PART VI
Religious Foundress 1809-1820

June - December 1809

6.1 To Rev. William Dubourg, S.S.¹

Winchester Friday Afternoon [June 21, 1809]

My friend and Father will I know be pleased to hear that we are so far safe tho' our progress is so much slower than you expected—your turnpike road is to be sure a very rough one and we were obliged to walk the Horses all the way - and have walked ourselves all except Cecilia nearly half the time—this morning four miles and a half before Breakfast. the dear patient was greatly amused at the procession and all the natives astonished as we went before the carriage - the dogs and pigs came out to meet us and the geese stretched their necks in mute demand to know if we were any of their sort to which we gave assent

Cecilia is already stronger and eats something—you know what spirits this must give us.

the gentleman who will take this cannot wait a moment - do do present me as you know and wish to everyone particularly Madame B² and my Sisters, and Cashus—

6.1 ASJPH 1-3-2:5

¹Cecilia Seton, Elizabeth’s sister-in-law, arrived in Baltimore in early June accompanied by her sister Harriet and escorted by her brother Samuel Waddington Seton and Guy Carlton Bayley, Elizabeth’s half-brother. Her health was so poor that Dr. Pierre Chatard advised her immediate removal to the country. Thus, Elizabeth assembled the small party of Anna Maria, Cecilia, Harriet, and Sister Maria Murphy Burke to go with her to Emmitsburg earlier than planned. They left Baltimore June 22 and stayed overnight near Winchester, now Westminster, Maryland, before arriving in Emmitsburg the following day. The rest of the group remained in Baltimore.

²Possibly refers to Madame Bruslé, the housemother at St. Mary’s in Baltimore, and Elizabeth’s sister-companions at Paca Street
No doubt the dear children are well and the Sisters very good—we are going off in an hour to sleep to night at Myers 8 miles hence

Harriet gives orders in your name remember Peace and Pardon for Your poor X cross

the girls beg to be laid at your feet

6.2 To Matthias O’Conway

jmk

Mount St. Marys [1] 25th June [1809]

My dear O’Conway

I have before me your gay and sweet and lovely Columkill [O’Conway] - he has been held close in my arms and heart, wishing that his dear Mother could do the same - his countenance is as ruddy as the morning, his eyes the bluest I ever saw and his whole person the picture of health. his teacher is a venerable fine looking man - he says your darling has most promising dispositions as to morals, and also very good talents but like most of us he wants diligence, Yet is really and truly a good child.

Cecilia Veronica [O’Conway] will tell you why I am here as I have but a moment—dear Columkill asked directly for Cecilia remember he shall never want a mother while I am here.

Remember me tenderly to your dear Family my dear Friend Mrs. [Rebecca Archer] O[Conway] and Mr. Jos[eph O’Conway] in

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6.2 PAHRC MC 44:1,3

1Rev. John Dubois, S.S., welcomed Elizabeth and her first sisters to Emmitsburg. He surrendered his log cabin on St. Mary’s Mountain for their use until repairs were completed on the farmhouse they were to occupy. This cabin originally served as a retreat house for the Baltimore Sulpicians.

Rev. John Dubois, S.S., (1764-1842), born in France and ordained in 1787, arrived in the United States in 1791 as a refugee from the French Revolution. He was appointed by Bishop John Carroll as a circuit-riding missionary in central Maryland and the Blue Ridge, and in 1795 he became pastor in Frederick, Maryland. He joined the Sulpicians in 1808, the same year he founded Mount St. Mary’s College and Seminary in Emmitsburg. Dubois, imaginative, a gifted scholar, and a determined character, was often called “Little Napoleon” by the students. In 1811 he became the third superior of the Sisters of Charity, a position in which he remained until 1826 when he was appointed bishop of New York (1826-42). At the time of his episcopal appointment, he withdrew from the Sulpicians.
particular and be assured of the constant and warmest affection of your friend MEASX

I did not tell you we were half in the sky the highth of our situation is almost incredible. the Chapel\textsuperscript{2} elegant Simplicity Oh Oh Oh— but—the Body is without its Soul—You know. thy kingdom come - thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven\textsuperscript{4} Amen 100000000

\textbf{6.3 To George Weis\textsuperscript{1}}

[August 6, 1809]

My dear George

Will you send my little cabinet. a bed for Sister Rose\textsuperscript{2} is to come

\textsuperscript{2}Old St. Mary’s Church on the mountain was built by Rev. John Dubois. James Hughes, a builder from Emmitsburg, contracted to do the work in 1805-1806. It served the students from the college as well as Catholics from the area.

\textsuperscript{3}Cf. Matt. 6:10.

\textsuperscript{4}The next two pages contain a letter from Sister Cecilia O’Conway to her father.

\textbf{6.3 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:64}

\textsuperscript{1}George Weis, a resident of Baltimore who lived near St. Mary’s Seminary, was a carpenter and contractor who built St. Mary’s Chapel in Baltimore and Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg. He and his family developed a lasting friendship with Elizabeth and her companions as they were preparing to leave for Emmitsburg in 1809. He developed a deep spiritual relationship with Elizabeth and remained a helpful friend of the community during his lifetime.

\textsuperscript{2}Rose Landry White (1784-1841) was a native of Baltimore who married Captain Joseph White in 1799. When her husband was lost at sea, she was left with two small children. She found support from Rev. John David, S.S., who directed her to charitable work and to Elizabeth’s new community in June 1809. When Elizabeth went to Emmitsburg later that month, Sister Rose was left in charge in Baltimore. She and the remaining sisters and students joined Elizabeth in Emmitsburg July 29. She was a member of the first novitiate and pronounced vows July 19, 1813. She was elected Assistant to Elizabeth (1812), Assistant Procuratrix (1814), and appointed Sister Servant at the Asylum in Philadelphia (1814) and New York (1817). In April 1820 she returned to St. Joseph’s, Emmitsburg, because of ill health, and was then elected to succeed Elizabeth as mother (1821-27). At the conclusion of her term, she was sent to St. Vincent’s, Washington, DC (1827), the Baltimore Infirmary (1828), St. Joseph’s, Emmitsburg (1828), and the Orphan Asylum and School, Brooklyn NY (1831). She was again elected Mother of the community (1833-39), after which she went to St. John’s School, Frederick, MD, (1839) where she died July 25. She is buried in the original community cemetery in Emmitsburg. See A-6.3a for Rose White’s journal covering the period from June 1809 to August 1817. It contains typical journal events, biographical details of the early sisters, obituaries, letters, and other items.
and if they could be sent together it would be best.³ May the multiplied blessing of this precious octave be with you pray for Me as I do for you

MEAS

6.4 To Archbishop John Carroll

[August 6, 1809]

My dear and tender Father

—It was my intention to have written to you on my first arrival at the [St. Mary’s] mountain but so many things occurred to disappoint and distress me that it was impossible to say anything that would not give you more pain than pleasure—since then our situation is fixed (at least for the present) the Sisters¹ left at home have joined us and my

³By this time everyone from Elizabeth’s party had moved into the farmhouse in St. Joseph’s Valley. This home had been built about 1750 and had belonged to the Robert Fleming family before it was purchased by Samuel Cooper. It became known as the Stone House and served as the community residence until February 1810. It contained four rooms, two upstairs and two down. It was later expanded and served as the laundry building. It remained at its original site on a hill overlooking Tom’s Creek until 1979 when it was moved closer to St. Joseph’s Provincial House.

¹By July 29 the rest of Elizabeth’s children, Catherine, Rebecca, William, and Richard; two boarders, Isabella O’Conway and Julia LeBreton; and the other women who had joined Elizabeth in Baltimore had arrived at Emmitsburg. These included Sisters Rose White, Cecilia O’Conway, Mary Ann Butler, Susan Clossey, Catherine Mullen, and Ann Nabbs who kept house.

Mary Ann Butler (1784-1821), born in Ireland, joined Elizabeth in Baltimore during the spring of 1809. She pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. She became known as Sister Mary Ann and was noted for composing words for hymns, including “O What Could My Jesus Do More.” She died at St. Joseph’s and is buried there in the original community cemetery.

Susan Clossey (1785-1823), born in Ireland, joined Elizabeth in Baltimore May 24, 1809. Known as Sister Susan (Sus), she pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. She became close to Elizabeth as she nursed members of the Seton family, especially the children, when they were seriously ill. Elizabeth described her as “one of the sweetest souls . . . who has lived in my very heart and been more than an own sister to me . . .” (ASJPH 1-3-3-6:104). She was in the first group sent to the Asylum in Philadelphia (1814) but returned to St. Joseph’s in 1815. She again went to Philadelphia in 1818 where she became Sister Servant. She also served at St. Mary’s School there, and in 1820 she was appointed Treasurer pro-tem of the community. She died in Emmitsburg May 6, 1823, and is buried in the original community cemetery there.

Catherine Mullen (1783-1815), joined Elizabeth in Baltimore just before the first group left for Emmitsburg in June 1809. Known as Sister Catherine or Kitty, she pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. She was elected to the first council in August 1809, elected Treasurer (1812), and appointed novice mistress (1813). She died on Christmas Day at St. Joseph’s and is buried in the original community cemetery in Emmitsburg.
dear children even my Boys are all reunited to poor Mother, our Cecilia whose illness seemed incurable is restored, and Harriet another dear Sister who came with her is we hope in God in a fair way of becoming a good Catholic—Mr. [John] Dubois who is all kindness and charity to us we begin to get accustomed to,³ and we also have the consolation of observing in some degree the System which is hereafter to govern us,⁴ and no doubt the goodness of our Lord will support us thro’ all our weakness and infirmities—Yet as you are truly our Father it cannot be right to conceal from you that both myself and Sisters have been greatly chagrined by a letter received from our Superior [William Dubourg] soon after I came here which required of me not only myself to give up a correspondance with the person in whom I have most confidence,⁵ and to whom I am indebted for my greatest spiritual advantage, but also to eradicate as far as possible from the minds of the Sisters that confidence and attachment they all have for him. Sister Rose [White] and Kathy Mullen are the only persons in the community who have an interest in any other director and as all the rest are of one heart and voice with respect to Father Babade it seemed a severe regulation and with respect to myself it was cutting me off from the advice of the only one, of nine different Priests I have confessed to from necessity, to whom I ever yet had opened my heart or been able to draw the consolation and instruction so necessary in my situation—but accustomed as I am almost habitually to sacrifice every thing I most value in this life I should have acquiesed quietly tho my heart was torn to pieces but the others could not bear it in the same

³Harriet Seton had expressed interest in becoming a Catholic in New York but had met family opposition. She professed her faith in the Catholic church and made her First Communion September 24, 1809. She was confirmed a few weeks later by Archbishop John Carroll and took the name of Madeleine.

⁴Rev. John Dubois, S.S., was the parish priest in Emmitsburg and came into frequent contact with the sisters.

⁵July 31, feast of St. Ignatius Loyola who was patron of the Maryland missions, marks the foundation day of the Sisters of Charity. It was then that the sisters began a regular way of life following an order of the day. See A-6.4a for the Provisional Regulations for the St. Joseph Sisters. On August 18 the sisters assembled to vote for a council to assist Elizabeth and her assistant, Rose White. Sisters Catherine Mullen, Cecilia O’Conway, and Cecilia Seton were the first elected council.

⁶Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S., had been the well beloved confessor and spiritual director of the sisters while they were in Baltimore.
way, and the idea so difficult to conceal that our Superior was acting like a tyrant—the reserve we all felt to the excellent Mr. Dubois knowing that he and the Superior had but one Soul—all this my dear Sir has been the source of a thousand temptations, and the enemy of all good has tried us hard you may be sure, added to all it pleased our Lord to withdraw from me all comfort in devotion and deprive me in a manner of the light of his countenance at the very time the foot of the cross was my only refuge.

—now I am going straight on by Faith but if I were to indulge myself instead of rejoicing in the delightful prospect of serving and honoring God in a situation I have so long earnestly desired, death and the Grave would be my only anticipation, but you know your child too well to believe any such indulgence is allowed—on the contrary I abandon myself to God continually, and invite all my dear companions to do the same.—to day the Superior has given the Sisters a copy of the rule relating to correspondants which permits every one to write once in two months to the Director they prefer, on subjects of direction which are disignated—none of us ever desired any thing more, and if this had been understood at first much uneasiness would have been spared - but the adored will be done—and do you our dearest Father but bless us and pray for us and all will be well—there has been some very busy persons making exaggerations to our Superior about my writing large packages to Father Babade which package sent only twice I truly explained to him contained letters from Cecilia, Harriet, my Anna, Maria [Murphy] Burk, (and my little girls who are fondly attached to him and used to write him constantly when in Baltimore) and the packages he twice sent us contained the life of Clotilda of France,6 and the manner of regular meditation and mental prayer which I had never followed in a manner necessary for a community

—Well, my own troubles will teach me I hope how to comfort others, and serve as the payment of some little part of the great debt I own, may they last until Death if good will come from them, only do do pray for your child, and be so good as to promise that you will not

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6St. Clotilda of France (474?-545), the widow of Clovis, king of the Franks, and a mother of three sons. She spent her widowhood helping the sick and poor at Tours.
speak of the contents of this, or any other letter I may write you, that
without restraint I may speak to you as to our Lord.
—Our dear Rose is my Treasure - she is truly excellent - Kitty too is
all goodness they lay their very heart at your feet united with that of
their unworthy Mother, with dear Cecilia’s, and all your children.
how much I thank you for telling me of our every dear Mrs. [Joanna]
Barry - do if you write her say every thing for me affection can dictate,
and also pray mention us all tenderly to our dear Mrs. [Mary Ann]
Barry in Gay Street - if I had been rightly in my Senses since I have
been here I should have written her as I ought, for never can I express
my Sense of her goodness to us all =

Your account of Louisa [Caton] cuts to the heart - I must say I had
other hopes - but patience, she certainly cannot forget all her promises
and resolutions.

My dear Boys are here or rather at the Seminary of the mountain for
the present—can you will you forgive all this detail, pity a creature so
weak and imperfect - all my hope is that your dear self like our Lord
will accept the good will.

All ways yours with truest respect affection MEASeton.

6.5 Copy to George Weis¹

St. Joseph’s² 26th August 1809

My dear Weiss,

I know it will please you, and your dear wife to hear from your
friend, though I have nothing new to tell you except that we are more
accustomed to our mountain home than when you last heard from us
and that our Cecilia [Seton] is quite strong, and your favorite Harriet
Magdalen [Seton] is waiting only for our dear Father to become a true
and fervent child of our Holy Church. She has news from her

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¹The text is in the handwriting of Rev. Simon Bruté, S.S.
²The location of the property the sisters occupied was in the area known as St. Joseph’s Valley.
bethrothed [Andrew Barclay Bayley] that she cannot expect him for two years more and she is determined to stay with us, which you may be sure is a great comfort. tell your dear wife that her little Azov races after every priest he sees, and is faithless to his master and mistress both but he is so handsome and lively, we cannot help loving him as well as for her sake that gave him, but not as we love the pigeons, for every body takes care of them and there is no such thing to be seen here as a tame pigeon. Kitty and Becky [several words scratched out] are very well. They often amuse themselves telling me what they did while I was away and how often they dined with you and how good dear Mrs. Weiss was to them—do tell my friend C. D. S. that I will write to him by the return of our dear Father [Pierre Babade] whom we are looking for every day—Harriet would not consent to go to the feet of any one else. (A weak uninformed faith still!)

27.—I can never forget the kindness you have shown us but my mind and body have both suffered what God alone can tell since I left you but he knows how truly I am attached to you and how fervently I beg His blessings may be with you forever. if in this world he gives them to you as to me in crosses and contradictions let us live by faith since we know it is much better to suffer for a time that we may afterwards partake of His glory—my dear Anina C[eelia] and H[arriet] desire to be affectionately remembered to you both—Becky says tell M. Weiss I send my best, best love to her and Mr. Weiss too don’t forget him Mother—And Kitty says she sends her best love. That is all we poor creatures have to give.

