

# ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON CHURCH



Father Mark Seiker  
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North Platte, Nebraska 69101

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Parish Hall: 534-0511

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## ***Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord*** ***April 12, 2020***

***Welcome to St. Elizabeth's:*** It is our hope that you feel at home and among friends here at St. Elizabeth. If you are a visitor for a day, we pray God's speed on your journey. If you are looking for a parish community, we would be delighted to welcome you into our parish family. Please introduce yourselves. Registration forms are available in the entry racks or contact us anytime at 308-534-5461.

### **Religious Services**

#### **Mass Schedule** For Sunday Obligation:

Saturday 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday 10:00 a.m.

#### **Weekdays & Holy Days**

As published in the Bulletin.

#### **Rosary**

Prayed **8:30 a.m.** Monday mornings, and  
30 minutes before weekend Mass.

#### **Sacrament of Confession**

Offered 30 minutes before most all daily Masses  
Saturday 4:00 p.m. – 4:55 p.m.  
Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m., or by appointment.

#### **Sacrament of Baptism**

Parents are asked to attend a baptism preparation class. This is recommended, and easiest to do before the birth of the child, but must be done before the baptism.

#### **Sacrament of Matrimony**

To assist those who plan to marry, all couples will be required to fulfill the diocesan marriage preparation policy, which includes the FOCCUS & Engaged Encounter Programs. This requires a minimum of 4-6 months. The assessment process must be completed before a wedding date is set. Contact pastor early to begin the preparation.

### **Parish Information**

#### **Bulletin Deadline**

All material is to be submitted to the parish office before noon Wednesday prior to the Sunday it is to appear. Email to: [rectory-office@seas-np.org](mailto:rectory-office@seas-np.org)

#### **New or Moving Parishioners**

Please call the office to arrange an appointment with the Pastor to register in the Parish. Please call the office to notify us of any address change.

#### **Your Will**

Ask your attorney to include remembrance of your Church in your will.

#### **Religious Vocations**

Any young woman interested in religious life, or young man interested in a vocation to the priesthood should contact your pastor. Please pray for vocations!

### **Education**

#### **Family Formation Program**

Sunday mornings (Sept-May) 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

#### **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)**

For those interested in possibly joining the Catholic Church. Usually on Wednesdays (Sept-May), 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. in Parish Hall. Please contact the parish office for more information.

## SCHEDULE OF MASSES

Monday	Apr. 13	7:00 a.m.
Tuesday	Apr. 14	7:00 a.m.
Wednesday	Apr. 15	7:00 a.m.
<b>6:00pm-10:00pm Eucharistic Holy Hours =&gt; Spend time with Jesus</b>		
Thursday	Apr. 16	7:00 a.m.
Friday	Apr. 17	7:00 a.m.
Saturday	Apr. 18	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>
Sunday	Apr. 19	<b>8:00 a.m.</b>

## INTENTIONS

Increased Devotion to Immaculate Heart
Anna Lee
Elizabeth (Liz) Haag
John L. Sullivan +
Book of Memories / Blessings
Ruby Ramirez +
People of our Parish

*When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with Him in glory.*

— Colossians 3:4

## **Stewardship: April 5, 2020**

<b>Adult Envelopes:</b> .....	\$2,098.00
<b>Loose Plate:</b> .....	\$0.00
<b>Children:</b> .....	\$0.00
<b>Holy Day:</b> (Easter) .....	\$160.00
<b>Total:</b> .....	\$2,258.00

<b><u>Joy of the Gospel Campaign</u></b>	
Total Pledged: .....	\$958,770.00
Gifts last week: .....	\$860.00
<b>Total Gifts Received: .....</b>	<b>\$884,833.05</b>
Original DIAL Loan: .....	1,485,000.00
Total Received (CTTF Camp):	\$1,025,440.07
Misc Donations Received: .....	\$739,940.31
Total Payments on Loan: .....	\$1,702,428.04
<b>Balance on DIAL LOAN: .....</b>	<b>\$61,613.45</b>

Southern NE Register: .....	\$0.00
Rice Bowl: .....	\$40.00
Holy Land: .....	\$110.00
Combined Collection Non-Specified: ..	\$50.00
American Bishops Overseas: .....	\$0.00
Black & Indian Collection: .....	\$0.00
Catholic Communication: .....	\$0.00
Catholic Home Missions: .....	\$0.00

