the added Cross of worry about the troubled lives of her two sons. She remarked in the last letter to her closest childhood friend: "All is bleak with me but the blue sky." Elizabeth Seton was patient even with bleakness because of a faith once expressed by St. Thomas More: "We can hardly hope to go to Heaven on a feather bed, seeing that Christ went there on a Cross."

We in the Diocese of Rochester rejoice with special joy that Elizabeth Seton will be recognized by the Church as an extraordinary woman of heroic sanctity — convert, housewife, parent, educator, foundress of a Religious Community, a woman for all times and all seasons, worthy of our limitation and sensitive to our intercession. For we have sensed her presence among us in the wonderful works of her daughters. Four of them came to us 130 years ago before we were a diocese, and cared for the children of St. Patrick's Orphanage. They were the first Catholic Sisters in all of Western New York. And they have remained with us, thank God, all these years to serve at St. Mary's Hospital as the healing presence of Christ.

I rejoice especially with our Sisters of Charity whom I admire and respect and for whose apostolate to our sick and suffering I am eternally grateful. I will be in Rome, please God, on Sept. 14 leading a Courier-Journal pilgrimage from Rochester to express my gratitude and my joy. I vowed years ago I would never lead another pilgrimage. But Saints can work miracles.

Editor's Note: Full details of the bishop's Courier-Journal pilgrimage to Rome will be announced shortly.

Pontiff Welcomes Buddhist Group

Vatican City [RNS] — His Holiness Cyalwa Karmapa, leader of the Ka-gyu-pa order of Tibetan Buddhism, was received in private audience at the Apostolic Place here by Pope Paul on Jan. 17.

The Pope told the 61-year-old Buddhist monk, who was accompanied by a large retinue, that he was "grateful" that His Holiness had expressed a desire to "come and visit us."

"We are friends of all men of good will," said the pontiff, "especially of those who, like yourself, have conserved and promoted spiritual as well as

moral values of humanity," adding:

"We wish to extend this warm welcome and appreciation also to the distinguished persons of your retinue and to the whole religious community which Your Holiness represents."

His Holiness Karmapa, born in Tibet in 1924, fled the country in 1959, the year China crushed a Tibetan uprising, forcing many Buddhists, including the Dalai Lama, to seek refuge outside Tibet. The Dalai Lama, who is living in India, is the spiritual leader of all Tibetan Buddhists (about 3 million). His Ka-gyu-pa

order is under the over-all spiritual jurisdiction of the Dalai Lama, and he has been living in the Indian protectorate of Sikkim.

Pope Paul, in his address to his Buddhist guests, recalled that Vatican II had expressed "sincere admiration for Buddhism in its various forms for its contribution to the spiritual elevation of man."

"We have at the Vatican a secretariat for promoting relationships and dialogue with non-Christian religions," the Pope went on, "and we are very happy that in all parts of the world our sons and daughters of the Catholic Church are more and

more open to friendly cooperation with non-Christians in promoting peace and spiritual and moral values among all mankind."

The Pope wished the Buddhist group "a very happy stay in Rome and a deeply satisfying visit to St.

Peter's Basilica, which so many pilgrims from all over the world will visit during the current Holy Year."

"All of us are pilgrims to the Absolute and the Eternal who alone can fulfill the heart of man," the Pope concluded.

Vatican Legate Goes to Romania

Vatican City [RNS] — Archbishop Luigi Poggi, the Vatican's top expert in east European affairs, has gone to

Bucharest, Romania, for talks with government officials on "restoration" of the Romanian Byzantine Rite Catholic Church, Vatican Radio reported.

The Church, as an autonomous legal entity, has been suppressed for 27 years.

In 1948, the Communist regime of Romania denounced a concordat concluded in 1929 with the Vatican, nationalized all schools and passed a law on religions which resulted in disorganization of Church administration.

By government decree, the (then) 1.5 million member Romanian Byzantine Rite Church was incorporated into the Romanian Orthodox Church. Orthodox bishops took over the cathedrals of Roman Catholic bishops. Five of the six Latin Rite bishops were deposed by the government. The sixth was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment in 1951, when a great many arrests of priests and Catholic laymen were made.

Religious orders were suppressed in 1949. Since 1948, more than 50 Catholic priests have been executed and some 200 have died in prison.

Some change for the better in Catholic church-state relations was reported after the middle of the Summer of 1964, although restrictions were still in effect.

At present, only one Catholic diocese in Romania has a resident bishop.

The Bishop's Public Appointments



February

- 2— Celebration of the Eucharist, St. Patrick's Church, Victor — 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
- 3— Confirmation, St. Bridget's Church, East Bloomfield — 7:45 p.m.
- 5— Concelebration of the Eucharist and Homily with Regional Coordinators, Becket Hall — Noon.
- 6— Black Ministry Meeting — 10:30 a.m.
- 6— Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, Becket Hall — 4:45 p.m.
- 9— Confirmation, St. Patrick's, Mt. Morris — 3 p.m.
- 10— Joint Board of Trustees' Meeting, St. Bernard's Seminary and Becket Hall — 10:30 a.m.
- 11— School Visitation, St. Louis School, Pittsford — 9:30 a.m.
- 12— Ash Wednesday Ecumenical Service, St. Luke's Episcopal Church — 12:05 p.m.
- 12— Ash Wednesday Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, St. Patrick's Church, Victor — 7 p.m.
- 13— Departments' Accountability Meeting — 9 a.m. — Noon.
- 13— Catholic School Principals' Workshop, Notre Dame Retreat House — 5:30 p.m.
- 14— Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, Convent of the Missionary Sisters of Guadalupe — 8 a.m.
- 15— Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, New York State Marriage Encounter Rally, Auburn Community College — 4:30 p.m.
- 18— New York State Bishops' Meeting, New York Catholic Center — 10 a.m.
- 18-20— National Meeting of the Priestly Life & Ministry Committee, @Hare Inn, Chicago.
- 20— Theology Seminar, SUNY, Geneseo Campus — 7:30 p.m.
- 22— Radio Message, Family Rosary Network — 7 p.m.
- 23— Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, St. Christopher's Church, North Chili — 10:30 a.m.
- 24— Lenten Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily for the Pastoral Office Staff — Pastoral Office Chapel — 12:30 p.m.
- 25— Lenten Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily for the Pastoral Office Staff — Pastoral Office Chapel — 12:30 p.m.
- 27— Black Ministry Meeting with Brother Joseph Davis, St. Monica Rectory — 8 p.m.