6.6 To Archbishop John Carroll

8th September 1809

My Father in God

- Our Superior [William Dubourg] has written us the welcome news that we may expect our Father [Pierre] Babade here in a short
time but mentioned that he did not know if you would give him permission to hear the Sisters.—how many times since have I begged our Lord to direct me what to do - on the one hand I know it may displease you if I say any more on the subject, and on the other side my dear girls¹ are continually begging me “O dear Mother do write to the Bishop [John Carroll] he is a Father to us and will not deny your request” but I have put them off until the last few days my Cecilia [Seton] is again sick and blistered and her pains being accompanied by particular depression of spirits the only consolation I can give her is the promise of writing you to beg in her name and the names of four other Sisters ² who desire the comfort and feel the necessity as she does of unfolding their souls to him that you will allow them the privilege which will insure their contentment and Peace - for my part I assure you that if it is not granted to me you will leave a Soul so dear to you in a cloud of uneasiness which can be dissipated in no other way. It would seem as if our Lord has inspired this confidence in my Soul and in those of many others round me for my severe and most painful trial, circumstanced as I am—his ever blessed adorable will be done, but as he permits us to desire and express that desire to you as our Father you will not be displeased with me for again troubling you on a subject on which you seemed already to have made known your intentions.

We are looking out for your promised visit³ and long for the time - Mr. [John] Dubois has announced it publickly - how happy shall we be to recieve your dear Paternal Benediction once more—Oh that dear Mrs. [Joanna] Barry might be with you as we once hoped - have you any news from her—do remember me most affectionately to our kind friends Mr. and Mrs. R[obert] Barry - to the Welsh family - and good little Mrs. Craig - I suppose she has given up her desire of visiting us.

committing the success of our requests to our dear Virgin Mother I am and always must be your faithful Affectionate child and servant MEASeton

¹Elizabeth’s daughters and some of the sisters wished to make their confessions to Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S.
²Sisters Cecilia O’Conway, Mary Ann Butler, Susan Clossey, and Maria Murphy Burke
³Archbishop John Carroll came to Emmitsburg October 20, 1809, and confirmed Harriet Seton.
May I beg as the penitent at your feet that this may not be communicated to any one - if Mr. Dubois should know this request was made his feelings would be hurt and it would answer no purpose.

6.7 To Julia Scott

20th September 1809

Oh my Julia

what a letter have I received from you [who] but yourself could have written it to your friend who seemed to have forgotten you. about a month ago I wrote you in a very lively mood a parcel of nonsense about your abandoning me imagining I wore a straight waistcoat and giving you some droll idea of my position which letter would illy reply to your dear tender expression therefore seriously and sincerely I will answer all your questions one by one—and in the first place never was I more at liberty or in a happier state of mind to answer and make every communication to the dear ones of my heart of whom you ever must be the first. why I have not written or rather sent what I wrote is only another proof of that careless disposition so often lamented; and also from a certainty that you were not at home and probably would not be until the fall. as to affection Julia and the tenderest solicitude for all that concerned you—the tears gush at the thought you could have reason to doubt it—yet you know not that the nearer a soul is truly united to God the more its sensibilities are increased to every being of his creation much more to those whom it is bound to love by the tenderest and most endearing ties.

you will hear a thousand reports of nonsense about our community which I beg you not to mind - the truth is we have the best ingredients of happiness—order, peace, and solitude. there are only 16 now in
[the] family\(^1\) a steward who supplies all our outdoor wants - a housekeeper who regulates within [Kitty Mullen], a superintendent of the work room, and my dear Cecilia (who takes charge of my children and two dear little girls\(^2\) I brought from Baltimore) take all fatigue and care off my hands as much as if I was a child myself. I am a name to keep up regularity and to say there is a head to the house - the chief work I do is to walk about with my knitting in my hand (we supply or are to supply knitting and spinning [for] the college and two seminaries\(^3\) of Mr. [William] Dubourgs with socks and cloth), give my opinion, see that everyone is in their place, write letters, read and give good advice—

Your Anna makes you uneasy but again I assure you circumstanced as she is with young DuP[avillon] she is a thousand times happier here than she could be elsewhere—she has no restraint or want of amusement - nothing can be more pleasant than our situation as to woods meadows etc the comforts of life in plenty, Cecilia and Harriet are the companions of her choice if she had a thousand—she studies French Spanish and Italian with them under a Mistress who is sweetness and modesty itself, a Miss [Cecilia O’] Conway daughter of the Spanish teacher in Philadelphia—her progress will never be of any consequence probably but she is pleased and it keeps her busy—indeed my Julia if you had her she would be a source of perpetual uneasiness to you for as she grows up and looses herself from that blind obedience exacted from a child under thirteen, she takes many varieties of temper which makes her disposition so unequal that until she is more matured and experience teaches her some necessary lessons it is very difficult to make her happy. the great error now past and

\(^1\)In addition to those already mentioned, two women from Emmitsburg joined the young community in its early months. Sarah (Sally) Thompson (1779-1850) entered July 30, 1809, completed the first novitiate, and pronounced vows July 19, 1813. Because she was from the neighborhood, she served as “steward” or business manager for the community. Known as Sister Sally, she spent her entire community life in the Emmitsburg area at St. Joseph’s and Mount St. Mary’s in domestic service. She is buried in the original community cemetery in Emmitsburg.

Ellen Thompson (1788-1813) entered in September 1809, completed the first novitiate, and pronounced vows July 19, 1813. Known as Sister Ellen, she had delicate health and died at St. Joseph’s. She is buried in the original community cemetery in Emmitsburg.

\(^2\)Isabella O’Conway and Julia LeBreton who had been students at Paca Street

\(^3\)St. Mary’s in Baltimore and Mount St. Mary’s in Emmitsburg
irreparable on my part is to have made her my friend and companion too soon, few dispositions like your dear amiable Maria can bear to be advanced so soon, but all will be right at last with the excellent examples she has in both her aunts—

Cecilia's complaint of the breast so far remains that it is impossible for her to undertake the burden of cares she left at home in the charge of housekeeper and Teacher in James Seton's family besides that some delicate circumstances of a connection he has formed make it extremely improper any young female should reside there—here she finds a house after her own heart, and the summit of all earthly desires which is to live with me—

Barclay has written poor Harriet a proposal that he should remain 8 or ten years longer in Jamaica to obtain a fortune - she is so shocked with a proposal which so evidently shows his indifference to her that it seems to disgust her with every thing of the kind. however I hope he will know how to appreciate her merit and constancy and things may be accommodated in a shorter time.—she has resolved to wait the event patiently and make the best use of her time in the interval—Ann and Cecilia are the gainer and she is determined to hide her disappointment in our Mountains and keep out of the circles of fashion this winter which would be impossible if she returned to New York.—

I wish Sister Charlott's curiosity southward had been awakened before we left Baltimore - I think you will all come to see me next summer and take a laugh at our black gowns and demure looks which however hide a set of as lively merry hearts as ever met together. My darling sweet Boys are here also all health and life - they came just in the vacation and I found they would be so well in the Seminary here which has equal advantage with the one in Baltimore without such a multitude of Boys that I obtained from Mr. [William] Dubourg a place - and every Wednesday they are in Mother's arms—it is such a comfort to have all within my reach you well know.—The note you inclosed

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4Cecilia Seton had tuberculosis.
5Cecilia Seton had been living in her brother James' home and caring for his eight motherless children before her arrival in Baltimore.
6Elizabeth's half-brother Andrew Barclay Bayley had gone to Jamaica by 1806 in order to pursue a mercantile career. At the time he was engaged to Harriet Seton.
my darling friend was very very unexpected—the House of Murrey in N[ew] York informed me thro Brother [Samuel] Craig that they have no more funds of the Filicchis which I cannot understand - nor have I heard from Leghorn since I left N[ew] York except by a Brother in law of the F[ilicchi]s who tells me they made a hundred thousand dollars during the Embargo by some fortunate speculation while every one here was losing. their constant Friendship I cannot doubt so that I hope soon for some explanation. Your love in the mean time supplies all - we should not have suffered for any thing however a more generous set of beings than those whose hands I am in you cannot imagine - never have the least apprehension on that score—if you knew half the really good your friend possesses while the world thinks she is deprived of every thing worth having you would moralize an hour at least and allow that she has truly and really the best of it. If I am not strong in health it is because my constitution is broken, air, exercise, good food, Indolence and content ought to strengthen me, but so long a combat as I have gone thro’ will leave its vestiges - yet there is no settled complaint of any kind—one strong north wester will brace all again—how I wish you could take it with me

—what are you doing darling, dear Glorianna?—You are well, you have many comforts, but you have not all—When you are taken to the sick bed what will you say - you will acknowledge you have had enough - too much of this world because it has bound you - but you will feel a want which nothing then can supply—the long long long life in perspective will seem a strange land with strange inhabitants—think about it a little—do you know dearest that after all my neglect of you and the little reason you have to think I love you with the boundless tenderness I do love you with - God is my witness I would this moment gladly give my life to obtain for you the comforts to be obtained in that hour - the Peace of a Soul going to its kindest dearest tenderest friend—hush—you understand—when I think of you sometimes I could go and tear you away from all and wrap you in the bosom that loves and has loved you so long—what would I not do to give you

7An affectionate name for Julia Scott. Glorianna is also the name of the Faerie Queen in The Faerie Queen by Edmund Spencer. Elizabeth was probably familiar with this famous allegorical epic containing themes related to virtue.
only a little taste—dear dear dear friend - you laugh - but while you laugh consider
—what an extravagant idea it is that piety creates gloominess and
disgust - unacquainted with the anticipations of a soul whose views
are chiefly pointed to another existance it is inconcievable what lib­
erty it enjoys - the cares and troubles of life surround it to be sure as
others but how different their effect—human passions and weakness
to be sure are never extinct - but they cannot triumph in the heart
which is possessed by this friend of love and Peace - she is very lovely
Julia - make acquaintance with her—she will not be angry you have
neglected her so long—do you want a letter of recommendation—she
will recieve you even without that. tell me in your next how you like
her - and if Maria has any sentiment in her favour—a thousand thou­
sand thousand blessings be with you dearest to the last moment of my
life I will love you, pray for you and long for your happiness—it shall
not be so long before you hear from me again—

forever ever your own friend EAS
direct to me as usual

6.8 Draft to Rev. William Dubourg, S.S.¹

[September, 1809]

My Father

—the pleading of so weak a creature does not merit your attention I
know - yet once more be patient with one you have born with so
long—it seems but a dream that things are as they are that you have

6.8 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:6

¹Rev. William Dubourg, S.S., conducted the sisters’ first retreat in early August, and upon his
return to Baltimore he submitted his resignation as superior of the sisters to Rev. Charles Nagot,
S.S., his superior. He resigned in reaction to Elizabeth’s appeal to Archbishop John Carroll to
intercede with Dubourg who had forbidden the sisters to correspond with Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S.
Overcome with regret over his resignation, Elizabeth wrote to Dubourg. Meanwhile, she heard that
Rev. John David, S.S., had been appointed the new superior.
given your children to a Father in law while their real Father still lives and loves them with a Parents tenderness— and why - the Mother is worthless - pity them - pity her try her once more and if she ever even vexes you again quit her and them forever—

the Rev. Mr. [John] David may make an excellent Superior - his merits as a Father are undoubted, but our Lord did not give him that place with us - the charge was pointedly given to you my perverseness has driven

6.9 To Archbishop John Carroll

2d November 1809

My dear Reverend Father

Two days after your departure I received a letter inclosed for you from Leghorn which Mr. [John] Dubois has forwarded and I hope you have received. Since you left us Mr. [William] Dubourg has been here some days, and I am not without hope that he will again resume his charge as Superior— You know there are many reasons why I wish it, and if it cannot be for any length of time at least until the Rev. Mr. [John] Davids situation is decided for you know if he should go with Mr. [Benedict] Flaget we shall have three changes in one year—besides the temporal management could not be done by him.

2Elizabeth likened Rev. John David to a stepfather.
3The next page is torn away and the text is illegible. The following is written on the reverse of this page:
   Jesus Lover of my Soul
   Let me to thy Bosom fly
   Leave ah Leave me not alone
   Still Support and comfort me—Hide me

6.9 AAB 7M6

1Archbishop John Carroll had administered the sacrament of Confirmation to Harriet Seton in Emmitsburg October 20.
2Rev. William Dubourg, S.S., the first superior, had recently resigned as a result of strained relationships with Elizabeth and the sisters which stemmed from a decision he had made forbidding their correspondence with Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S.
3It was expected that Rev. John David, S.S., would accompany his friend bishop-elect Rev. Benedict Flaget, S.S., to his new frontier diocese, Bardstown, Kentucky.
and it is very difficult to divide it (under one circumstance) from the spiritual, also since it is our first Superior I have offended to him I ought to be permitted to make the reparation, if it may be allowed - Yet if it is the will of our Lord it should not be so, I must do my best to make all go right—the truth is I have been made a Mother before being innitiated - and that must excuse all - to you I attempt no justification - you know all - being a convert, and very much left to my own devotion, how gratefully attached must I be to the one who has shewn an unceasing care for my Soul and done every thing to enlighten it, and discover to it the full consolation of our holy Faith. in my place my dear Father you would have experienced my trial, but you would at once have offered it up to God—I am late in seeing the necessity of this measure, but not too late I hope since it is never too late with our good Lord and he can dispose every heart to accommodation—you will see how good a child I am going to be - quite a little child, and perhaps you will have often to give me the food of little children yet, but I will do my best as I have promised you in every case. that I am sure of your prayers for my advancement is one of my greatest comforts.

[Antonio] Filicchi’s letter is 30th of November 1808⁴ - replying to the first I wrote him from Baltimore - and directs me to draw on his agents for a thousand dollars to advance my establishment there.—let your daily blessing be with us our dear and most Revered Father, and do if you hear of our dear dear Mrs. [Joanna] Barry give me one line. always and forever Your respectful and affectionate

pray present me respectfully to Rev. Mr. Beeston⁵—All the girls would beg to be laid at your feet if they know of this hasty scrawl.

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⁴Antonio Filicchi’s letter had taken a year to reach Elizabeth because of the embargo. It was the last she was to receive from the Filicchis until the end of 1815 due to Napoleon’s Continental System.

⁵Rev. Francis Beeston, an English friend and secretary of Archbishop John Carroll and the rector of the Catholic parish at Baltimore, died in late 1809.
6.10 Copy to Antonio Filicchi

My dearest Antonio

It is eighteen months since I have a line from Leghorn until a few days ago your letter of 30th November 1808 with one enclosed for our dear Rev. Bishop [John] Carroll gave me the inexpressible and most grateful consolation of knowing that our valued Filippo [Felicchi] was still in this World, and your dear self and family well, which we hear by much later date through Mr. Purviance, and also by Mr. Wurger who has kindly taken the trouble to call on me sometimes during his stay in Baltimore. Yet your Brother's illness from his account is very alarming, and I dread with all my good disposition to see the will of God done in all things, yet must dread to hear so good and precious an example is taken out of this World so much in need of it. I have recommended his dear soul whatever is his situation to a most holy Priest here, who never fails to remember him in the divine Sacrifice every day and it has often been offered with my unworthy communions all for him.

In all my Communions you have a large place but one in every Week entirely yours. What else can I do my more than Brother, in return for your unfailing goodness to your poor Sister? that is all my possession except that joined with it the prayers of ten dear holy Sisters are daily offered for you, our Benefactor and friend. Now then you will laugh when I tell you that your wicked little Sister is placed at the head of a Community of Saints, ten of the most pious Souls you could wish, considering that some of them are young and all under thirty. Six more postulents are daily waiting till we move in a larger place to recieve them, and we might be a very large family if I recieved half who desire to come, but your Reverend Mother is obliged to be very cautious for fear we should not have the means of earning our

6.10 AMSJ A 111 054 (manuscript copy) No original exists.

1The manuscript is a copy of the letter made by Antonio Filicchi. A note on the letter reads: “Copy of the original forward to Rev. [Charles] White the 20 October 1846 at Baltimore.”
living during the Winter. Yet as Sisters of Charity\(^2\) we should fear nothing. Your thousand Dollars will greatly relieve us dear Antonio may you be blessed for ever. I wrote you in full the plan proposed by our Superior;\(^3\) and greatly approved by the Bishop and dear Mr. [John] Chevrous and [Francis] Matignon and as two letters went by different occasions it is probable one is received and I will only my dearest Antonio beg your’s and Filippo’s pardon a thousand times if your uncommon friendship and indulgence to your Sister has made her exceed in the request she has made you in them. Remember I would not ask you to give more, for your generosity has already been too great, and our Lord for whose sake and to whom you have given in the person of the Widow and the Orphan can alone repay you. But that you might find it proper after consulting proper persons to invest some of your property in establishing us who have now been called to the service of God in a religious state, and many others whose vocation is undoubted, I have proposed to you without fear since He seemed to open this door for us in your generous benevolence, my only fear is that perhaps my intention was not sufficiently expressed to you.\(^4\)

6.11 To Matthias O’Conway

[December 12, 1809]

I take her place and scold continually, she is however the picture of health as is our Isabella [O’Conway] who is the best heart and temper in the world, she is so robust you would not know her but loves every thing better than book and needle, she is truly a good child as to solid goodness indeed the Oconways here are in very good credit if we had but little Anna (and Joseph our Physician) and James the other brother\(^1\) we should be more compleat.