### **Parish Calendar**

Tuesday	Apr. 14	7:00pm: Lectio: Salvation (Lent/Easter Study ... via ZOOM)
Wednesday	Apr. 15	6:00pm – 10:00pm: Eucharistic Adoration      7:00pm – 9:00pm: RCIA Classes ... via ZOOM
Thursday	Apr. 16	7:00pm: Lectio: Salvation (Lent/Easter Study ... via ZOOM)

## **Catholic School News:**

**SCRIP:** SCRIP is still available for purchase! The Endowment office is operating with limited office hours, 10:00am-12:00pm daily. If you need SCRIP gift cards, please call, text, or e-mail Wendy Dodson using the contact information below. The office will prepare your order and you can stop by (601 S. Tabor) to pick it up. This is also a great time to utilize online SCRIP through the [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) website! If you are new to online SCRIP, please create a family account by clicking "get started," and then "join your program." Our school enrollment code is: 41B837676942. Once you create a family account, you can add a checking account or credit card as form of online payment. Contact the Endowment office at any time with your SCRIP questions! Wendy Dodson: [w.dodson@npcschools.org](mailto:w.dodson@npcschools.org). 308-534-5939 (office). 308-520-2891 (personal – call or text).

*North Platte Catholic School:  
Faith & Knowledge for a Brighter Future*

**Divine Mercy Afternoon Reflection...** with Fr. John Rooney and Seminarian Choir **Sunday Apr. 19, 1:00pm-4:00pm** on The ABC's of Divine Mercy. At-home live-stream Reflections at 1:00pm and 2:00pm, Holy Hour with the Seminarians at 3:00pm. Sponsored by Our Lady of Good Counsel Retreat House - free-will donation - [www.goodcounselretreat.com](http://www.goodcounselretreat.com).

**Scott Hahn Free Webinar...** Guest speaker and noted Catholic author Dr. Scott Hahn will join the teaching staff of the Emmaus Institute for Biblical Studies for a free, two-hour, collaborative webinar on **Saturday, April 18, 9:00-11:00 a.m. CST**. In a live, conversational format they will engage the topic of how to live by faith in a time of fear, under the webinar title: "Fear not, for I am with you: God's Presence in Times of Crisis." To access the webinar link, please go to the Emmaus website at [www.emmausinstitute.net](http://www.emmausinstitute.net), or simply visit the Emmaus Institute account on Facebook or Youtube at the time of the event.

**Volunteer Mowers ...** We are looking for some volunteer help to mow the Catholic Cemetery on State Farm Road. We have set some dates for mowing. Sunday April 19, May 3, and May 17, all at 1:00pm. If you can help on other days and times, that is fine too. Questions call Mike Montgomery (530-7917).

## **Group / Bulk Subscription to MAGNIFICAT ...**

MAGNIFICAT is a monthly publication containing a short morning, evening, & night prayer, & a short daily meditation; as well as the Scripture readings for the Daily & Sunday Masses, essays on the lives of the saints, and spiritual insight into masterpieces of sacred art. Magnificat is a good way to learn more about your faith & deepen your prayer life and your relationship with God. The **annual group subscription rate is \$23.00/each**. That is a savings of \$24.00 off regular (individual price of \$47.00). If you would like to be a part of the group / bulk subscription, please turn in your payment to the Rectory or see Fr. Seiker. The **group subscription runs from August 2020 – July 2021**. Those in our Group may also read Magnificat either **online** or on their **iphone** or **ipod**. **Please contact Fr. Seiker by Friday, April 17, 2020.**

## **Our Easter Mission ...**

"Have no fear. The outcome of the battle for life is already decided, even though the struggle goes on against great odds and with much suffering ... "Christ is now raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep ... so in Christ all will come to life again" (1 Cor. 15:20-22). The paradox of the Christian message is this: Christ - the head - has already conquered sin and death. Christ in his body - the pilgrim people of God - continually suffers the onslaught of the Evil One and all the evil which sinful humanity is capable of. The liberating message of the Gospel of life has been put into your hands. And the mission of proclaiming it to the ends of the earth is now passing to your generation. Like the great apostle Paul, you too must feel the full urgency of the task: "Woe to me if I do not evangelize" (1 Cor. 9:16). Woe to you if you do not succeed in defending life. The church needs your energies, your enthusiasm, your youthful ideals, in order to make the Gospel of life penetrate the fabric of society, transforming people's hearts and the structures of society in order to create a civilization of true justice and love." – Pope John Paul II to Youth, August 15, 1993, Denver, Colorado.

