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## Plans Generating for Canonization Ceremony

**New York [RNS]** — Although "simplicity and dignity" will be maintained in connection with rites surrounding the Sept. 14 canonization in Rome of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, first U.S.-born Catholic saint, preparations for the event are beginning to take on grander proportions.

Pilgrimages and tours are being scheduled with thousands of Americans expected to attend, new and revised books about Mother Seton are being published, and a special World Hunger Fund campaign will be presented to Pope Paul on the day of canonization.

In addition, the canonization is being heralded as coinciding with the 1975 Holy Year decreed by Pope Paul and with the U.S. Bicentennial celebration. Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, president of the U.S. bishops, called the canonization "an event of major historical significance for all Americans."

According to the U.S. Secretariat for the Canonization of Mother Seton, the three major U.S. television networks have been invited to cover the canonization and more than 10,000 persons from the U.S. are expected to attend.

**[Bishop Joseph L. Hogan is leading a special Courier-Journal tour to Rome for the canonization. Fathers**

**Michael Conboy, Louis Hohman, Joseph Reinhart and John Rosse will accompany the bishop.]**

Communities which make up a federation of the Sisters of Charity and trace their foundation to Mother Seton have added an "untraditional" gift to the usual gifts they will be bringing to Rome on Sept. 14, a special fund to be used by Pope Paul to help feed the world's hungry.

At the time the news of the forthcoming canonization reached the Sisters of Charity last December, they were in the process of trying to raise consciousness about the urgency of the world's hunger problems. So they set up a special World Hunger Fund for contributions from the Sisters' personal allowances, to be matched by the six communities of the federation and given to the Pope on the day of canonization.

Sister Virginia Unsworth, coordinator of the fund for the New York Sisters of Charity, said the canonization "seemed a good time to speak of our interconnectedness, and our faith that these problems, while complex, are not beyond solution."

She acknowledged that the gift given to the Pope will only be a token, made up of donations received over the Summer. The various communities had already been channeling funds to development agencies since last September, when they joined other American

congregations in a week of fasting to express solidarity with the hungry.

Mother Seton will be canonized in a simplified ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica, in accord with new church regulations. Although the consecration Mass will not include the traditional banners and plumes over the papal chair, a large painting of Mother Seton by the Italian artist Ciotti will be displayed outside the basilica.

The six Superior Generals of the federation of communities founded by Mother Seton will be among 16 persons in the offertory procession during the canonization Mass. They will bear the symbolic gifts of flowers, wine, birds and candles. Prior to the Mass, the federation leaders will present Pope Paul with the proceeds of the world hunger fund.

Mother Seton, born in New York City in 1774, founded the Sisters of Charity in 1809. She was beatified by Pope John XXIII in 1963, and her sainthood was proclaimed by Pope Paul last December. A pioneer in establishing the Catholic school system in the U.S., she died in 1821.

The six communities that trace their origins to Mother Seton have their headquarters in Emmitsburg, Md. (where the order was founded); Mount St. Vincent, N.Y.; Halifax, Nova Scotia; Greensburg, Pa.; Cincinnati; and Convent Station, N.J.

## A Letter to Fords About Another 'Susan'

An open letter to President and Mrs. Gerald Ford  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ford:

My niece is about the age of your Susan. She, too, is tall, slim and blond. The resemblance probably stops there. You see, she tried marijuana with the "in crowd" in her junior high. Then, one thing led to another until her disappearance. When her parents finally found her, she was ill from malnutrition, hepatitis, gonorrhea and skin infections from multiple injections. She has noticeable mental changes — her personality and judgment have been impaired. She will probably never have an abortion because she will probably never be able to bear a child due to her severe pelvic inflammatory disease — among other things. The doctor says if she can stay off drugs, she may live to the ripe old age of forty. No need to mention the agony of the family who lost this child to the world we live in today.