\(^2\)This is Elizabeth’s first reference in her letters to the community as Sisters of Charity.

\(^3\)The plan referred to the Sulpician vision for the new community as brought to fruition by Rev. William Dubourg, S.S.

\(^4\)For the continuation of this letter see 6.39, May 20, 1810, AMSJ A111 054.

6.11 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:20

\(^1\) Anna, Joseph, and James were children of Matthias O’Conway.
Why cannot I write you in full—my friend my whole heart is tenderly attached to you and your dear family my little Pope is frequently in recollection and presented on the sacred paten among my darlings our Lord bless you all a thousand thousand thousand times

Veronique will tell you all is sickness here among my part of the family I am like a leaf before the wind blessed be the adored name forever—
L.J.C. J.M.J.

forever your friend in Him MEASX
remember me to the dear Grandmamma and to all - all - all—

6.12 To Archbishop John Carroll

14th December 1809

My dear Reverend Father

—a full and particular letter written you by the holy Mr.[Charles] Nago[t] would have informed you of all our concerns since you left us, but unfortunately one of our Sisters taking my pocket to wash without my knowledge the poor letter with one inclosed to Louisa [Caton] was drowned, and so spoiled it could not be sent - since that time our Cecilia [Seton] has been at the last extremity, and Harriet these last three weeks also confined to her bed, which with the many etceteras of sick Sisters and children has made it almost impossible for me to acknowledge your last most kind favour and thank you a thousand times for the many indulgent expressions it contains.

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[Sister Cecilia O’Conway was known as Veronique after Cecilia Seton arrived in June 1809, but she reverted to Cecilia after the latter’s death in 1810.]

[Elizab e th adopted the pious practice of using L.J.C. (Laudetur Jesus Christus, or “Praised be Jesus Christ”) from Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S. J.M.J. Means “Jesus, Mary, Joseph.”]

6.12 AAB 7N7

[Rev. Charles-François Nagot, S.S., was the Sulpicians’ American superior. He had written Elizabeth a reprimanding letter (ASJPH 1-3-3-2:7) November 9, refusing to reinstate Rev. William Dubourg, S.S., as the sisters’ superior and telling her that it was God’s will that Rev. John David, S.S., be appointed superior.]
I have had a great many very hard trials my Father since you were here, but you of course will congratulate me on them as this fire of tribulation is no doubt meant to consume the many imperfections and bad dispositions our Lord finds in me - indeed it has at times burnt so deep that the anguish could not be concealed, but by degrees custom reconciles pain itself and I determine dry and hard as my daily bread ¹ is to take it with as good a grace as possible, when I carry it before our Lord sometimes he makes me laugh at myself and asks me what other kind I would choose in the Valley of tears ² than that which himself and all his followers made use of—

how much very much I wish to know something of our most dear Mrs. [Joanna] Barry, if you have heard of her, if perhaps she is arrived and every thing that relates to her—also dear Mrs. Robert Barrys family I have never been able to hear of since your last letter except once that dear little John was still very ill—do give a thousand loves to her for me the very thought of her kindness to us brings tears to my eyes, tell her she is often in my thoughts with her dear husband and children before the Blessed Sacrament.

There seems to be no intention of removing us to St. Josephs ³ this winter I have refused to give the least sentiment on the subject, there are so many difficulties in staying and dangers in going that unless obliged in Obedience I cannot take it upon me. Your favourite Rose

²Cf. Matt. 6:11.
³Cf. Ps. 23:4.
⁴This refers to the house under construction, which Elizabeth named St. Joseph’s House. The Filicchi family helped finance the construction, but it was not until February 20, 1810, that the community moved into their new log home, even though it was only partially completed. March 19, 1810, the first Mass was celebrated in the new chapel there. This building came to be called the White House after it was later faced with clapboard and painted white. It contains a series of paintings by Elizabeth’s brother-in-law Edward Seton that depict its original appearance and the ways the campus changed over the years.

The White House was originally located east of the chapel (which is now located at the United States National Fire Academy and Emergency Management Institute.) The house was enlarged about 1826 and again about 1838. After the construction of other buildings, the decision was made to relocate it. In 1845 it was dismantled, boarded over, and reassembled by John J. Shorb for $300. Mother Xavier Clark supervised the project and restored the house to the way it looked in Elizabeth’s lifetime. It was moved again in 1917 under the supervision of John T. Bramble of Baltimore because floor boards were rotting from being directly on the ground. A cellar was dug (as in Elizabeth’s time), and the house was again dismantled, reconstructed, and restored on a site about 50 ft. northwest where it now rests. The mantels, baseboards, most of the molding and chair rails, and the bannister on the stairway to the second floor are original.
[White] and Kitty [Mullen] are very well and even improved in health for some time past - dear good girls they all take every thing as it comes - every one of the Sisters vie with each other to make light of every inconvenience so surely the poor Mother must not lose courage—pray for us my Our most dear Father as we do for you continually with the greatest tenderness. always most Affectionately and faithfully your child in Christ MEA Seton.

Will you please to remember us to Mr. [Francis] Beeston we beg to be remembered by him at the Altar. —I have written Louisa [Caton] by post not knowing of this opportunity—

6.13 To George Weis

Saturday Morning [December 23, 1809]¹

My dear friend

—our Harriet is gone without my even knowing she was in danger²—she died at two this morning we have had Mass and the communions of all the community it is now five oclock—where where is the soul of our Father?—I can only offer a Mothers heart, a Mothers sighs and a Mothers tears: Cecil [Seton] is very ill again—

tell our dear Father [Babade] that every moment of her illness while she had any understanding was full of him, his towel his cake his handkerchiefs his letters every thing she could touch of his, the water he had blessed she even drank in the night by stealth all all was her only delight—but above all when she received our Lord she said all her soul was with him—as is that of the poor Mother. try to get this

6.13 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:57

¹The date is written in another hand.

²Harriet Seton became ill the last week of November, became critical December 18, and died of an inflammation of the brain December 23, 1809. During the summer of 1809, Elizabeth and her companions had taken a walk through the thick woods on their property in Emmitsburg in order to select a site for a cemetery. Although several spots seemed favorable, Harriet’s attention rested on a large oak tree which she designated for her repose, declaring, “This is my spot!” as she playfully threw an apple core against its trunk. Though she never joined the community, she was the first to die in Emmitsburg, and she was buried under that oak tree which became the site of the community cemetery of the Sisters of Charity.
letter by all means to Rev. Mr. Moranville\(^3\) and the Rev. Bishop [John Carroll] before their masses Christmas day—and forward the inclosed to New York as soon as possible pray for us my dear dear friend\(^4\)

### 6.14 To Julia Scott

27th December 1809

My own dear little Julia

—how do you do are your dear ones well—I have had many heavy hours since I wrote you first from the extreme illness of Cecelia [Seton] which terminated in an abscess of the liver and now the death of my sweet and darling Harriet\(^1\) who was the life and joy of my heart for many months past—her illness has been long that is since she first complained of the sick head ach and bilious affliction she has been long subject to, but sometimes better at others worse I had not the least alarm till her complaint took a sudden turn, Nature took a wrong Course and she lost so much, excessive debility succeeded, her head became violently affected and the dear child could neither be helped by blisters or any etceteras of medical aid.

So it goes with your friend, tribulation is my element—if it only carries me Home at last never mind the present, do you ever think about it - my dearest dearest Julia—Year after year passes, the last must come - foolish and extravagant as your own friend now appears to you when the scene is about to close things will wear so different an appearance you would be very glad to have been among the number of those who look beyond it. is it not so dearest.

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\(^3\)Rev. John Moranvillé (1760-1824) was born in France, ordained a priest in 1784, and sent to work in French Guiana. He came to the United States in 1794, and in 1804 he became pastor of St. Patrick’s church in Fells Point near Baltimore. He was known for his sanctity and guided several women to join the Sisters of Charity.

\(^4\)Written on the address side, probably by George Weis: “the dear Cicilia arrived in my house April 11th 1809.” The year was really 1810.

### 6.14 ASJPH 1-3-3-6:80

\(^1\)Harriet Seton died December 23, 1809.
—Our Mountains are very black but the scene below bright and gay, the meadows still green and my dear ones skipping upon them with the Sheep, except poor Anna who deeply feels the loss of her companion friend and adviser - they always walked together, read and worked together, sharing even the same bed. Yet I am much reconciled to our loss as her situation with [Andrew] Barclay [Bayley] was so distressing always fearing he was only bound to her by honour, or if his affection continued was obliged to follow him to Jamaica or probably to give him up entirely—she was an angelic girl truly and her death is one of the hard blows destined for your own friend - yet here I go like iron or rock day after day—as He pleases, and how he pleases, but to be sure when my turn comes I shall be very glad = say dearest say if you are growing good, and how every thing goes with You and our dear Maria and J[ohn]. is Mrs.[Charlotte Sitgreaves] Cox able to bear the change of weather—is our dear dear Brother Sam still at Easton, is he well - if it was in my power to bring on you all the many Blessings I wish you - you would have thousands more than you can even wish for yourselves.

I do not like to send this blank side but have several letters to write by this post dearest—they tell me a hundred most ridiculous stories² are going about relative to our manner of living here, but I hope you will not listen to them a moment if they should reach you—and believe me again when I assure you that I have with my darlings also true peace and comfort every way—as to sickness, and death itself if it comes to us again we know that they are the common attendants of human life they are our certain portion at one period or other, and it would be madness to be unhappy because I am treated like the rest of human beings = so do not give it a thought for my share in them but think dearest think for your own precious most precious Self My Gloriana farewel—

ever your own friend EASeton

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²Gouverneur and Charlotte Seton Ogden, Elizabeth’s brother and sister-in-law, wrote several letters to Harriet Seton berating her for remaining in Maryland and converting to Catholicism (See Robert Seton Memoirs II: 64-71). Vehemently anti-Catholic in their sentiments, they had been outspoken in their criticism of Elizabeth while she was still in New York.
My dear friend

I have received both your letters. but have scarcely a moment to answer Anna is attacked with the malady of our Madelone—Susan [Clossy] and Mary Quin has been in bed with it since X mas. so it is but I implore you and Father [Babade] not to speak of it - let others tell the tale—I am satisfied—

Cecil [Seton] is as before very weak almost fainting when she attempts to get up. tell Father that he must not think it in my power to recieve any one in the house until things are changed and we are settled in St. Josephs.—you must not think our courage fails - Oh no when the clock struck 12 last night and ended the old year Annina laying in my arms in a violent ague I felt happy, contented, embracing my lot with joy but this is only the force of grace, generally I am stupefied and have not the power to wish or care for any thing but heaven and eternity, every other thought is troublesome.

tell your dear [Mrs.] Minon [Weis] to have courage—all our clouds will pass away by and by - perhaps this is our last year of trial. 
—A dieu X your true friend. L.J.C. 1000000 Beni 1000 Adore 10000

6.15 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:72

1Harriet Seton took the name Madeline when she became a Catholic. She had died of inflammation of the brain December 23, 1809, shortly before this letter was written.

2Mary Quinn (d. 1816) whose parents were Irish was born in New York and admitted as a candidate November 11, 1809. After completing the first novitiate, she pronounced vows July 19, 1813. Known as Sister Martina, she made special contributions in the ministry of education. She died at St. Joseph’s May 26, 1816, and is buried in the original community cemetery in Emmitsburg.

3St. Joseph’s House, the sisters’ newly constructed log home
beg our Father not to tell C\textsuperscript{4} of Anninas sickness, but to pray for her particularly himself.\textsuperscript{5}

6.16 To George Weis\textsuperscript{1}

Sunday night January 7 1810

My Friend

You will be anxious for Annina her situation is not dangerous I hope for the present but her complaint is very obstinate and the fever constant. Good Susan [Clossy] is recovering, little Mary [Quinn]\textsuperscript{2} is blistered and continues ill—

tell our dearest Father [Babade] the thought that we are always in his heart and prayers is my great consolation next to the adored, we are all praying for him continually.

best love to your dear [Mrs.] Minon [Weis] L.J.C. Beni Adoré

\textsuperscript{4} Probably Charles DuPavillon with whom Anna Maria was infatuated.

\textsuperscript{5} Written on the outside of the page: “tell Father St. Polycarp is his saint this month. St. Vincent mine—the first opportunity you will have something of Maddelan.” It was a custom to draw the name of a saint as a special model for the month.

St. Polycarp (69?-155?), a disciple of St. John the apostle, was a leading Christian in Roman Asia in the second century. He is an important link between the apostolic age and the great Christian writers of the late second century. The account of his martyrdom was circulated widely in the early Christian church.

Probably a reference to St. Vincent de Paul, co-founder of the French Daughters of Charity

\textsuperscript{6.16 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:65}

\textsuperscript{1} There are unclear lines above the date.

\textsuperscript{2} Later Sister Martina Quinn
My dearest Eliza

A letter from Sister [Mary Bayley] P[ost] last week tells me you are safe arrived and very well—A few days before I began a letter to you not knowing where it would find you - and now I do intreat you take the first stormy day when visitors are quiet or the first hour of night you can bestow to satisfy a heart that loves you more than you are conscious of—it is more than 9 months since I have heard any thing direct from you or our ever dear Dué and the last of her was far from Consoling

—the Darlings you have so long cherished are as when I last wrote you full of health and innocence except poor Anna who is more than affected by the death of Harriet but like every thing else this will pass I hope. William has been very ill some weeks ago,¹ but has double health and activity since.

—the different reports you may perhaps hear of our situation will make you doubtful what it really is, but if you recollect the System of the Sisters of Charity² before and since the Revolution in France, you will know the rule of our community in a Word, which amounts only to that regularity necessary for order and no more—You may concieve my content in such a situation, it is almost inconceiveable to myself that I possess it.

—now our chief object is Spinning Knitting etc to obtain clothing for ourselves and the Children in our charge who are Educated with

6.18 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:36

¹William had been seriously ill in October 1809 to the point where his death was expected. A shroud had been made which was used when Harriet Seton died.

²The Daughters of Charity were founded in Paris in 1633 by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac for the service of the poor. Because the Daughters of Charity was not a consecrated religious community, the sisters were not subject to the restrictions of the cloister and were able to work among the people. They quickly expanded to other European locales. The French emigré Sulpicians were familiar with the work of this group.

St. Louise de Marillac (1591-1660) was born in Paris, married, and had one son. After her husband’s death she collaborated with St. Vincent de Paul in work with the Ladies of Charity, and in 1633 she co-founded with him the Daughters of Charity.
the care the principle inspires on which our good Sisters act. they are truly good Sisters - you would be delighted with their Simplicity and sincerity. every Occasion to visit the sick is embraced but the Villages round us are not very extensive. our mountain serves the limits of the world to us but beyond them dearest Eliza you know I have many most dear interests and truly none more solid and sincere than that for my Sad who comes in my mind a thousand times oftener than many others from the nature of my Occupations so congenial with her mind—

Our Rev. Mr.[John] Tisserant is not yet returned but still expected, the death of a Sister in Germany has delayed him. we have here a most interesting young man whom he has brought up and cherished with tender care, son of an English nobleman over whose history the veil of mystery is thrown, but he is inexpressibly dear to me, we feel for each other as belonging to the same dear Father—we have reasons to hope Mr. Tisserant will be our chaplain when he returns—perhaps you have seen him since you wrote. If [George] Duplex is returned give him a thousand kind remembrances from us the children speak of him - their Uncle Craig, and those they were most attached to as if they parted from them but yesterday. tell my dear [Samuel] Craig I ever think of him and love him with the most sincere attachment

—how I should like to step in at your Sunday dinner and see dear Helen, Mary, William Bayley for I have heard both the latter are in N[ew] York

—do give my love to them all if it is so and the Long Island physician when you see him. do do write dear Eliza and direct to Baltimore as before. I am but one days ride from it and get my letters immediately

ever yours EASeton.