**Southern Nebraska Register ...** subscription rate is **\$15.00/1 yr**. Make checks to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church. Thank you!

## Charity & Stewardship Appeal CSA 2020

(DDP)... due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, there is a different approach to CSA this year. On Friday (04/03/20), pledge card for the Charity and Stewardship Appeal (CSA 2020) were mailed to parishioners. You may place your contribution (*check only not cash*) in the enclosed envelope & mail to the Lincoln Drop Box. *If you did not receive a pledge card, or if you have questions, please contact Fr. Seiker (email or phone).* The goal for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is **\$8,630.00**. These funds will be used for various programs funded by the Charity & Stewardship Appeal (CSA 2020). Our Diocese is holding to CSA Appeal 1 month earlier than in the past!

Since we support a Catholic Grade School & High School, 80% of our goal & everything over our goal comes back to us, to help us provide Catholic education through our local Catholic School!

Over the last 26 years, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church has greatly benefited from The Charity and Stewardship Appeal (CSA): we have borrowed \$436,457.04 for Parish Hall, Rectory, & Farm. We borrowed \$1,485,000 for the new Church at very low interest rates. We have paid off loans for Parish Hall, Rectory, & "Farm". We still owe \$61,613.45 on Church loan. Though many parishioners have made significant contributions to Joy of the Gospel Campaign through pledges & other gifts, we need to continue to make a gift to CSA 2020 at a similar level as in previous years, & also use regular Sunday envelopes!

## Lectio: Salvation: Unveiling Scripture & Tradition ...

these sessions are conducted via ZOOM. Persons who have been participating have joined via ZOOM this past week. **Anyone who wants to participate is invited to contact Fr. Seiker.** It is not too late to begin the study. Some of us have a little more time now. Please spend time sharing your faith with other Catholics & learning what "salvation" means.

	<b>7:00pm –8:15 or 8:30pm</b>	7:00pm	7:00pm
#6	<b>Not a Spectator Sport</b>	<u>Tuesday</u> April 14	<u>Thursday</u> April 16
#7	<b>Not Simply a Moment</b>	<u>Monday</u> April 20	<u>Thursday</u> April 23
#8	<b>Not Inevitable</b>	<u>Sunday</u> April 26	<u>Monday</u> April 27
#9	<b>Not Just for Other People</b>	<u>Thursday</u> May 7	<u>Friday</u> May 8
#10	<b>Not Only About the Future</b>	<u>Tuesday</u> May 12	<u>Thursday</u> May 14

## EASTER OCTAVE Liturgies:

All Masses are being livestreamed at

<https://www.facebook.com/seasnorthplatte/>

The videos of all Masses will also be available on the parish webpage about 1 hour after the end of the Mass at <http://seas-np.org/covid-19-mass-videos-at-seas/>

- April 11, **Holy Saturday 9:00pm Easter Vigil**
- April 12, **Easter Sunday 8:00am Easter Sunday Mass**
- **Monday – Friday during the Octave ... 7:00am.**

## Scheduled Times for Confession are:

- **Easter Sunday, April 12, 9:00am – 9:55am**
- **Monday–Friday during the Octave ... 12:00pm–1:00pm**

If these times don't fit your schedule, make an appointment to have your confession heard in the Parish Hall. **Be Forgiven!**

## Salvaton: What Every Catholic Should Know ...

a book by Dr. Michael Barber (*who spoke at our 2019 Forty Hours Eucharistic Devotions*) is available for parishioners and friends as an Easter gift from the parish. Please pick up your copy & enjoy reading it. Learn more about Salvation and how to answer the questions people ask you like: "Are you Saved?" You are also invited to join in the Study via ZOOM. You can watch the videos for the first 5 sessions on FORMED.ORG.

## The Lord's Descent into Hell ... (Ancient homily for Holy Saturday)

Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh & hell trembles with fear.

He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, he who is both God and the son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the cross, the weapon that had won him the victory. At the sight of him, Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone: "My Lord be with you all." Christ answered him: "And with your spirit." He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying:

"Awake, O sleeper, & rise from the dead, & Christ will give you light.

"I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and for your descendants, I now, by my own authority, command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise.

"I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I am in you; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated. For your sake I, your God, became your son; I, the Lord, took the form of a slave; I, whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth.

