



St Elizabeth Ann Seton (August 28, 1774 – January 4, 1821) was the first native-born citizen of the US to be canonized. She established the first Catholic school in the nation, at Emmitsburg, Maryland, where she founded the first American congregation of religious sisters, the Sisters of Charity.

First Reading: (1 Jn 3:22 - 4:6) We receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who keep his commandments abide in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God. This is the spirit of antichrist, of which you heard that it was coming, and now it is in the world already. Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world, therefore what they say is of the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and he who is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Ps 2:7-8, 10-11

R./ I will give you the nations for your heritage.

Gospel: (Mt 4:12-17, 23-25) When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles -- the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

REFLECTION

"Repent and believe in the gospel, for the kingdom of God is near". This was the first proclamation of Jesus. This nearness of the kingdom is seen in Jesus' ministry of preaching and healing. Jesus ceaselessly preaches the good news of love and comfort of God and tirelessly heals the sick of various ailments. To receive and experience God's kingdom one must repent and believe. True repentance involves giving up sin and returning to the Lord. True believing is to turn to God, to trust Him and be loyal to Him. **Repentance is a fundamental requirement from a true follower of Christ. This is manifested and authenticated in a twofold mission: to listen to God's word and to transmit the same; to be healed by the Lord and to heal others through devotion and benevolence.**