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3He was in Europe at the time and never returned to the United States.
4William Craig, Eliza Sadler's brother, was a widower who had been married to Elizabeth's half-sister Charlotte Amelia Bayley.
6Guy Carlton Bayley, Elizabeth's half-brother, had just begun medical practice as a country doctor on Long Island.
My dear B.

Before this time you have no doubt heard many different accounts of the departure of our beloved H[arriet] - I know letters were written you immediately and thought it best to wait until your mind would be composed before I wrote you anything on the subject—

By your letters to her after her quitting N[ew] York you appeared to be acquainted in part with the circumstances of dear Cecils illness and the manner in which they were again reunited to me at Baltimore—from thence we came to the Mountain where both Hatché and Cecil soon obtained a great share of health.—we were accustomed to walk in the woods every afternoon which led to the height of the Mountain on which we lived half way up - and a little higher than our log cottage\(^2\) stands our chapel which H never entered till some time after we came here but always walked in the wood with Anna when Cecil and I went there—neither of us ever asked why she did not come in well knowing that in her situation it would be imprudent in her to take any share in our religious customs - but when of her own accord she did come in and take great delight in joining us in them we surely never advised her to stay out, or showed any other opposition then asking her if she had considered how it would be thought of at home—

—She then with many many tears related to me how completely unhappy she was in that home which I fully knew before I left N[ew] York, said she would rather die than return to it - represented how little hope she had of being united to you from the different accounts and reports she had of you from persons who intimately knew your situation

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6.19 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:82

\(^1\)Rev. Simon Bruté, S. S., wrote on this letter: “to Barclay Bailey who had loved Miss Harriet.”

\(^2\)For six weeks the women stayed in a log cabin which Rev. John Dubois, S. S., vacated for their use. Above it stood St. Mary’s Church on the Mountain where Dubois had been a resident pastor since 1805. It served the college and seminary when Mount St. Mary’s was founded in 1808. Elizabeth and the first sisters came for prayer, Mass, and Vespers at “the old church on the hill,” where they provided music and tended the sacristy.
and habits, shewed a letter you had written which mentioned the story of a young man who left his mistress lovely and youthful and was so long seperated that he found her old and ugly, asking if she had not lost her bloom etc. etc. which letter she burnt in great agitation and declared she would make her determination forever and never seperate from Cecil and me, and by uniting herself to us she was sure of Peace and tranquillity at least which was all she asked in this world—after that Aunt F[arquhar]3 wrote her that you wished her to join you in the West Indies or that you were coming for her to which she replied in a manner expressive of her unchangable affection and attachment to you, and that she was ready to prove it at any hour, and I believe wrote you to the same effect as I remember she was two or three days writing you and sent a very large package by

6.20 To Archbishop John Carroll

19th January 1810

My dear and Honoured Father

an opportunity offers and I cannot refuse myself the melancholy comfort of telling you how much I feel your Affliction,1 it would be the greatest of all consolations to me could I lessen it by relieving you of the least of the many cares your heavy loss throws upon you both in the domestic and every other way—every one amongst us have presented our constant petitions for the repose of the Soul so dear to you or for its greater glory - for my part I have so associated it with our dearest Harriets that every time the clock strikes my heart ascends for them. Harriets death was very melancholy being caused by an inflamation of the brain her mind was intirely deranged for the last four days during which and all night long she sung almost incessantly the musick of the church and even while she was dying continued to

3Elizabeth Curson Farquhar, a maternal aunt of Harriet Seton

6.20 AAB 7N8

1Probably a reference to the death of Rev. Francis Beeston, the bishop’s friend and secretary
sing a hymn the Sisters sing at the adoration\(^2\)—the first we perceived of her derangement was from her excessive distress at not being fasting to recieve our Lord stretching out her arms and calling to him, complaining that he was denied to her who was all her confidence and hope - the next day, the expectation of the Blessed Virgin,\(^3\) she was more composed, recieved him with great joy and remained quiet for an hour, I asked her what he was saying to her She answered “all love and Peace.” and these were the last rational words she said - seemed quite unconscious when Extreme Unction\(^4\) was administered and went to sleep without a struggle. My Anna was taken sick immediately and two of the Sisters - they are recovering - two have left their chamber but I really began to think we were all going. I have been sick a few days but am quite better and we are preparing to make a trial of St. Josephs house - if it is too cold we must return again our moveables are not very weighty.\(^5\) do you bless us, do you carry us in your heart - I know you do and it is a great very great comfort to us all—Cecilia [Seton] is beginning to leave her bed, Anna has been blistered and a good deal reduced but they are both sitting by a good fire and quite cheerful—colder weather you cannot imagine than we now have but it is much better than the unwholesome damp. Rose [White] and Kitty [Mullen] are very well except colds - all beg your Paternal Benediction, and prayers particularly your poor unworthy but most Affectionate

MEASEton

\(^2\)Hymns sung at Benediction included Tantum Ergo and Pange Lingua, both composed by St. Thomas Aquinas.

\(^3\)Harriet died December 23. She received Holy Communion for the last time December 18.

\(^4\)A sacrament in the Catholic church celebrated with those who are seriously ill or dying. It is now called the Anointing of the Sick.

\(^5\)Because of crowded conditions in the farmhouse, three sisters moved to St. Joseph’s house before the building was completed.
6.21 To George Weis

[n.d.]

My dear Friend

—All goes *just so* sweet Cecil is every day better and Annina is well—ask our Father [Babade] why we hear nothing of Charles [DuPavillon] is he at the college, or where is he—we intended to have sent something by Lilly but I have been sick etc—tell your dear [Mrs.] Manon [Weis] I love and bless her a thousand times and beg in return her maternal benediction as she gave me when we parted. tell my Fa­ther I find no place this pinching cold weather but his dear dear heart and I stay in it continually.

always your own friend MEAS

Oh take care of Lilly my heart bleeds with disappointment at his change—but the adored will is all

6.22 To Rose Stubbs

St. Josephs Emitsburg [January 24, 1810]

My most dear Rose

Your most welcome letter is safe in my hands, and I cannot tell you the comfort it gives me to hear of you and your dear family. you tell me better news of them than I had heard from New York, but well per­suaded that the only way to come to our heavenly Treasure is thro' the fire of tribulation we can have no other will than his who goes before us to *lead us* on—I have gone thro' more interior and external trials since I began a religious life than you can concieve, but have always

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6.21 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:58
6.22 AMSV 110:10,6

1A friend from New York
found and still find they are very very good for me—and so you must take them dearest.

I have just buried my Sister Harriet [Seton] a most beautiful accomplished girl converted here last summer by the blessed Virgin of the mountain, received her first communion the 24th September, feast of the Blessed Virgin of Mercy—gone ever since to the sacraments weekly, and lived up to our rules with the fervour of devotion—just as her friends found out her conversion and a storm of distressing reproaches was falling on her, and the solicitation of my Brother [Andrew Barclay Bayley] to whom she had been engaged many years she was taken ill and snatched away from it all, blessed be our Lord forever. What is this World my dear girl—what can be our hope in it—heaven and eternity—is the only point worth thinking of.

Now my dear to answer to some observations in your letter— you say very true that a religious life cannot be embraced without many considerations—let me be the last person in the world to persuade you on the subject—but knowing your love of religion and your dear parents great love for it I only mentioned to you that there was such a home for you and there is here an excellent Seminary for the education of young Clergymen many are taken free of all expence, and brought up in the most edifying manner and no doubt it would comfort your dear father to know this in case he was not able himself to succeed and provide for you all—as to the rest Almighty God will do what is right—

Our Community increases very fast, and no doubt will do a great deal of good in the care of the sick and instruction of children which is our chief business. the rule is so easy that it is scarcely more than any regular religious person would do even in the world. like yourself many of our Sisters do not know their Vocation, but they make no engagements till they have passed their twelve months Novitiate and

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--- Footnotes ---

2 Rev. John Dubois, S.S., erected a grotto to the Blessed Virgin on St. Mary’s Mountain which became a favorite shrine of people in the area.
3 The Provisional Regulations for St. Joseph’s Sisters was adopted during the summer of 1809. Harriet Seton never became a member of the Sisters of Charity.
4 Mount St. Mary’s Seminary
5 The Sisters of Charity had not yet established a novitiate.
then if they persevere they make simple Vows in the hands of our Bishop [John Carroll] which he can dispense with at pleasure whenever he sees just cause for doing it. Oh what a comfort while the church of God is reduced to such distress and seems as it were abandoned to its enemies he permits us to serve him in peace in this happy corner, where he stays with us even under our very roof—we have an elegant little Chapel thirty cells holding a bed, chair and table each, a large infirmary, a very spacious refectory, besides parlour, school room, my room working rooms etc.—remember it is your home and your dear Sisters in any day when your dear parents and almighty God may think proper, and this I tell you only for your and their comfort in case any thing happened to them.

as I told you the Church is in great distress it is said that Pope Pius VIIth has gained the paten of Martyrdom and probably there is now no pope, or if there is it is a relation of Bon[a]parts—

our good and excellent Mr. Byrne7 died sometime ago at George Town College. Ann Barry died at Maderia and her Mother [Joanna Barry] is daily expected here. this is all I know out of our own roof—we are as much out of the world as if we were buried—

do let me hear every particular of your dear family as soon as you can, I hear no more of good [George] Duplex nor his wife - will write them this day—the Peace of our Lord be with You my dear Child, and the blessing of your Virgin Mother. always your friend in [Christ] most truly and sincerely MEAS.+

Anna and all the dear childrens best love to you—Cecilia [Seton] is with me I told you I believe—she has been at the point of death and is yet in bed—my eldest boy [William] also had his shroud made. I am very well and thrive thro’ trouble - pray for me always as I do for you all.

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6Pope Pius VII had been made a prisoner by Napoleon Bonaparte at Grenoble, Savona, and Fontainbleau successively. When the Allies entered Paris in March 1814, he returned to Rome amidst great rejoicing. Pius VII lived until 1823.

7Rev. John Byrne had been an assistant at St. Peter’s in New York.
6.23 To Archbishop John Carroll

25th January 1810

dear and Most honoured Father

St. Josephs House\(^1\) is almost ready, in a very short time we expect to be settled in it—you know our rules\(^2\) have hitherto been very imperfectly observed but now the moment approaches when order must be the foundation of all the good we can hope to do, and as so much depends on the Mother of the Community I beg you to take her first in hand for I must candidly tell you she is all in the wrong - not from discontent with the place I am in since every corner of the world is the same to me if I may but serve our Lord, nor with the intention of our institution for I long to be in the fullest exercise of it - but circumstances have all so combined as to create in my mind a confusion and want of confidence in my Superiors which is indiscernible. if my own happiness was only in question I should say how good is the cross for me this is my opportunity to ground myself in patience and perseverance, and my reluctance to speak on a subject which I know will give you uneasiness is so great that I would certainly be silent - but as the good our Almighty God may intend to do by means of this community may be very much impeded by the present state of things it is absolutely necessary You as the head of it and to whom of course the Spirit of discernment for its good is given should be made acquainted with it before the evil is irreparable. Sincerely I promised you and really I have endeavoured to do every thing in my power to bend myself to meet the last appointed Superior\(^3\) in every way but after continual reflection on the necessity of absolute conformity with him, and constant prayer to our Lord to help me, yet the heart is closed and when the pen should freely give him the necessary detail and information he requires it

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\(^1\)The house under construction which Elizabeth named St. Joseph’s House. The community moved there February 20.

\(^2\)The Provisional Regulations for St. Joseph’s Sisters was adopted during the summer of 1809.

\(^3\)Rev. John David, S.S., with whom Elizabeth had difficulty
stops, and he remains now as uninformed in the essential points as if he had nothing to do with us, an unconquerable reluctance and diffidence takes place of those dispositions which ought to influence every action and with every desire to serve God and these excellent beings who surround me I remain motionless and inactive. It is for you my most revered Father to decide if this is temptation or what it is—Mr. [Samuel] Cooper who is on a visit to Baltimore knows many particulars I cannot write which his interest in our community has made him unavoidably observe and which I beg him to make known to you—if you think proper to make known the contents of this to the holy Mr. [Charles] Nagot you will do so, but if after consideration of every circumstance you still think things must remain as they are whatever you dictate I will abide by through every difficulty, continuing at all times and in every situation

Your most Affectionate Daughter in Christ MEA Seton

6.24 To a Clergyman

March 1, 1810

"The month of February past, and my tottering frame still stands; but whence this change? With a cheerful heart I feel myself every day get weaker, and I feel happy in the idea that a few weeks must end it all. What now is all the world to me? It vanishes like smoke. Night or day, sunshine or rain, 'tis all one to me. My eyes are fixed on eternal day; pain has become my rest, and my nights never more sweetly passed than when restless and uneasy. Dearest Lord! How good you are to me; you have indeed heard my prayer, always to let me suffer for you, that so I may expiate my offenses; and when the hour of death shall come I may pass immediately from this world into Thy arms of mercy. Oh, how precious now is every hour of my time! Not an instant

6.24 Mother Seton Guild Bulletin, December 1947

1No original of this letter exists. This is a reprint from the Mother Seton Guild Bulletin. The editor of the bulletin incorrectly attributes this as a letter to Rev. John David, S.S. It seems more likely addressed to Archbishop John Carroll or Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S.

2Cf. Ps. 102:4.
shall be lost. Every thought, word, and action, shall tend to the one point. And how ungrateful should I be to my merciful Creator did I not devote to Him, to the utmost of my power the short remainder of my life, which most probably will be but a few weeks longer.

"Since the last accounts to my dearest father, the soul has tasted more peace that it has since our darling Harriet has gone. Death has no longer a frightful appearance. I can now meditate upon it with the greatest composure. My daily pains I feel hourly more precious though sometimes I get wearier, and even wish to be released; yet I find in my severest pains that I fervently pray our Lord to give me still more, and purify and prepare me for Himself. I cannot help thinking, from the nature of my complaint, that I am fast approaching toward the end of my exile; the pilgrimage has been wearisome, the mountain very hard to climb these few months past, which only make me long more ardently for a haven of rest. But shall I ever reach that port? May there not be some sins yet unexpiated? If so, I trust our Jesus will shed a ray of His divine light in my unworthy bosom. Before the arrival of that hour doubts and fears will arise; but Jesus speaks peace and comfort."

6.25 To a Clergyman¹

[March 1810]

"I cannot express to my soul's father my longing for Holy Communion. I receive it as often as the Sisters but I seem to desire still more; and the days that I do not receive Him I am not the same creature. I have much more comfort in my Communions than formerly.

¹Elizabeth had last written to Archbishop Carroll January 25. Harriet Seton died December 23, 1809.

6.25 Mother Seton Guild Bulletin, December 1947

¹No original of this letter exists. This is a reprint from the Mother Seton Guild Bulletin. The editor of the Bulletin incorrectly attributes this as a letter to Rev. John David, S.S. It seems more likely addressed to Archbishop John Carroll or Rev. Pierre Babaeoe, S.S.²

²According to the sisters' regulations "the days appointed for Communion will be Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, unless there occur some particular feasts in the week which may determine to alter them or to grant an extraordinary Communion. None shall be allowed to receive oftener."
According to our necessities He gives. Death and eternity ever before me! Why is it so? Because Thou, dearest Lord, givest me some pain, some bodily uneasiness, to remind me of the slightness of that thread which holds my existence. Was it always so? Once you saw my weakness and pitied it. You have made me see, dear Lord, the vanity of all human things.\(^3\) I now truly feel this life a weary pilgrimage, and long for the hour when my mortal part shall be dissolved and I shall be at rest. Cut and crucify this sinful body here; here let it pay the penalty that is due; but oh, my Jesus, spare me hereafter! At the hour of death, comfort and receive me!"

6.26 To Eliza Sadler

8th March [dated 1809 but content indicates 1810]

My dear dear Eliza

- both your first and second letters reached their destination which I know was to my very heart - they have said all that could be most grateful to it—it seems to me I can see you and look within you while you were writing; every article of furniture plants etc round you, and the spot where every thing stood I can bring to the minds eye as distinctly as if they were in view but an hour ago, even the features and expression of the beloved Pauline are exactly present—have you this treasure of memory—some persons can never recollect features all the past is confusion - if you have this privilege you must often look towards the dear uncles dwelling with sensations *I feel for you* - sweet Lord what a being is Ours - Obliged to reduce our aim to a simple view of the little part we fill and in quiet acceptance insure tranquillity; or engage the torrent of recollection—which carries - oh my Eliza - where would mine carry me if it was not resisted—therefore a transient glance behind with me is quickly followed by a strong look upward which the mid day sun itself cannot repel—sour or bitter all is

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\(^3\)Cf. Eccles. 1:2.