"For your sake, for the sake of man, I became like a man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed to the Jews in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden.

"See on my face the spittle I received in order to restore to you the life I once breathed into you. See there the marks of the blows I received in order to refashion your warped nature in my image. On my back see the marks of the scourging I endured to remove the burden of sin that weighs upon your back. See my hands, nailed firmly to a tree, for you who once wickedly stretched out your hand to a tree.

"I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side for you who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side has healed the pain in yours. My sleep will rouse you from your sleep in hell. The sword that pierced me has sheathed the sword that was turned against you.

"Rise, let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly paradise. I will not restore you to that paradise, but I will enthrone you in heaven. I forbade you the tree that was only a symbol of life, but see, I who am life itself am now one with you. I appointed cherubim to guard you as slaves are guarded, but now I make them worship you as God.

"The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift and eager. The bridal chamber is adorned, the banquet is ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The kingdom of heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity."

## FROM FR. MARK SEIKER:

### MERCY SUNDAY: Novena to the Divine Mercy ...

We began the novena at the service of the Seven Last Words on Good Friday after the Stations of the Cross at 12:10pm. Join in praying the Novena & Chaplet daily (*there is a pdf with the prayers on our webpage [under Resources]*). Also, please join (*either in person [maximum of 10 persons] or virtually*) in the **Holy Hour, Sun., April 19, 3:00pm-4:00pm, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church**, praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, & quiet prayer time. [*Confessions will be heard in the Parish Hall.*]

Be open to the Lord's mercy, pray for an outpouring of His mercy in your life, in the lives of those you love, & in all persons. Be merciful!

**Online Giving to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton ...** Due to the inability to have public Masses at this time, online giving to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church is now possible through the Diocese of Lincoln. These donations will be recorded by the Diocese and a notice will be sent to the parish of the giving and the amount transferred. The diocesan website link is <https://www.lincolndiocese.org/diocese/giving>.

## Liturgical Minister

<b>Lector</b>		
<b>Acolyte</b>		
<b>Server</b>		
<b>Music</b>		
<b>Gifts</b>		
<b>Ushers</b>		
<b>Rosary</b>		

## **Readings for the Week**

Monday:	Acts 2:14, 22-33; Ps 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11; Mt 28:8-15
Tuesday:	Acts 2:36-41; Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22; Jn 20:11-18
Wednesday:	Acts 3:1-10; Ps 105:1-4, 6-9; Lk 24:13-35
Thursday:	Acts 3:11-26; Ps 8:2ab, 5-9; Lk 24:35-48
Friday:	Acts 4:1-12; Ps 118:1-2, 4, 22-27a; Jn 21:1-14
Saturday:	Acts 4:13-21; Ps 118:1, 14-21; Mk 16:9-15
Sunday:	Acts 2:42-47; Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; 1 Pt 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31

**Prayers for the sick:** Those affected with/by COVID-19, Eli Skoch (nephew of Maggie [Skoch] Butler), Theresa McCarthy-Garth, Young woman (with many difficult situations), Rose Jurado, Troy Tickle, Iris Wyman Lloyd, Peggy Lawler, J.D. Troyer, Matt Reisen (Matt & Ashley Perlinger's friend), Special Intention, Carolyn Cohen, Tim Garth (Theresa McCarthy-Garth's son), Those struggling with Alcoholism, Mary Lou Robles (Toni Barron's sister), Renate Nordquist, Mike & Kim Paul, Jim Beckius.

**Prayers for the deceased:** Nellie Rodriguez (Toni Barron's sister), Reyes Robles (Toni Barron's brother-in-law), Margaret Ruskamp (Donna Bode's mother), Dolores Kosmicki, Patricia Zamora (Toni Barron's sister), Teresa Clouatre, Gordon Swanson (Cindy Swanson's father), Florena Schneweis (Emily Kronidak's mother), Carlos Fleury (Steve/Janet Fear's son-in-law), Ruby Ramirez (Toni Barron's sister), JoAnn Bode Waters (John Bode's sister), Eileen Boltz, Leona Clouatre, Bernadine Torres, Martha Burbach, Luke Ranck.

**Birthdays/Anniversaries:** 4/12 - Kay Cooper, 4/14 - Gianna Pieper, 4/18 - Bridger McCormick, Mina McCormick.

**Congratulations:** to Charles & Toni Barron who celebrate their 67<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary April 11.