However, let me say to you that you bear the burden of responsibility for what you say and do much more than the rest of us because you are leaders in this world. There are many of us struggling to guide our children through the pitfalls of youth — drugs, drinking, permissive sex, irresponsible use of the automobile, disrespect for property, etc. All we are doing can be undone so quickly by people of your stature when you speak so casually, so acceptingly of the problems we try to help our children avoid. How difficult it can be to counteract the influence of the overly permissive peer group! But when the wife of the President of the United States identifies with the peer group in their permissive attitude — and over national prime time television yet — we can only wonder how many young people will be swayed, how many will suffer irreversible damage, and what sorrows those who love them will undergo as a result!

President and Mrs. Ford, you might do well to review the attitudes of Louis the XVI and his Queen, Marie Antoinette. They were leaders during another kind of revolution. But there is a parallel. Marie Antoinette also demonstrated obtuseness in the face of painful reality.

**Out of consideration for my niece,  
I choose to remain anonymous.**

**Editor's Note: For obvious reasons, we respect the writer's anonymity although our rule is that all letters writers must be identified. The writer lives in our diocese though the niece in question does not.**



SISTER MARY WALTER

## Principal Named at ND High

Sister Mary Walter Hickey, RSM, has been appointed principal of Notre Dame High School, Elmira, according to Sister Mary Judith Heberle, superior general of the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester.

Sister Walter has been assistant principal of Notre Dame since 1972. She succeeds Warren Tessier, who has taken a position as administrator of the Chemung Nursing Facility in Elmira.

"I'm looking forward with enthusiasm to accepting the challenge of leadership in a secondary school," said Sister Walter. "I have great confidence in the staff and student body, and I feel that together we can build a strong educational community in the Chemung Valley."

Prior to becoming assistant principal at Notre Dame, Sister Walter was a member of the History Department of Our Lady

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## Bishops Reiterate Opposition to Abortion Ruling

**Washington, D.C. [RNS]** — The nation's Roman Catholic bishops, in a series of workshops held in key U.S. cities recently, reaffirmed their commitment to reverse the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court rulings on abortion, primarily through a constitutional amendment that "protects all unborn human life."

They pledged "sacrifices of time, energy and funds for the continuing education of all citizens and for the organized and coordinated action necessary to achieve the goals," according to a consensus report issued by the U.S. Catholic Conference here. Almost half the total hierarchy — 140 bishops — took part in the sessions.

Terming the reversal of the high court rulings "a primary and urgent issue" requiring immediate attention and action, the bishops who met in the day-long, inter-regional sessions — in New York, Chicago, Dallas and San Francisco — called for continuing dialogue with members of Congress and other legislators on the issue.

The workshops were conducted by the Committee for Pro-Life Activities of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) during the first week of August. Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York, chairman of the committee, and Archbishop

Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, president of the NCCB and USCC, presided at all four workshops.

In addition to reaffirming their commitment to a "human life" amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the bishops said they would continue to be guided by statements offered in testimony before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments, chaired by Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.).

These include proposals that the unborn child be considered a person under the law from conception on; the constitution express a commitment to the "preservation of life to the maximum degree possible; the proposed amendment give states power to enact enabling legislation; the proposed amendment give states power to enact enabling legislation; and the amendment "restore" constitutional protection of the "right to life" as described in the Declaration of Independence.

They recognized the need for the Pro-Life Committee to share data and generate greater dialogue within the Church, through such organizations as the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Daughters of America, the National Conference of Catholic Charities, the Catholic Hospital Association and national organizations of priests and religious.

## Diocesan Concerns Focus of Series

*At the first meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC), tentative diocesan goals were established. Future meetings will refine those goals.*

*The Courier-Journal is running a series of articles on the five main areas of concern in which the Church hopes to achieve specific results in the diocese — Worship and Life, Teaching Mission, Social Mission, Pastoral Organization and Supportive Ministries.*

*Tentative goals within those areas will be explored with members of the DPC in the series. Page 2.*