6.26 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:37
sweet to me as if referred to the principle he either permits, or com-
mands, either must be right it will be very right too if you will take
dear Craiges\textsuperscript{1} health in the consideration and care next May to look at
our mountains you will find my plants in lovely order - the parent root
to be sure is almost sapless and appears quite decayed but when the
wind blows hard the little ones surround and bear it up—indeed it is
true Eliza when I am so weak as to suffer vexations or cares to press
upon my mind only the look of these dear ones who seem to say
Mother live for us acts like a main spring—but yet it is not the main
spring for if it was no higher I should be worse than ungrateful.

Can you think then that the sad stories of my dear and precious
Anna is true indeed not one sentence more than I now tell you—she
contracted a strong affection, much stronger than I ever thought her
capable of, with a student\textsuperscript{2} at St. Marys college without having even an
opportunity <ever> to speak to him, and seeing him only at
Church—\textit{his} good sense or fears that poor William and Richard (who
were the channels of his Bouquets and verses without my having the
most distant suspicion) would be found out by the Superior, induced
her to discover all to me—of herself I believe she never would so great
is the reserve of her temper, but he wrote her the most pressing
intreaties to throw herself in my arms and after showing his letters
endeavour to obtain my sanction to their affection - this was not very
difficult as I knew more of him than she did herself thro’ my \textit{souls
friend}\textsuperscript{3} who is also his, and had always wished Anna might be so for-
tunate as to gain his affection in the way she has which seems to be
solid and sincere. his fortune is very large and his education of the
first kind with superior talents. his family only a very tender Mother
who resides in Guadeloup and I am told very amiable—so stands the
point so much and no more—they had one interview in my presence,
and I brought her away with me where she is very well contented wait-
ing for the event with a good grace as she has sense to know his sincer-
ity is best tried by absence and that she is yet too young to enter into so

\textsuperscript{1}Either William or Samuel Craig, Eliza’s brothers
\textsuperscript{2}Charles DuPavillon. Anna Maria had been passing love notes to him through her brothers,
William and Richard Seton.
\textsuperscript{3}Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S.
serious an engagement—he graduated last month and still lives with
the Superior of the college until he joins his Mother to bring her here
or she makes arrangements to settle here—I have no reproach to make
myself, for it is impossible a child could be more strictly watched or
carefully advised than my Annina—now I can do no more than commit
All to the Adored—some time ago I was uneasy, but I find her so good,
so innocent and dutiful that it would be folly to anticipate evil which
may never come—he writes always inclosed to me unsealed.

Your Richard is as lovely in my eyes as when in his curles and nan-
keens but would not be in yours the same sweet look of love but a
quiet considerate expression all opposed to Williams vivacity—still
as much in love with Mother as when hanging on the breast and al-
ways happier with his little Sisters than all the companions in the
world his talents are not distinguished but he is very steady—the bend
of the neck not ungraceful, but the dear head often aching—

I cannot say any more now without missing this weeks post - only
my earnest tender love to Craige—if ever you see dear Mary⁴ try to do
away the bad impressions I find she has of Annina—it would be a very
dangerous example for her—Oh if God would ever grant that I should
once again have an opportunity of cultivating hers and Helens⁵ sis-
terly love how thankful I should be—you know writing them the kind
of letters I should be obliged to write would be nonsense, nor have I
the time—but time and patience will do something perhaps all I can
say is my heart now hangs round them all more than ever—

dear Mary Baratt and her lovely family do say a word of them that
partiality will go with me to the grave—as will my true and faithful af-
fecion for you EAS

—soon I expect my dear dear a thousand times dear Cecilia will
take her flight⁶—Oh Eliza how many strings draw up as well as
down[w]ards—yet my heart faints when I think of this separation no
one can concieve what she is to me - but - but - fiat.⁷

⁴Mary Fitch Bayley, Elizabeth’s half-sister
⁵Helen Bayley, Elizabeth’s half-sister
⁶Cecilia Seton was very ill at the time.
⁷“So be it”
6.27 To Catherine Seton

9th March 1810

My poor Josephine1

The fault of quarreling you have so often confessed and declared you would not do so again, that it hurts my very heart to find you have been guilty of it—but your Lord is the one you have most offended my poor child, to him who is so good to you, you are most ungrateful.

You cannot go3 next Sunday but if you have no marks or cross between now and next Wednesday I will once more present your poor little soul to him as a lamb the wolf is trying to tear from his dear arms.—

tell Rebecca I did not think she would so soon forget her good promises - but I beg our dear Lord and our Sweet Mother to give you both pardon for all your faults through the precious blood which washes sins away.

Your poor Mother +3

6.28 To Matthias O’Conway

St. Joseph’s day 19th March [1810]

My dear and doubly dear friend

Your letter is this moment received and barely in time for the morning post—Your confidence I know cost you a struggle but it is not lost. —dear dear Veronique1 it was necessary to have the blessed Sacrament in her heart and before her eyes to support her - this she had and the poor

6.27 ASJPH 1-3-3-9:48a

1This is the first extant letter in which Elizabeth addresses her daughter Catherine by the name Josephine. Since she was baptized Catherine Charlton Seton, Josephine may be either her Confirmation name or reflect an informal name change as the new community commenced. This was the most stable living situation this ten-year-old girl had ever known.

2Receive Holy Communion

3Rev. Simon Bruté, S.S. added this note: “after quarrels with her sister Rebecca”

6.28 UAQ #13

1Sister Cecilia O’Conway
weak trembling arms and heart of her souls Mother—Yet one word from you and your blessed Rebecca\(^2\) would have been more than all for the moment.—She is in my room, in my bed, in my heart, and will in a few hours be strong for she is truly an angel—her sacred sorrow is unknown to all her Sisters except one who is one Soul with her\(^3\) [they] think she has a slight indisposition—look UP Father of Sorrows—to the Father of Mercies, you and yours are his own, cloathed in the robe of tribulation but marked with his Seal and signet\(^4\)—let us be comforted “sorrow endures but for a night—our night is far spent and the day is at hand\(^5\) - L[audetur] J[esus] C[hristus]”

in return for your confidence in your poor Mater she will tell you that our sweet Lord has made her take some bitter bitter potions in this Valley of Peace—the cup is yet to the lip, and is not near the dregs—so much the better, the larger draughts of Salvation will follow it, but this weakness is an embarrassment with respect to your dear - I have no will, or power to move a finger, [one word and a line crossed out] from Mrs. [Charlotte] Melmoth's communications with the Superiors and confessor—but if she knows that [half a line plus two and a half lines are crossed out] after her [unreadable] are it may be passed over in silence. Your utmost imagination cannot concieve half the difficulties of my situation, but if I can have her I will be doubly her Mother, and do all that is possible to reconcile her to leaving the angelic one she will be separated from. This is committed to your honor and friendship. poor Mrs. Melmoth has been a sharp thorn in my crown, but that does not make her merits less—eternal Silence on this subject

—respecting the picture\(^7\) I speak as a friend to a friend—it must have cost you a great deal and that will deprive it of all its charms with

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\(^2\)Rebecca Archer O'Conway, wife of the addressee

\(^3\)Elizabeth herself

\(^4\)Cf. Rev. 7.

\(^5\)Cf. Ps. 30:5; Cf. Romans 13:12.

\(^6\)A note on the address page reads: “Mrs. Melmoth was a lady who wished to be a Sister of Charity, but Mr. Rev. Dubois would not receive her on account of her being an actress.” A convert and an actress from England and Ireland, Charlotte Melmoth was in Baltimore at the same time as Elizabeth. She followed the sisters to Emmitsburg where she made the first retreat with the sisters. She lived for a time in Emmitsburg, but later she returned to New York.

\(^7\)Matthias O'Conway gave a number of paintings to the Sisters of Charity and to Mount St. Mary’s.
me.—my Soul is dead to all pleasure in possessing this and that, as things are now—it lies under the harrow. but if you have bought it and give it to the Community so be it - if the sum you have given can be re­stored take it again and wait till we both see happier days—the organ is not for us nor the pictures but for Mr. [John] Dubois Chapel.

Editha [O’Conway], Sweet Soul is softened and now before God knowing simply that the beloveds are in sorrow that is all, I have car­ried her to our Lord and impressed her with the sense of how much is in her power to make you all happy. She is goodness itself. Columkill [O’Conway] is the loveliest picture of health and innocence you can imagine—

A Dieu A Dieu—dear dear James [O’Conway] will now be the ob­ject of all our prayers—our, that is about six of us who are One Soul. but nobody knows or shall know

I open the letter to intreat you not to let your Rebecca venture on these roads until you make enquiry—the last persons here from Balti­more found them dreadful—but with what delight I would press the darling dear little Pedro [Peter O’Conway]—yet be prudent—

6.29 To Margaret Carey Murphy Burke¹

March 21st 1810

jmj

My dear Mrs. Burk

—your letter awakened many recollections which had been long since forgotten - believe me until you mentioned them I had not

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¹Margaret Carey Murphy Burke (1770/72-1852) was the wife of Captain James Burke and the sister of Matthew Carey of Philadelphia, a prominent Catholic publisher. About 1809-10 she worked at Mount St. Mary’s as the house mother. She was the mother of Sister Maria Murphy Burke and of Teresa Murphy Burke who entered the community but did not stay.
thought of particulars only had observed in you the effects of sorrow and misfortune which are so familiar to myself and often are the occasion of so many peculiarities of conduct that when I meet with them in others they occasion no surprise—no my dear friend you are like myself a child of Affliction and the only painful feeling I have had with respect to you was as you say the coldness of your manner and the fear that you perhaps viewed me as the chief instrument of your unhappiness with respect to your beloved child—let her witness for me what undeviating tenderness and sympathy I have always had for you from the time I first knew her, indeed the manner she always spoke of you would have excited it in any one especially when added to the idea of how much you must have felt in her separating from you.

—but let us in future understand each other and be true friends - if we have neither of us the manner of expressing outwardly, at least let us rely on the internal sentiment for I cannot be more interested than for your lovely family. also you love and honor My Father,² and that with me is a tie strong as the Gordian knot - also our dear Maria [Murphy Burke] the angelic little Teresa - and our day is far spent the night is at hand³ - how soon we may be called to meet where we will inhabit the same home and be associated for Eternity. dear friend Peace be with you. MEAS

<i>I believe I forgot to tell dear Maria that Father recommends to her prayers the Brother of Mr. Dubourg for whom he is making a Novena - she is to carry the request to our lady of Guadaloup.>⁴

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²Rev. Pierre Babade, S.S.
⁴This title commemorates an apparition of Mary said to have occurred in 1531 near Mexico City to Juan Dieg o, a poor Amerindian. Mary is honored under this title as patron of the Americas. One of the painting’s given by Matthias O’Conway to Elizabeth and the sisters was of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
My own dear and a thousand times dear Julia

—Your account of yourself and what is most dear to you is more interesting to the very soul of your friend than you can imagine—What would I consider my life if it could obtain your true happiness, you know what happiness, not that of the present passing hour of course, but that which is infinite—do not imagine your own friend is looking on the gloomy side for that soul so precious, not so, but wishes ardently wishes that you could taste the peaceful disengagement which some are enjoying without being indifferent to their active duties—but patience dearest only be not insensible to the thousand countless motives we have to love the best of Beings and it will grow right at last, that is if you will love. for my part I find so much contentment in this love that I am obliged to put on my consideration cap to find out how any one can raise their eyes to the light of heaven and be insensible to it. I remember when Anna was six months old and every thing smiled around me, venerating the virtues of my Seton and sincerely attached to him, accustomed to the daily visits and devoted love of my Father, possessed of all I estimated as essential to happiness, alone with this Babe in the see saw of Motherly love frequently the tears used to start and often over flow, and I would say to myself while retrospecting the favours of heaven, all these and heaven too? sometimes falling on my knees with the sleeping suckling in my arms I would offer her and all my dear possession[s], Husband, Father,
Home, - and intreat the bountiful giver to separate me from all, if indeed I could not possess my portion here, and with him too—nor do I remember any part of my life after being settled in it that I have not constantly been in the same sentiment, always looking beyond the bounds of time and desiring to quit the gift for the giver—tell me how your dispositions have been I never recollect hearing you express any other sentiment but simple Veneration, but I know your heart is all alive, and may be acquainted with a language in which it has never spoken to its friend

—So you have been told we are all suffering sick etc—it has been so in part, but not as much so as report would have it—Harriets death while it wounded me sorely in one way was easily reconciled in others - if I had an hours conversation with You on her situation with the F[arquhar]' family on one hand and our poor B[arclay]' on the other, you would see that with her heavenly sweet dispositions she is just where it is best she should be, and all this starting of nature from separation and death is often more selfish then rational—Cecilia [Seton] will very soon follow her I think in a very few months more probably weeks—What can I say they are both far dearer to me than myself - we part - nature groans - for me it is an Anguish that threatens dissolution, not in convulsive sighs but the soul is aghast, petrified, after ten minutes it returns to its usual motion and all goes on as if nothing had happened - this same effect has followed the death of all so dear. Why, Faith lifts the staggering soul on one side, Hope supports it on the other, experience says it must be - and love says let it be - and so goes your friend thro’ her passing career—it will not last long that is all she is sure of—

dear Anna begins to feel her Mothers fate, and mixes the attention of a friend with the duty of a child, how happy she is to learn experience at the school of a Mother, there is so many ways of sweetening the lesson, and it makes her so solid and cautious in her hopes—

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3Harriet Seton died December 23, 1809.
4The Farquhars were related to the Seton family. Elizabeth Curson Farquhar, William Magee Seton’s aunt, objected to Elizabeth’s conversion to Catholicism as well as to Harriet Seton’s and Cecilia Seton’s interest in Catholicism.
5Andrew Barclay Bayley, Elizabeth’s half-brother, had at one time been engaged to Harriet Seton.
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—You have given her compleatly the means of independance\(^6\) which adds infinitely to her contentment in such a house as this where the purse being one she would have had many restraints and sometimes dissatisfactions - Whatever is mine is my childrens, but your gifts being particularly to her she acts for herself; and I assure you with great propriety and considers her little sisters as in her own charge.

the Boys are very happy, and truly good—I have enough dearest for this world be assured, the dearest pleasure in the world I would now ask would be to see you quietly and alone for a few hours - perhaps before next winter - say yes - tho’ they tell me it is a tedious journey from Philadelphia—Mr. [Samuel] Cooper tells me you are very well - building a new and handsome house he wished extremely to call on you but was prevented by some idea connected with me, I did not well understand him. he brought me for Cecilia a Barrel of Honey - one of Treacle\(^7\) which we make great use of - a box of Smyrna Figs - one of Raisins - one of Pruens - and 70 or 80 yards of pelise Flannel besides pieces upon pieces of india chemise muslin - that was a good thought you will acknowledge—he will never let us want what he can give—We never see him - or even thank him for his pure Benevolence - Many strange beings there are in this world dearest—love me dearly dearly as I do you

Your own friend MEAS

6.31 To Rev. John Dubois, S.S.

[April 1810]

My dear Sir

If you will accompany us on any part of our way we will esteem it

\(^6\)Julia regularly sent money for the Seton children and additional money specifically for Anna Maria.

\(^7\)Molasses

6.31 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:86
as a particular favour. You did not speak of Cecilias journey\(^1\) when it was first mentioned as either unreasonable or improper or she might have viewed it so herself it is not yet too late if you wish to speak to her on the subject, for my part circumstances as I am both with herself and her family I cannot. if she should ever die in the attempt I can only feel the conviction I have acted for the best, and done all in my power to serve her, your kindness rely upon it will never be forgotten by me and I am sure she is fully sensible of it.

MEAS

6.32 To Sister Maria Murphy Burke

[April 1810]

My dearest Dove

I thank you for your letter dear—you are always faithfully and tenderly remembered. *look up, be good*, cast all your care upon him who cares so much for you,\(^1\) and makes *every thing* work for good to those who *love*\(^2\)

—You remember when Elisius\(^3\) was pursued by his enemies he saw millions of celestial beings ready to take his part - so it is with us, and *Patience* will at last bring all right—my best love to Elenor\(^4\) and kind remembrance to *all* with a thousand blessing to my darling boys.

in haste but ever and forever yours in Christ blessed be his holy name Amen 10000000

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\(^1\)On the advice of Archbishop John Carroll and Dr. Pierre Chatard, Cecilia Seton went to Baltimore for medical treatment. Accompanied by Elizabeth, Anna Maria, and Sister Susan Clossey, they stayed at the home of George Weis.