**Congratulations:** to Jim & Henrietta Boots who celebrate their 45<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary April 19.

**TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION ...** The Lenten journey is now complete, its mission of renewal and preparation to receive new life fulfilled. The call to worship the Risen Lord has been received, and we gather to experience together the consoling presence of Christ in word and sacrament. We are at our best today, crowded and cramped to be sure, but the fullest sign of who we are meant to be. Christ has claimed us in the waters of baptism, we have acquired wonderful companions, and together we can accomplish great things. This is the day for rekindling the old flames of baptismal commitment, so we light the paschal candle, and by its light we make yet again the ancient promises to reject evil's grip and empty promises. Today we do not recite the Creed, but respond with one voice to age old questions. New life has to be nurtured, both the life of the newly baptized and the renewed life of those who have passed through Lent's refining prayer, fasting, and giving alms. At any Mass during the next fifty days, you may be surprised by grace and splashed by water! — Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

**SEEDS OF FAITH ...** There is a brevity, a certain terseness, in the scripture readings for Easter Sunday. Peter's speech in Acts is built of direct, pointed sentences. Paul's letters are based on straightforward creed-like statements. Even the Gospel story only briefly recounts what will turn out to be one of the most remarkable events in human history – the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Advertising agents call these encapsulated points of information “bullet points.” Scripture scholars call them kerygmata, or “kernels” of our faith. Actually, “kernels” or “seeds” are good terms for these statements, since throughout the Easter season, we will hear in the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters of Paul, and the Gospel accounts of the days following the Resurrection exactly how these kerygmata began to flower, how they continued to grow through the life of the early church. May these Easter “seeds” of faith serve a similar purpose for us, too, so that the life of the Risen Christ will flourish in us and through our witness in the coming days. — Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

**CHRIST HAS RISEN ...** Where is your sting, O death? Where is your victory, O hell? Christ has risen, and you are overthrown. Christ has risen, and the demons have fallen. Christ has risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ has risen, and life reigns. Christ has risen, and not one dead rests in the grave. For Christ having risen from the dead became the first-fruits of them that slept. To him be glory and majesty to ages of ages. Amen. — Byzantine Pentekostarion

**Pray for our Seminarians:** Augustine Xavier Reimers, from St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Seward. He entered the Seminary in 2016. He is in College 3 at St. Gregory the Great Seminary.

**Pray for our Religious Sisters:** School Sisters of Christ the King, Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln, Sisters at the Carmel of Jesus, Mary & Joseph, Pink Sisters, Sisters of Mary, Queen of Mercy.

## **HOLY FATHER'S INTENTIONS ... (April)**

**Universal Prayer Intention: Freedom from Addiction:** We pray that those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied.

## Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Patroness of All Who Long for the Eucharist

While this Holy Thursday will be marked by quiet in empty churches worldwide, due to the coronavirus pandemic, Mother Seton shows us just how great the shout of triumph will be when we can finally receive Him again.

Tom Hoopes  
April 8, 2020

This is the strangest Holy Thursday ever for so many of us.

We're unable to attend the Mass of the Last Supper on this night of the Institution of the Eucharist.



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton knows our pain. In 1807, she lamented “The first Sunday of exile from his Tabernacle” when she moved several miles away from her parish church. Not having the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament nearby was enough to distress her.

But she knew the pain of a much more significant “exile from the tabernacle” earlier in life, and hearing her story can help us during our isolation.

The story begins with Elizabeth discovering the Real Presence of the Eucharist overseas. She had traveled to Italy with her husband in hopes that a change in climate would cure his tuberculosis. It did not. But while in Italy, she witnessed the Eucharistic piety of the Catholics there.

Her husband William died in December of 1803 and by the summer of 1804, Elizabeth was already fascinated by the idea of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. She writes about one incident where she was attending Mass with a Protestant from England.

“At the very moment the priest was doing the most sacred action they call the elevation,” she said, “this wild young man said loud in my ear ‘this is what they call their real presence.’ My very heart trembled with shame and sorrow for his unfeeling interruption of their sacred adoration for all around was dead silence and many were prostrated.”

She said, “Involuntarily I bent from him to the pavement and thought secretly on the word of St. Paul with starting tears ‘they discern not the Lord’s body.’”

