



Elizabeth, Meet Francis

On the Feast of St. Elizabeth Seton, we have been invited into a conversation with Elizabeth who is joined by Pope Francis. As we attend to their words, we contemplate what parts of our own stories might be inserted into the conversation. If we are reflecting by ourselves, we could write our reflection. If we are with others, we may enter the conversation with them.



(Prior to each reflection and in conclusion, participants may wish to sing the Taize Jubilate Deo.)

Mission

“...to speak the joy of my soul at the prospect of being able to assist the poor, visit the sick, comfort the sorrowful, clothe little innocents, and teach them to love God! There I must stop.”

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

“The Gospel joy that enlivens the community of disciples is a missionary joy. The 72 disciples felt it as they returned from their mission (*Luke 10:17*). Jesus felt it when he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and praised the Father for revealing himself to the poor and the little ones (*Luke 10:21*). It was felt by the first converts who marveled to hear the apostles preaching “in the native language of each” (*Acts 2:6*) on the day of Pentecost. This joy is a sign that the Gospel has been proclaimed and is bearing fruit.”

Evangelii Gaudium ¶21

Joy and Sorrow

“God is with us, and if sufferings abound in us, his consolations also greatly abound, and far exceed in utterance.”

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

“There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter. I realize of course that joy is not expressed the same way at all times in life, especially at moments of great difficulty. Joy adapts and changes, but it always endures, even as a flicker of light born in our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved.”

Evangelii Gaudium ¶6

Community

“You know I am as a Mother encompassed by many children of different dispositions – not all equally amiable or congenial, but bound to love, instruct, and provide for the happiness of all, to give the example of cheerfulness, peace, resignation, and consider individuals more as proceeding from the same Origin and tending to the same end than in the different shades of merit or demerit.”

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

“Differences between persons and communities can sometimes prove uncomfortable, but the Holy Spirit, who is the source of that diversity, can bring forth something good from all things and turn it into an attractive means of evangelization. Diversity must always be reconciled by the help of the Holy Spirit, who alone can raise up diversity, plurality and multiplicity, and who at the same time can bring about unity. When we, for our part, aspire to diversity, we become self-enclosed, exclusive and divisive; similarly, whenever we attempt to create unity on the basis of our human calculations, we end up imposing a monolithic uniformity. This is not helpful for the church’s mission.”

Evangelii Gaudium ¶ 131

Peace

"Never be hurried by anything whatsoever, and nothing can be more pressing than the necessity for your peace before God - commit everything to him that passes thro' your hands; you will help others more by the peace and tranquility of your heart than by any eagerness or care you can bestow on them."

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

“A church that ‘goes forth’ is a church whose doors are open. Going out to others in order to reach the fringes of humanity does not mean rushing out aimlessly into the world. Often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others, to stop rushing from one thing to another and to remain with someone who has faltered along the way. At times we have to be like the father of the prodigal son, who always keeps his door open so that when the son returns, he can readily pass through it.”

Evangelii Gaudium ¶ 46

Jubilate Deo

Ju - bi - la - te De - o om - nis ter - ra.
Raise a song of glad - ness, peo - ples of the earth.
Al - Se - nor a - cla - ma, tie - rra_en - te - ra.

Ser - vi - te Do - mi - no in lae - ti - ti - a.
Christ has come, bring - ing peace, joy to ev - 'ry heart.
Sir - ve - lo, dan - do - le gra - cias por su_a - mor.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, in lae - ti - ti - a!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, joy to ev - 'ry heart!
A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, gra - cias por su_a - mor!

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, in lae - ti - ti - a!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, joy to ev - 'ry heart.
A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ia, gra - cias por su_a - mor!

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Photograph of Pope Francis from charismanews.com.

Portrait of Elizabeth Seton by Sister Fides Glass, SC, of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill,
Greensburg, PA.