6.32 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:92

\(^2\)Romans 8:28

\(^3\)Probably the prophet Elisha, a disciple of Elijah. Cf. 2 Kings 6:17.

\(^4\)Probably Elenor Smith, a student at St. Joseph’s Academy
6.33 To Anna Maria Seton

Tuesday morning 16th April [actually April 17, 1810]

My own most dear Anina

If you do not see Cecil to day I fear you will see her no more in this World therefore ask our dear Mrs. [Mary Ann] Barry if you may come at 4. I have also another reason for wishing to see You Kiss the Darlings for your own Mother.

6.34 To Rev. John David, S.S.¹

[April 28 or 29, 1810]

My dear Sir.

As I was very very sick at the time of our departure from Baltimore with chills and pain in all my frame - and also it was raining very hard We were obliged to leave it without seeing you and Mr. [William] Dubourg again contrary to my intention—Mr. Clovieres² Charity in following and yours in sending him to us with every Other Mark of your goodness to our dear Cecily you must know I am more than grateful for, and am very desirous to convince of it by a more certain proof than words.

I shall wait for further directions before announcing to the Sisters the change that is intended in my situation as in Roses [White] Absence no one else would be willing to take the place of Mother without your immediate order. - perhaps however Mr. Cloviere has letters - at all events I shall be satisfied³

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6.33 ASJPH 1-3-3-9:27

1Cecilia Seton, Elizabeth’s sister-in-law, died in Baltimore April 28, 1810.

6.34 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:8

1This letter was formerly classified as written to Rev. Charles Nagot, S.S.

2After Cecilia Seton died in Baltimore April 28, Joseph Picot de Clorivièrè, S.S., (d. 1813) a seminarian, accompanied Elizabeth and Sister Susan Clossay on their journey back to Emmitsburg with the body.

3These two sentences are written crosswise at the bottom of the second page. The Sulpicians were discussing the possibility of replacing Elizabeth as Mother of the Sisters of Charity.
Susan [Clossy] and Mother had set out alone with Cecil in the cof­fin as cheerful and gay as two folle[s].

We could hardly look at Mr. Cloviere with proper gravity when he overtook us at Winchester I believe—

6.35 to George Weis

[5/n.d.]

My dear Wies,

—I fly away from my School to tell you by our kind Doctor [Pierre Chatard] that all is well - every thing Peace and my heart and Soul bent upon keeping it so, well assured that this trial of our Lord in so seperating us from Our own Father [Pierre Babade] is but to try us and prove our Submission and love for his Adorable Will—

so it does not make me now uneasy but look forward to a time perhaps nearer than I imagine When we shall be personally united with him our Souls live in—I say Our for there are some here who like myself love him if possible more and more and as I told our Rev. Mr.[John] Dubois if once that spark was but a small proportion of Divine love Now it is a strong and constant flame reaching higher than heaven, for our darlings there nourish it continually—the children are very well - tell my Annina when you see her that I will write this week

We are to have a retreat in June and our rule is now strictly begun a thousand million Benedictions on Him who blesses us continually - tell him I never do or will miss his mass at 7 but am there much more than here.

tell our dear Minon [Weise] that I love her dearly and think of you both very often recommending all you trials with my own to his dear mercy.

ever your true friend.

Monday morn

foals
6.35 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:66
good "Sus"[an Clossy] is well - teaching her little class—

6.36 Draft to Rev. John B. David, S.S.

[5/n.d.]

Rev. Father

I am sorry to find the business of Miss [Mary] Quin\(^1\) has given you pain and can only report that I have not done or said any thing to authorise her expectation of coming here without a previous arrange­ment with you.

—The school has increased to thirty 5 scholars\(^2\) and yet goes on very well Ellen Thompson who is entirely unable to do any work in the house has charge of the small children as Mr. [John] Dubois requested she should be in the school and Susan [Clossy] also assists except on washing and scrubbing days - so many would be unnecessary if it was not requisite to finish school so as not to interrupt spiritual exercises

—the Sisters observe the rule to the utmost of their power except the habit of Silence, which cannot very readily be established after so long a scene of confusion and even now driven from room to room surrounded by workmen and called upon in every direction as they all are except Sister Rose [White] who keeps the work basket, and whenever any Sisters are collected round her they observe it as is required.

—I do not know that in any instance their peace or mutual charity has been interrupted, but on the contrary they seem always carefully bent on preserving it. two or three of them are not happy in their situation here, but that arises from family circumstances and not any disgust with their vocation. when you come you will no doubt judge if it is of serious consequence or not.

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\(^1\)Written along the side of the address: "Tell dearest Father to send the chaplets he promised for his children by the Doctor. and as many as he can blessed by himself" A chaplet is a rosary.

\(^2\)Later Sister Martina Quinn

6.36 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:9

St. Joseph’s Free School began February 22, 1810, while the first five boarders arrived from Frederick County, Maryland, May 14. This is the first free Catholic school for girls taught by sisters in the United States.
If you could suppose the Sisters are permitted to incur any expence that may be avoided, Mr. Dubois who knows every thing that passes in the house can satisfy you that he has been continually reproaching them that they are more sparing than they ought to be, but if the size of the family taking in day labourers also is considered the very article of flour is an immense expence when purchased as it always is by the single barrel and we use but one barrel where they use three at the mountain.

6.37 To Eliza Sadler

6th May 1810

My own dear Eliza

I have just returned from Baltimore where I had carried the darling Celia with a distant hope that she might be benefited by the ride, change of air, and consultation of Physicians - but - He said No - and that is enough - a happier more consoling departure than she made you cannot imagine - she was innocence and Peace itself - the precious Sisters lay in a wood close by our dwelling, inclosed—every day the hands of affection and love do something to adorn the sacred solitude, how I wish we could pass the hour of Sunset there—yet dearest Eliza let it be so in spirit

—how are you, how is dear [William] Craigé, is our Dué yet with You - I have so many many letters to dismiss this week that I can only ask you those questions to me really interesting—and will you beg [Samuel] Craig to take the inclosed receipt to Murreys and if he can get the Bills to forward them. my darling Boys Bills must be paid, beside the expenses of so long an illness as Cicily’s is not trifling since October last—I say if he can get Murrey to meet the demand for it is so

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3Extant financial records show that in the early spring of 1810, payments were made to Charles Lee, a free black, for digging holes and planting trees; to James Dyer, George Caldwarder, and John Blaise for work in the orchard and garden and for cutting wood; and to John Brown and Joseph Hughes for carpentry in St. Joseph’s house.

6.37 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:38

1The Filicchis’ business agent in the United States
long since I have heard from Leghorn that it would be no surprize if he refused to do so - since his situation with the [Antonio and Filippo] Filicchis may be changed - but Craige will interest himself

—The Mother has made a great effort, and Anna remains in Baltimore for a time, with a tried friend and most excellent woman Mrs. R[obert] Barry part of the family we loved in N[ew] York. She is an European - and will and does keep her always under her own eye. Anna has a very great desire to improve herself in drawing, and will always be busy, so that I cannot be uneasy for her, besides her modesty and reserve is really Angelic.

do dearest Eliza write soon - tell me if there is any thing more interesting to you in this world - if you have heard from the dear Beings you left in Ireland—not asking if you are reconciled to having left them for I well know you have the Secret of according every thing with the dispensations of the Adored.

We have not a word from Mr. [John] Tisserant² but always hope—obliged unwillingly to leave you

I am yours EASeton

Special love to all I love.

6.38 Copy to George Weis¹

13th May 1810

Is it possible my kind my good George who wishes only to make the happiness of others, and fill them with Joy, should be himself a victim of sorrow—{I hope some change has taken place last week,} I entreat you in the name of our adored to take courage, and look to the

²Rev. John Tisserant had been in England since 1806.

6.38 ASJPH 1-3-3-12:99 (1-2) (manuscript copy) No original exists.

¹The text is in the handwriting of Rev. Simon Bruté, S.S. He added a drawing of Elizabeth holding a cross and tablet on which "The Will of God" is inscribed. Another version of this letter is ASJPH 1-3-3-2:76 (3-5) which is included in a set of letters copied by Rev. James Roosevelt Bayley, Elizabeth's nephew. A note at the beginning of the packet states: "Copied from letters to a Mr. Weis of Balt. by Mother Seton. I copied these notes myself from MS. which Mr. Weis or Wise let me have for that purpose = when I was Secr to Bp. Hughes in 1846 or 47. J. Roosevelt Bayley, Bp. of Newark, St. Elizabeth's, Madison, Ap 29/48." The material enclosed as [ ] is in the Bayley copy but not in the Bruté copy of the letter.
crown before you—if you sink so soon in the days of trial, My friend, how will we be able to keep in the bloody footsteps of our Leader—oh look upon him; see his look of love and sorrow while he looks behind after you, and calls “come, follow me—Calvary is the rendezvous—there my dear George both you and I must meet him—meet him—we must be crucified—it is in vain to start, or think of escaping—oh that the Adored would give you a spark of the fire he has put in my heart since I bid you the last A Dieu—but I will use that fire to beg you may be supported, or carried through this deluge of sorrow which has beset you—{I can say nothing to you except I think you must be mistaken about our Pere [Babade]—he would surely do his best to thank you for all your goodness to us by double attention, besides your claims on his heart[,] this is a mystery.}

—oh Dear George do not give way to dejection look up, I supplicate you, remember the thousand offerings you have made of yourself—{and write me next week how all goes—the dear children are very well, talking often of dear Mr. and Mrs. Weis, and the dearest Pere—I have told you last week of whatever new has happened since my return}—peace be with you

tell your dear Minon Weis to love me as I do her in our Lord, and with all her heart, when I think of all her exertions, for one comfort when with her mine overflow and our one painful moment must be forgotten forever—our good Angel has blotted it out.

Always Your aff. friend MEAS

{—tell our dearest Father he cannot imagine how much good his _unique d'Estragon_ has done—how often it relieves my weak breast—perhaps I qualify it Faith, and love may be another ingredient— at all events it is excellent— and every day and night I use the holy water blessed by him in your _little room_ in the manner of extreme unction—in the morning to defend from danger—at night to efface the errors of

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2 An herbal remedy using tarragon
the day—you must allow that Enthusiasts have a region of happiness where the wise ones do not enter, if they did they would find a sort of Greek they could not understand.

L. J. C. beni soit, loué, adoré.

6.39 To Antonio Filicchi

May 20th 1810

Since the above was written, my Brother, I have never been able to hear of a good occasion to write and have besides been so beset with difficulties that having but a few moments and nothing but trouble to tell you of, was not very anxious to write.

Yet do I speak of trouble before the boundless joy of having received another most dear Sister in our holy Church. Perhaps you may remember Harriet Seton who was engaged to marry my Brother, the Doctor Bayley. She was in the top of fashion, amusement and the Belle of N[ew] York, when making us a visit while I was in Baltimore, for the recovery of Cecilia’s health, she followed us to the mountain, where our Community is established, became a fervent convert, approached Communion twice a week and exercised every mark of faithful Souls. In the midst of this happiness after having received the reproachful letters of her friends and the learned ones of Controvertists, renouncing them and the engagement to my Brother (unless he joined her intentions) she was taken ill and died singing a salutation to the blessed Sacrament. Since that, Cecilia too has departed, the admiration and triumph of all who know her in our Faith.

3French for “May He be blessed, praised, adored.” Bruté notes that this ending is “a usual form of her[s] to say without end, million times.”

6.39 AMSJ A 111 054 (manuscript copy) No original exists.

1For the first part of this letter, see 6.10, November 8, 1809, AMSJ A 111 054. The manuscript is a copy of the letter made by Antonio Filicchi. A note on the letter reads: “Copy of the original forward to Rev. [Charles] White the 20 October 1846 at Baltimore.”

2Andrew Barclay Bayley

3Cecilia Seton died April 28, 1810.
Your poor Sister to be sure is called the pest of Society, and all the lovely names of Hypocrite, Bigot etc. etc. which you know are all music to the spirit longing only to be conformed to Him who was despised and rejected by men.  

In our house we have had continual sickness too, all the Winter, and I have been obliged to incur many expences, and to go thro’ every difficulty natural to such an undertaking as I have engaged in. You know the enemy of all good will, of course, makes his endeavours to destroy it, but it seems our Adored is determined on its full success by the excellent subjects he has placed in it. We are now twelve, and as many again are waiting for admission. I have a very very large school to superintend every day, and the entire charge of the religious instruction of all the country round. All happy to the Sisters of Charity who are night and day devoted to the sick and ignorant. Our blessed Bishop [John Carroll] intends removing a detachment of us to Baltimore to perform the same duties there. We have here a very good house tho’ a [log] Building and it will be the Mother House and retreat, in all cases a portion of the Sisterhood will always remain in it to

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4Cf. Is. 53:3.

5In addition to those already mentioned, women who had entered the Sisters of Charity by this time were the following:

   Jane Corbet (b. 1785), a native of New York and a convert to Catholicism, was recommended to the community by Rev. Anthony Kohlman, S.J. She was admitted as a candidate in December 1809, but she withdrew the next year and returned to New York.

   Ann Gruber (d. 1840), born in Switzerland, entered March 16, 1810, and pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. Known as Sister Ann, she served the community several times as Procuratrix (1812, 1826, and 1827). Although in April 1814 she asked to be relieved of this duty, she was told to await the outcome of elections in July. In 1815 she went on mission to Mount St. Mary’s for domestic and infirmary services and in 1823 to the Baltimore Infirmary. She died in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, en route from St. Louis to Emmitsburg. Originally buried in St. Paul’s cemetery in Pittsburgh, in February 1874 her remains were removed to St. Mary’s cemetery and reburied in the lot of Timothy Hesson. She was the first woman religious buried in western Pennsylvania.

   Elizabeth (Betsy) Boyle (1788-1861), a convert from Baltimore, entered March 16, 1810, and pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. She served as the Assistant to Elizabeth (1814), as Sister Servant in Philadelphia (1820), and as Sister Servant in New York (1822) for many years. In 1846, under the sponsorship of Bishop John Hughes of New York (1797-1864), Sister Elizabeth Boyle became the first superior (1846-1849) of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of New York. She died in New York at the Catholic Orphan Asylum on June 21 and she is buried in the community cemetery at Mount-St.-Vincent-on-the-Hudson in the Bronx.

6The school opened February 22, 1810, when three new day students arrived.

7This did not happen until after Elizabeth’s death.

8St. Joseph’s House, their newly constructed log home
keep the spinning weaving and knitting and school for country people regularly progressing. Our blessed Bishop is so fond of our establish-
ment that it seems to be the darling part of his charge and this consoles me for every difficulty or embarassment. All the Clergy in America support it by their prayers and there is every hope that it is the seed of an immensity of future good. You must admire how Our Lord should have chosen such a one as I to preside over it, but you know he loves to show his strength in weakness, and his wisdom in the ignorant,⁹ his blessed name be adored forever, it is in the humble poor and helpless he delights to number his greatest mercies and set them as marks to en-
courage poor Sinners.

How are you, Tonino what are you doing. do you every think of the poverina of America. Yet you do, and she thinks of you as of her daily Bread.

22nd of May

The Rev. Mr. Zocchi¹⁰ has a letter to you which I trembled to write, but my dear dear Antonio if I have done wrong only say the word and I will apply no more to your boundless generosity without your imme-
diate explanation of time and quantity. but this occasion of obliging this good Priest, and the real advantage of the Sum at this time, has perhaps made me trespass. Yet remember your command to draw on you in necessity has been repeated and positive and it is not to me but to our Adored you send it. If it was for any other intention but for His use I would be far from using such a privilege, and this way seemed better than apply to Murrey¹¹ as the time before when [William or Samuel] Craig waited on him with my letter requesting him to make me an advance he replyed that he had not funds from Filicchi to allow more than the sum you ordered of 200 Dollars. Antonio, Antonio do not be angry with me it is for the family of the blessed Virgin and St Joseph I act and in their name.