St. Elizabeth Ann found herself longing for faith in the Real Presence. In one letter she wrote, “My sister dear, how happy would we be if we believed what these dear souls believe, that they possess God in the Sacrament and that he remains in their churches and is carried to them when they are sick.”

She was tormented by the thought of how wonderful it would be if the Real Presence were true.

“When they carry the Blessed Sacrament under my window,” she wrote, “I feel the full loneliness and sadness of my case. I cannot stop the tears at the thought. My God, how happy would I be even so far away from all so dear, if I could find you in the church as they do.”

Elizabeth returned to New York and continued to attend Episcopalian services, but was turning toward the Catholic church — literally.

“I got in a side pew which turned my face towards the Catholic church in the next street, and found myself twenty times speaking to the Blessed Sacrament there instead of looking at the naked altar where I was or minding the routine of prayers,” she said.

Then, her separation from the Blessed Sacrament became almost too much to bear, like for so many of us today.

Elizabeth must have betrayed her feelings about the Blessed Sacrament because her Protestant friends started to challenge her. “How can you believe that there are as many gods as there are millions of altars and tens of millions of blessed hosts all over the world?” one asked.

Her answer shows that her longing had bloomed into faith:

*“Again I can but smile at his earnest words, for the whole of my cogitations about it are reduced to one thought ... it is God who does it, the same God who fed so many thousands with the little barley loaves and little fishes, multiplying them of course in the hands which distributed them...”*

In fact, she said, “nothing is so very hard to believe in it, since it is he who does it. Years ago I read in some old book, when you say a thing is a miracle and you do not understand it, you say nothing against the mystery itself, but only acknowledge your limited knowledge and comprehension which does not understand a thousand things you must yet own to be true.”

She even said, startlingly, that God makes less sense if the Eucharist isn't true:

*“If the religion which gives to the world, (at least to so great a part of it) the heavenly consolations attached to the belief of the Presence of God in the blessed Sacrament ... is the work and contrivance of men and priests as they say, then God seems not as earnest for our happiness as these contrivers.”*

St. Elizabeth Ann compares the Catholic tabernacle to the Ark of the Covenant in the ancient Jewish Temple and laments, in the Protestant world, “our churches with nothing but naked walls and our altars unadorned.”

In her morning walks, she says, the beauty of nature is lost on her. *“I see nothing but the little bright cross on St. Peter's steeple,”* marking where Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is.

When she is finally able to receive the Blessed Sacrament, Elizabeth's delight is inspiring.

It is in Lent of 1805 when she finally gets her wish. The way Elizabeth anticipates the Eucharist is how we all should anticipate our return to the Sacrament when we are allowed back:

*“At last Amabilia — at last. GOD IS MINE and I AM HIS,”* she writes in one letter. *“I HAVE RECEIVED HIM.”*

St. Elizabeth Ann recounts how she counted the moments that brought her “nearer the moment he would enter the poor, poor, little dwelling so all his own. And when he did — the first thought, I remember, was ‘Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered!’ for it seemed to me my King had come to take his throne, and instead of the humble tender welcome I had expected to give him, it was but a triumph of joy and gladness that the deliverer was come.”

There is nothing so sad as knowing that God himself is nearby, waiting, but just out of reach.

The very first Holy Thursday was marked by the hushed awe the Apostles must have had at their first experience of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament.

While this Holy Thursday will be marked by quiet in empty churches worldwide, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton shows us just how great the shout of triumph will be when we can finally receive Him again.

Tom Hoopes, author most recently of *The Rosary of Saint John Paul II*, is writer in residence at Benedictine College in Kansas, where he teaches. A former reporter in the Washington, D.C., area, he served as press secretary for the U.S. House Ways & Means Committee Chairman and spent 10 years as editor of the *National Catholic Register* newspaper and Faith & Family magazine. His work frequently appears in the *Register*, *Aleteia*, and *Catholic Digest*. He lives in Atchison, Kansas, with his wife, April, and has nine children. Source: setonshrine.org (<https://tinyurl.com/semhhfd>)

## St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Patroness of the Quarantine



Not only did St. Elizabeth Ann Seton endure much suffering and illness throughout her life, but she underwent her own harrowing quarantine with her dying husband far from home. This Lent we can unite our own inner and exterior trials across time and space with the communion of saints.

Heather King  
March 20, 2020

“My eyes smart so much with crying, wind and fatigue that I must close them and lift up my heart... God is our all indeed. If sufferings abound in us, his Consolations also greatly abound, and far exceed all utterance... If I could forget my God one moment at these times, I should go mad.”