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⁹Cf. 1 Cor. 1:25.
¹⁰Rev. Nicholas Zocchi was born in Rome and ministered in the United States at Taneytown and Westminster, Maryland, where he built a church in 1805. At this time he was returning to his homeland for a visit.
¹¹The Filicchis’ business agent in the United States
I do not know why this Clergyman [Zocchi] leaves America—but he is much respected and very much useful, and has long had four Congregations in charge. I have told him you would befriend him, and I am sure you will. Our last letters from Boston the Reverend and honoured Gentlemen\textsuperscript{12} there were well—it is said Bishop Concannon\textsuperscript{13} is arrived and our Mr. [Benedict] Flaget who is to be Bishop of Kentucky and if so the ordination will bring Mr. [John] Chevrous to Baltimore and of course he will visit the Sisters of Charity—Oh how happy happy I shall be, may be he will call me to Boston to settle a branch of us there—to be sure, fine hopes in the brains of your poor Sister. indeed indeed Antonio I long and wish to serve our Lord with every breath I draw—pray for your own work that it may be crowned at last.—

I forgot, and it is almost useless to tell you that the New Yorkers have given me up altogether and entirely, Mr.[John] Wilkes and Mrs. [Sarah] Startin, before Harriet’s conversion had ceased correspondence and looked upon me as one of the evils of Society but since that, from what Sam[juel Waddington] Seton one of our younger Brothers has written to Cecilia before her death I find my name cannot be mentioned before them. Mr. Wilkes last letter mentioned his Wife’s fortune was in Chancery,\textsuperscript{14} and all his affairs embarassed, and if he made me any remittance he must borrow, which you may be sure I did not require, and have not heard from him since upwards of one year—does it hurt you that I press so hard on you and make no further application to them—consider how can I apply to them for means which would go to the support of a Religion and institution they abhor, while what is taken from you is promoting your greatest happiness in this World, and bringing you nearer and nearer to the Adored in the next—but again let me repeat if I have gone too far stop me short

\textsuperscript{12}Revs. Francis Matignon and John Cheverus

\textsuperscript{13}Bishop Richard Luke Concannon, O.P., (1747-1810), an Irish Dominican, spent virtually his whole priestly life in Rome. He had been consecrated the first bishop of New York in Rome April 24, 1808, but he was unable to travel to the United States before his death June 19, 1810, in Naples, Italy.

The Order of Preachers, O.P., known as Dominicans, is a religious order of priests and brothers founded in 1216 by St. Dominic de Guzman in Spain to teach and preach the Gospel. The Dominicans were founded in the United States by Rev. Edward Fenwick, O.P., in 1805.

\textsuperscript{14}A court with jurisdiction in equity
forever if you find it necessary, without fear of the least wound to the
Soul you love which receives all from your hands as from that of Our
Lord, and whenever they may be closed will know that it is he who
shuts them who uses all for his own Glory as he pleases. I do not write
your Filippo [Filicchi] now as this letter will serve to say all to
both—except the fervency and attachment of my very Soul to you in
Our Christ may he be blessed and praised forever—how great that at­
ttachment is, and with how much reason can only be known by one
who once was what I have been, and can conceive how great the con­
trast of past and present is—this is understood by him alone who gave
you to me and us to you—for which I trust we will love, and praise and
adore thro’ Eternity

Your MEASETon

Do not let your most dear Amabilia [Filicchi], and darlings forget
us—The Confessor of our Community\(^\text{15}\) under whose care my Boys
both are an excellent, superexcellent Priest has a great desire to obtain
an altar piece for his Parish. Mr. Zocchi says it could be done in Italy
for one hundred Dollars, and he has begged that Gentleman to interest
himself—and I beg of you, if you should know of any such to be inter­
ested too—he will punctually pay that Sum.

6.40 To Antonio Filicchi

22nd May 1810

My Dear Filicchi

—The Rev. Mr. [Nicholas] Zocchi being about to return to his na­
tive home, your lovely Italy and wishing to secure his little property
from the dangers of the Voyage, has proposed to me to exchange a
thousand Dollars for a Bill on you to that amount, which will be a great

\(^{15}\)Rev. John Dubois, S.S.
accommodation on both sides, nor can I doubt of your approbation as in your last you ordered and commanded your Sister to call upon you if necessary. I have received the sum from the Rev. Mr. Zocchi of one thousand Dollars in gold and if you can return it in gold it will be particularly agreeable to him, and I have promised him you will pay it at sight, at least in part, if not the whole.

I recommend this Rev. gentleman to your kindness and Friendship - and remain your most

Affectionate in Christ MEA Seton
St. Joseph’s¹

6.41 To Eliza Sadler

Monday 27th May 1810

My own dear Eliza.

The letter is received just in time to say that it is so, by this post - and to thank our dear [William] Craigé for so kindly executing my Commission—indeed the health you are anxious for is more promising than it has been since its first hard hard shock and separation from him who gave it. the bones will of course always be uppermost - but the breast suffers little and the head is clear—You never mention yours dearest - Oh if it could breathe our mountain air and taste the repose of deep woods and streams.

Yesterday we all - about twenty Sisters and children dined, that is eat our cold ham and cream pies in our Grotto¹ in the mountain where

¹Added in Mr. Zocchi’s handwriting: “Received from Mr. Anthony Filicchi the above sum of one thousand dollars due to me by Mrs. Seton - this day the 21st of September 1810 N. Zocchi.” A draft of this note is found in ASJPH 1-3-3-10:40.

6.41 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:39

¹The Grotto on St. Mary’s Mountain above Mount St. Mary’s was a natural setting formed by the great trunk and thick roots of an ancient fallen tree which overhung the bed of the mountain stream. Rev. Simon Bruté, S.S., adorned it with an old cross, and it became a place of reflection and prayer, especially as a Marian shrine.
we go on Sunday for the Divine Office. Richard joined his Mothers side and love with every mouthful handing the cup of water from the cool stream with as much grace as an Angel but William contented himself with a wave of his hat and a for afterwards, and going home he followed in a part of the wood where he would be unseen and gave such expressions of love and tenderness as can come only from the Soul - but always unobserved and never forfeiting his character of being a man. they are two beings as different as sun and moon - but William most interests poor Mother. in the afternoon catechism he was asked if his business in the world was to make money and gain reputation or to serve God and use all his endeavours to please him - “my business is to do both Sir,” answered William with the tone of decision. but I forget time flies and I have taken half a sheet—a thousand thousand loves and benedictions be with you my dear Eliza my heart feels as bright as the Sun now setting and wants to share with you

Oh how it will comfort me if dear Helen [Bayley] is happy - I have always felt as if I had been the means of depriving her of her little property - and it has cut - but so many things will now concur to make her situation delightful to her that I am truly truly thankful.

Anna is yet with Mrs. [Mary Ann] Barry - how we would love to see her with Mary once more - but - Well dear Eliza now I catch the sigh - Adieu . á Dieu .

always yours, EAS

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2The Divine Office is psalms and scripture readings which form the official prayer of the Catholic church.

3Possibly Mary Bayley Post, Elizabeth’s sister, or Mary Fitch Bayley, her half-sister
My own dear Julia

—What is your conclusion - that this world is a changing passing scene - to be sure dearest and happy they who can quit it as my Cecil¹ has done - so peaceful and contented that when the last sad silence came it was more like sleep than death. You may have heard by the current of report that she died in Baltimore where your last hundred dollars carried us, discharged our expences, procurred us many comforts for the three weeks we were there, and furnished Anna with all she wanted and enabled me to bring my darling back to the Wood² to rest beside dear Harriet.—so it is, and so it is—and who shall say it is not all right = Anna went with us but the stage we returned in could only bring the dear clay,³ one of the Sisters of Charity,⁴ who had nursed her, and our baggage, so Annina was left with Mrs. Robert Barry who is kindness personified and a truly amiable woman. it was a very interesting moment for the poor child as her much loved⁵ was on the point of departure to his own country in order to arrange his affairs for—our Lord only knows whether for their reunion, or separation. I have given the whole business up to that dear Lord who has indulged me so much that now I go straight on, and let him manage everything. all the precaution I took was to watch that they never were a minute alone which they never were allowed to be before, and now had no opportunity, so that my dear one might not be led into those indiscretions which tho apparently triffling at the time, yet must hurt the purity of a heart innocent as hers

—Louisa and Emily C[aton] were often with us Louisa once said come Anna stay with us we will get a much better match for you - you

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¹Cecilia Seton, Elizabeth’s sister-in-law, had died April 28.
²Elizabeth often referred to the wooded area where the cemetery was located as “the Wood.”
³The body of the deceased Cecilia Seton
⁴Sister Susan Clossey
⁵Charles DuPavillon
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don't know the enchantment of cockades and epaulets etc—Oh how my Mother's heart felt - between you and I alone I have begged Annina never to go there. We are poor and let us be so, but free from such ideas of happiness - poor poor Louisa how she is to be pitied - but we cannot change her.

Now then dearest I am jogging on - thro' fine air, thick woods, plenty of what I call the goods of this life - some cares, many comforts - and always looking upwards. the children are good as Angels, the Boys very regular and assiduous - no dear dear Cecil no soul meeting soul when the sun sinks behind the mountain, but - but—but—

now tell me about yourself—I used always to be fearing sickness, accidents etc when you were so long silent - but now they say you are so well and strong—Yet well and strong may change quickly too like every thing else, tell me dearest how indeed are you = and Charlotte and Brother - but above all most dear Maria - there is a lovely modest girl (Ellenor Smith of Frederick Town) in my charge about sixteen, but so like Maria that she took my heart the first moment she lifted her eyes upon me, and many a sigh I give to Maria while giving her her daily instructions. - I have four of them the same age as boarders, and so many are daily applying that I suppose I must be school dame again - our good Sisters can teach the country children very well, but when the class is higher it is not so easy. Miss Caton told me our dear John is making excursions - and I fear you are under some anxiety. he is so young and impetuous in his disposition - and you have not my guiding star dearest to make all that happens right - Oh what would I not give if you had it - depend on it it is not because I do not ask it for you - and you must ask for it continually, the first best gift of heaven.

I am not going to write you any more to day and will take advantage of tommorows post—

adieu adieu adieu with a thousand loves.

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6John Scott had recently been in Baltimore where he had visited Anna Maria.
7The Catholic faith
My dear George

- Your bitter word gave me both comfort and pain - to find you in such good disposition for your cross, and to hear it still weighs so hard upon you, as I had hoped your business so distressing to you was now settled—but remember our Master has his own time for every thing, and you and I may as well take it patiently as fret under the bridle, and depend upon it our day will come too

I am bent double with pain to night - L.J.C. and the messenger goes early tomorrow - tell our F[ather Pierre Babade] my souls soul that I am afraid to do the least to ease my pains for fear they may be sent to him as I know one or the other must be nailed fast—Oh if it could be always me I should sing as joyfully as the leper, feeling for my Father on earth as for the Father in heaven since I cannot be with him let me be so blessed as to suffer for him. I hope you understand this mysterious language sir—if you do not go to Cecils corner and her spirit will fall upon you and explain it—but you understand well I know.

—a thousand loves to dear Minon [Weis] tell her her pidgeons all are males and poor dismal capuchins they are staying no where and always wandering. good night good night L.J.C. 10000000 MEAS let Annina have this immediately not in dear Fathers POCKET

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6.43 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:61

The following note to Anna Maria was probably enclosed with this letter.
Be sure my dearest Ann go to him your Father your friend your refuge, your All—only lay all your heart at his feet, the gift he loves best—The prayers and cries of mine will be with you for all your intentions—

6.45 To Catherine Dupleix

4th June 1810 jmj

My own dear Dué!

never let it enter your thoughts that time, absence or above all your carelessness in writing can change, even in degree a love, a friendship of my soul which for so many years has been as a part of itself, I wished you to have written but could well excuse you, knowing your habitual dislike to letter writing, and your most kind and dear [George] Duplex has supplied your place. Our [Eliza] Sad[ler], too before his arrival wrote every account I so much wished for and I dare say has written you that your poor little shipwrecked friend is finishing her career under the strange and ill placed title of Abbess of a convent; I say ill placed because it is as much so as it would be to call me by any other name than that of Seton as the little community I have the charge of are bound by no obligations¹ and are united only with the view of schooling children, nursing the sick, and manufacturing for ourselves and the poor, which to my disposition you know is the sum

¹The sisters had not yet made vows and were not bound by a formal rule. They were following the primitive document, Provisional Regulations for St. Joseph’s Sisters, which outlined the order of the day.
of all earthly happiness.—it is hard to live so far from the first ties of
my life, but you know circumstances sometimes made a residence
among them rather painful than otherways at least it could not counter
ballance the comfort of having my darling children all around me, in a
fine country where we enjoy the plain but substantial comforts of that
kind of life which looks only to Home for its conveniences - we have a
new and handsome house newly built on a very large farm half cov­
ered with woods. high mountains run all one side of it and meadows
below. the darling Boys are in a branch of the Baltimore college¹ half
way up the mountain and well taken care of every way, and without
partiality they are two as sweet fellows in looks, manners and disposi­
tion as poor Mothers heart could wish—Richard always Mothers Boy,
all his desire centers in a farm that he may never quit her—William is
the Boy of hopes and fears.—reading some lines in an almanack the
other day of the whistling of a sea boy in the main top shrouds - “thats
your sorts” he said “I’m your man” and always talks of saving the
World - but yet has great ideas of being a gentleman in every thing,
without knowing that a gentleman without a penny is but a name,
however as his gentlemans notions makes him a fine fellow, keeps
him from meaness and cowardice, I trust it will all turn out well, for a
more loving and tender heart cannot be imagined, tho’ the talents of
neither of them are distinguished, which does not disappoint me,
knowing well they often ruin their owners.

Kitty is only less than an Angel in looks and every qualification.
Oh Dué if you knew her and your little Beck as they are and could
[see] them every day you would say there is nothing like them. but
what is truly funny is to see Beck with a little class of six or eight chil­
dren, holding up her finger in silence with her pen and ink, giving
them good points or crosses and keeping better order than her Mother
can - her oldest is her own age but she is a woman to her - Kit rules
books, sets copies, hears lessons and conducts herself with such grace
that girls twice her age show her the greatest respect—

¹Elizabeth refers to Mount St. Mary’s at Emmitsburg as a branch of St. Mary’s College of
Baltimore. At this time both institutions were administered and staffed by the Sulpicians.
and my Annina - that is the pinch - My Annina - so young, so lovely, so innocent absorbed in all the romance of youthful passion - as I have told you she gave her heart without my knowledge and afterwards what could a doating and unhappy Mother do but take the part of friend and confident dissembling my distress and resolving that if there was no remedy to help her, at least by my love and pity. I found her case incurable, nor do I yet know if there will be any cause for repentance as her favourite has good talents and a handsome independence - it is said immense wealth, but I never enquired much about it - he is now on his passage to Gaudaloup to endeavor to arrange his affairs so as to settle my darling here as she never will consent to our Separation, and her poor little soul is tossed by all the hopes and fears you may imagine. - he has appointed six or eight months for his return, but if it will ever be - who can tell. he has been well educated, and is possessed of good principles but there is great danger certainly.

—You know I always look directly upwards. dearest Harriet and my angel Cecil sleep in the wood close beside me, the children and many of our good Sisters to whom they were much attached have planted their graves with wild flowers, and the little enclosure which contains them is the dearest spot to me on earth. I do not miss them half as much as you would think as according to my mad notions it seems as if they are always around me, at all events Separation will not be long.

my health is excellent considering; these good souls who call me Mother [supply me] with fresh eggs, milk and butter, coffee and cream, good vegetables, home[made] bread etc. and oblige me to live a thousand times easier and better than [unclear]. Never do the least kind of work of any kind, to walk around with knitting in hand and give the look of encouragement or reproof thro’ the house and school is my chief business—at 5 our work finishes and we all repair to the woods in fine weather and in wet tell womans stories and read till supper

—so now dearest dear friend I have as I would have wished you to do in my place - given you the outline—within all is quiet - no busy

3Anna Maria was infatuated with Charles DuPavillon, a student at St. Mary’s College.
world, no painful whispers, no misconstructions we are as quiet as the sheep your innocent Kit and Beck are caressing. Our chapel joins the house, the parish pastor\(^4\) comes every morning at six to say mass and at eight work begins.

—Your dear George and my dear George [Dupleix] has given me a hope that you will come to visit us on your return. Oh Dué Dué Dué what a day will that be when ONCE MORE I put my all in your arms - the poor eyes are blind at the thought - can it be - will it be dearest dear friend farewell - your EAS

we all send you kisses from the heart on this spot O\(^5\)

My dear Duplex I did not think you would sail so soon and unless this is dismissed at this moment it will not be in time for you as the mail goes on this day—a thousand thousand blessings go with you, with the boundless gratitude and affection of the heart of EAS.