—Elizabeth Ann Seton, journal entries while quarantined in Italy, 1803.

In response to the spread of the coronavirus, abroad and at home, many of us are in imposed or self-imposed quarantine.

The word quarantine arose in the mid-17th century: from the Italian *quarantina* “forty days,” from *quaranta* “forty.”

One of the earliest mentions of the practice is found in the Book of Leviticus, generally agreed to have been written between the fifth and eighth centuries BC. (Lev 13:4-54, 14:38)

But the word came into general usage in the fourteenth century with the spread of the Black Death, as the bubonic plague was known, along the Mediterranean coast. The goal was originally to protect coastal cities from plague epidemics.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton experienced quarantine twice in her relatively short life.

In 1799 her father, Dr. Richard Bayley, was appointed Chief Medical Officer at the Quarantine Station on Staten Island in 1799. He contracted yellow fever in 1801, suffered excruciating pain for a week, and died with Elizabeth at his side.

Two years later, she embarked to Italy with her husband William (not, at the time, a believer) and their eight-year-old daughter Anna Maria. William was sickly, and the family hoped the restful ocean voyage and balmy Mediterranean air would do him good.

Instead, as soon as they landed in Livorno (then known as Leghorn), Italian authorities decided that William appeared to have yellow fever himself. The family was whisked away via canal some distance from the city and installed in a *lazaretto*—quarantine station—located in a stone tower.

A “lazaretto” is a place designated to house lepers and diseased poor persons (the Italian *lazar* actually means leper). The concept first arose in the 1540s around Venice: well-known as a port for plague-infested ships arriving from the East.

The word derives from the Biblical proper name Lazarus—the brother of Martha and Mary who, in the well-known Gospel story, Christ raised from the dead.

The dank, cold *lazaretto* to which the Setons were confined consisted of bare walls, a brick floor, and windows through which the wind whistled, bringing dust and debris that sent William into fits of racking coughs.

Faithful friends brought the family mattresses, food, and wood for the small fireplace. They spent 25 days in seclusion during which William's condition steadily worsened. Almost miraculously during this time, however, he also came to accept Christ as his Lord and Savior.

They were released on December 19 and immediately needed to make an arduous 15-mile carriage trip. William died nine days later, giving thanks for Christ's mercy.

Forty days is the time during which an infection supposedly runs its course. Lent also lasts 40 days, based on the time Christ spent in the desert being tempted by the devil.

The connection is interesting. A quarantine purports to purify the body. Lent by contrast constitutes a kind of purification period for the soul; a mini-quarantine from the worldly lust for power and possessions during which we're invited to give ourselves ever more fully to the Father's will alone.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton spent her own 40 days in the desert, suffering bodily mortifications, watching the love of her life wither and die, tempted we can surmise by anxiety and fear on behalf of her daughter.

Christ's time in the desert formed him for his vocation of casting out demons and healing, including raising Lazarus from the dead.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's experiences with quarantine perhaps helped form her vocation as well.

Without suffering through the death of first her father, then her husband from yellow fever, would she have attained the full richness and depth of her faith?

Without the mental and spiritual agony, the isolation of those 40 days in her *lazaretto*, would she have had the strength to return to the U.S., convert to Catholicism, endure the subsequent censure and estrangement from her in-laws, founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph and establish what is generally considered to have been the first Catholic schools in America?

We can't know of course. But as we increasingly abstain from large gatherings, travel, and all inessential activities outside our homes to help stem the tide of the coronavirus, we can know we are in solidarity with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, and with Christ.

We can know this Lent that the whole world has become a temporary "lazaretto."

In it, we are called to pray deeply, love with all our hearts, and ponder the words we heard on Ash Wednesday: "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return."

HEATHER KING is an essayist, memoirist, blogger, speaker and Catholic convert. She has authored numerous books, among them *Holy Desperation*; *Parched*; *Redeemed*; *Poor Baby*; and *Stumble: Virtue, Vice and the Space Between*. She contributes a monthly column to *Magnificat*, and writes a weekly column on arts and culture for *Angelus News*. Heather lives in Los Angeles and blogs at [www.Heather-King.com](http://www.Heather-King.com). Source: [setonshrine.org](http://setonshrine.org) (<https://tinyurl.com/wz9d8lp>)