[I] have just received Mrs. Sads letter with yours but cannot write her by this post. the childrens best love to you they look on you as one of Mothers unchanging friends and love you with a special affection. thank you for telling me about your home - mind and take good care of yourself.

6.46 To Matthias O’Conway

jmj

5th June 1811\(^1\)

My dear OConway

If you were as the world is, I would try to give you as I really could, a doz[en] just excuses for so long a silence in the letter way; but you can discern them in one glance and the smile of true Friendship speaks

\(^4\)Rev. John Dubois, S.S.

\(^5\)The last two paragraphs are a note on the outside of the letter to Captain George Dupleix, the addressee’s husband.

6.46 PAHRC MC 44:1,5

\(^1\)Although this letter is dated 1811, its contents indicate that it was written in 1810.
Peace—I must go back a long way—to tell you the mingled feelings of love and sorrow with which I received the dear picture which Mr. Heughs\textsuperscript{2} says he saw you pay down two hundred Dollars for - but it was to our Adored and that is enough for You. Our good Sisters are very proud of their possession we had a great many hints that it would suit the Altar at Emitsburg\textsuperscript{3} best, but we would not spell them, and it makes our humble chapel look really like a chapel. I did not want such a memento to raise the heart in fervent desires for the Donor and the precious ones he loves best, but have begged the community to remember them continually.

[Nine words crossed out in a darker ink] all the powers of my Will are limited even in the least points, I have told you.—it would be enough for me to present <her> for reception to insure <her> disappointment as I have experienced in other cases. only a hint of it to one of the three Reverends who guide all things, was answered by an intire disapprobation, [three words crossed out]—I answered you would meet every demand - and he said then you had better apply to the Rev. Mr. [John] David Superior - and so I think - the charge for a Boarder is 100 Dollars per annum and half in advance every six months - but if you can only get her in fear not I will take the rest upon myself If I remain which is not decided.

We are to have a retreat in July, and then it will be settled, final Rules proposed, and our yearly Vows made. You will laugh at me when I tell you I have seen more real affliction and sorrow here in the ten months since our removal than in all the 35 years of my past life which was all marked by affliction.—You will laugh, I repeat, because you will know that the fruit will not be lost - at least I hope not, tho’ indeed sometimes I tremble. it is not needful to tell you this is SACRED.

Our, Your Veronique is the Angel of the Community All Soul and life, doing every thing with such ease and diligence, and at the Altar, or in the schoolroom perpetually - not a moment lost.—Our Adored has so changed her with respect to external things that at times when I

\textsuperscript{2}Probably James Hughes who was a builder from Emmitsburg. Matthias O’Conway gave an original oil painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe to Elizabeth in 1811.
know her very soul has been drowned in Sorrow she has appeared as calm and steady as a Saint - during the Visit of our ever dear Joseph [O’Conway], at his departure, and since he is gone, not a word or look has betrayed her poor heart which I know was suffocated - not even in her bed which being next to mine she could not have cheated me - she would go to sleep long before me and in peace like a Babe = what a contrast to the convulsive sobs and tears which used to succeed even a bad dream of home—Oh happy happy Father of such a precious child Virgin Modesty and grace personified and yet always a proper confidence when necessity commands a true pattern of Innocence and piety = think what a true and solid comfort she is to me. She is now my Counsel in the place of my departed angel Cecil.

—[Isabella] Editha [O’Conway] is much advanced since I wrote you. her mind is beginning to form. She is much improved in many ways, and gets her certificate every week for writing in the school—I have always found it an excellent way to make children steady to show them you confide in them, and put the younger ones in some degree in charge of the older—they go over the same lessons many times which they have carelessly learnt, and being obliged to give good example it has a good effect - but this without neglecting their own particular pursuits. Rev. Mr. [John] Dubois is going to admit her a [unclear] to Communion being much satisfied with the change in her he kept mine back too for a time which cannot be disapproved as it was right he should know them well first.

Well my dear dear friend ANSWER ME, is the World we are in anything but a prison, are you not a thousand times tired of it - obliged to be diffident in trusting even what is good - and expecting what is good itself must turn to bad—I hope your Soul is not as sick as mine, except our Lord chains you as he does me to himself and smiles upon your disgust and weariness with inspiring looks of courage and conquest. sometimes I see him on before and with a reproachful look of love, he says will you, can you desert my bloody footsteps, at others I run on by His side, and would not change my company even for Beatitude itself - the company of a Suffering agonizing REDEEMER 0, OUR GOD What can we fear - hail a thou[an]d thou[an]d thou[an]d times dear dear dear holy CROSS. dear friend Say Amen. amen a thou[an]d thou[an]d thou[an]d
times. and L.J.C. forever ever ever. your MEAS with tender love to your dear Mother and dearest Wife whom I love in my very Soul.

6.47 To Archbishop John Carroll

15th June 1810

Most honoured and revered Father

Perhaps you have late news of Mrs. [Joanna] Barry but in the uncertainty I take this Opportunity of telling you that a letter from Mr. D[avid] B[arry]\(^2\) to Mr. Heffernam of New York mentions that she was waiting to take her passage in the first American vessel that sails from Cork [Ireland]. this letter was dated 3d of May.

your paternal heart will be glad to know that all goes quietly here—Mr. [John] Dubois\(^3\) has been named the representative of Rev. Mr. [William] Dubourg, and is making some exertions for the settlement of the establishment which gives a better appearance to things in general. the masons have nearly finished the lower part of the house, but the work falls so heavy on our good Sisters who have stood it out the longest that every one of them now are afflicted with pain in the breast and side - for myself I am almost bent double. \textit{but this I only tell you as our chief Shepherd.} let all things take their course, fortunately for us Mr. Dubois never thinks any sickness worth minding till the Doctor gives over, and therefore every one keeps up with courage. Our school is very respectable and has increased to forty, including Boarders.

—Rev. Mr. [Nicholas] Zocchi has begged me to exchange a thousand dollars with him for a bill on Filicchi\(^4\) which I readily did as

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6.47 AAB 7M8

\(^{1}\)A draft version of this letter is ASJPH 1-3-3-1:53. It is dated June 14.

\(^{2}\)David Barry, a nephew of Joanna Gould Barry

\(^{3}\)Rev. John Dubois, S.S., was overseeing the completion of the new St. Joseph’s House. This was his first official role with the Sisters of Charity.

\(^{4}\)Rev. Nicholas Zocchi had advanced money to Elizabeth and was to be reimbursed by Antonio Filicchi.
Filicchi has ordered me to take whatever might be wanting. Mr. Dubois has part of the money for the pressing wants of the house, he has promised security to Mr. Zocchi, and to me, if I am in a necessity for the money, which after paying him for my two Boys leaves about six hundred dollars . . . our friend [Robert] Barry has also a sum of five hundred dollars in his hands for us—why trouble you with this account only because I wish you to know whatever concerns us and if it should please our Lord to suggest to you any plan of bringing us nearer to you, you may know how far my means may go, and if you think proper to prevent Barry from investing it as he did a little sum of Anna Marias which I have no power over, you will tell him to keep it in his own hands. If you think it right our Anna should come home we wish it very much — Mrs. [Mary Ann] Barrys goodness must not be imposed on. and the weather will soon be very warm, here we have had continual cold almost like winter for some time past. I hope you will be able to take your ex[unclear] my dear Father you surely must want it very much—always and at all [unclear] prayers I am yours in Christ most affectionate

respectfully MEAS

If you thought you would make any use of the little sum Barry has, will you tell him to keep it at your disposal.  

6.48 To Matthias O’Conway

Monday 16th [July] 1810

My dearest Oconway

—I have asked pardon of the Adored of my good Angel who suggested to me to write you last week, but can never forgive myself for

5Anna Maria had written to Elizabeth June 10: “The Bishop told me the other day tho as in secrecy and you will keep it s uch that you would probably be down in the fall again and still more probable not go back. At least he said you would be down before October with a few, I hope he means Father [Babade’s] children.” (ASJPH 1-3-3-9:37)

6This ending note was written at the left upper corner of the page.
leaving it in the power of another (even tho’ my Souls Father) to tell you of your Our Vero’s\(^1\) situation - the week before last her fate seemed inevitable, last week it was so doubtful that I scarcely dared hope but after undergoing a course of Mercury which our Doctor said was his only resource, the dreadful symptoms subsided—a total obstruction had taken place between the breast and stomach (you know the old seat of suffering) the most powerful medicines and blisters seemed all in vain—I thought not of her my friend, but of you and your beloved with anguish - the thought of adding this blow to the unabated sorrows of your Soul put mine in agony—some reports from Baltimore had reached me tho’ they are carefully hidden from her. Pere Urban had said the word Paralytic annexed to the name of James\(^2\) and I dared not leave her to follow him in private for further enquires, as I found she had catched half the sound and did not wish her to know more in the state of suffering she then was - and could I - I - who wished to spare you more than myself could I tell tell you Vero is dying if there was the even the possibility of her recovery, every precaution was taken that you should not hear it from Emitsburg, and I never thought of Fathers do[ing] it.

—Well Our Lord means to place you high - high at his right hand indeed—Oh happy happy Oconway What is the glory of mighty Conquerors, What the luster of crowns and Scepters compared with yours—I am far prouder of my Alliance with you than if I were mistress of the Universe - not because you suffer and are signalized by Affliction - but that you know how to suffer - that the Sign of love is written on your forehead, and you carry it triumphant with undiminished brightness—Angels must envy you, and her you call dear Mater must imitate - she suffers like a child, and laughing with one eye weeps with the other—but Mrs. Harold’s account of you my dear friend (transmitted to my Annina by our Father [Babade]) inspires me more than the history of all the Saints I ever heard of and your letter of this day shall be worn out in my bosom to teach it Silence and Victory—Our Angel child read it with me on our knees before the adored

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\(^1\)A shortened form of Veronica, a name adopted by Sister Cecilia O’Conway

\(^2\)Possibly his son James
who will not reject our tears and sighs for him who is the object of our [prayers] - What will become of him—Vero is more than uneasy tho’ uncertain if he has left Baltimore or not and without the least idea that any thing has happened since he left her—Oh how Adorable are the darkest mysteries - but Mercy will shine thro’ them.

the thought of seeing your dear dear consort is a great comfort to us tho’ certain of the fatigue and difficulties she will endure, but if ever Angels guarded the just they will watch her and her precious charge.

We expect the Superior’s here every day Whatever is my destination (which is yet undecided) Yours, are mine and we will not grieve.

Editha [O’Conway] is newborn in Grace, she has helped me with devoted attention and love in fulfilling Veronique’s charge—Vero has resumed her office at the Altar which looked forlorn in her absence—She went yesterday with slow steps and often resting in the woods, quite to the mountain chapel—it is impossible to give you an idea of the joy and transport of every body to see her out again the children were transported out of themselves—and poor Mothers heart sung Allelujah—

Come on dear dear friend, let us not stay behind a moment - Heaven and Eternity - do do write soon.

Your MEAS

6.50 To Julia Scott

July 20th 1810

How it hurts me my own Julia that your letter should have been so long before it reached me—not from neglect but accident it being put in the hands of a woman who had been our servant to be delivered to myself, and the good soul quietly kept it in her trunk until all delays

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3Elizabeth expected Rev. John David, S.S., to come to Emmitsburg soon. Rumors were afoot that Sister Rose White would be appointed to replace Elizabeth as head of the community.

7For document A-6.49 see the appendix. This is a letter of Anna Maria’s which Elizabeth copied.

6.50 ASJPH 1-3-3-6:83
and difficulties in getting to me were overcome, and I did not get it in time for the weeks post. the contents I repeat to you is no longer a matter of necessity, and I have given [Robert] Barry your last years gift to Anna (except what we spent for Cecilia) to add to the dividend of the Bank or Insurance share her poor Father¹ had put in her name, the only point in his mercantile business we had any claim on - it is but a point, but I believe dividends accumulated, it is now about five hundred dollars including what I have been able to save.—great riches to be sure, but I do not know how great a resource it may be to me in a future day. the situation I am in as I have told you before is of all I could even imagine in the world the one most congenial with my disposition sentiments and views of Peace, (happiness you know there is not) enjoying the liberty of solitude, country life, and plenty of every good I think essential to our natural wants, with every advantage of mental enjoyment. the thought of living out of our Valley would seem impossible, if I belonged to myself, but the dear ones have their first claim which must ever remain inviolate consequently if at any period the duties I am engaged in should interfere with those I owe to them I have solemnly engaged with our good Bishop Carol as well as my own conscience to give the darlings their right, and to prefer their advantage in every thing = as it is - they are as you yourself would wish them to be, except a certain polish which nothing belonging to me ever had or will have = it will come soon enough if they turn out in the scenes where it is requisite.

—You have been suffering my Julia, really suffering since the spirit was wounded—What you must have felt in your apprehensions for the precious friend and companion of your varied days . . . when I have seen my Anna in danger of death I felt a sensation of joy mixed with the Mothers pangs rejoicing in her innocence, and anticipating the pressure of human misery - but you dearest friend have another perspective - I am sending my rose buds to blow in heaven, You looking over the sharp thorns which will grow on the rising stem think more of the sweet odour they exhale in your own bosom.—ungenerous selfish little Mother - When will you grow wise.

¹William Magee Seton, Anna Maria’s father, had died in 1803.
Emily Caton wrote our dear Maria had been very ill - and I am afraid they have written you what they expressed to me that they considered my situation as a hardship and continual fatigue, but my own Julia take the sacred word of your friend that it is not so, on the contrary every person in the house watches even my eye to hinder my making the least exertion, I never do a stick of work for myself or children - even my Boys cloths are made and mended for me, and all my wants supplied with the kindest attention =

—The little fairy is then on fairy hill—Oh Glorianna! could I meet you there = but - that pleasure could only be purchased by many pains for except the joy of seeing you and yours I would rather go thro’ the Shades of death than to Philadelphia or New York—in Baltimore I am yet a stranger . . . tell our own Darling Maria Anna is not now in a state of mind to enjoy Society - quiet, silent, and always reflective if not melancholy she has no pleasure but in her work and piano - she runs over the old lessons of the past with a very good grace but I see it is only to please me—her Alexis\(^2\) has made out to convey two letters to her already expressive of the romance of his age but never could I have believed (having once been Betsey Bayley) what he says in both of them that she had never given him the least proof of her affection - “Anna you always refused me, and I respected your delicacy, but at the last moment when I left you perhaps for a watery grave could you continue to refuse one single kiss - one only proof that I was dear to you the remembrance that you persisted in doing so is a continual cloud of sorrow” = this language is trifling - but to me the music of heaven—that my darling should have had the virtue and purity of an angel in the first dawn of youthful and ardent affection (for she certainly is not without passion) is a joy to her Mother which a Mother only can know.

Emily C[aton] writes me some extravagant history of John [Scott] (she knows how I love him) about some connection he is in danger of - money without qualifications - etc etc - I hope and pray it is not so - do write me about him and all that interests you love. So you are growing old - poor little darling!—I is sorry for you - truly to be old and young

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\(^2\)Anna Maria’s beau at St. Mary’s College, Charles DuPavillon.
too must be a very troublesome business ... Oh do do do consider—My Julia—He will come - you cannot send him back. your EAS

Dupavillon is the name. a thousand loves to dear Maria

6.51 To Rev. John David, S.S.

July [23,] 1810

Rev. Father

The written list is the spiritual English books at St. Joseph’s, some of them are Mrs. McGirks, the lives of the Saints were given by my friend [Antonio] Filicchi to my children and are much abused by a years use in community, but if you have not another set for the Sisters it cannot be helped. there are some good french books also, which are sometimes translated to them ...

The masons have completed the first coat on the cells, Rev. Mr. [William] Dubourg’s presence will no doubt forward every thing, but he said yesterday he feared the cells could not be dry for the time you appointed.

No new scholars - or change in any thing since Sister Rose left us.—be so kind as to remember me to her.

respectfully yours MEASeton

6.51 ASJPH 1-3-3-2:11

1“23rd” is written in the upper right hand corner of this letter.
2This list is not extant.
3Sister Rose White was in Baltimore on business, probably regarding her son, Charles, who returned with her and enrolled in Mount St. Mary’s.

Earlier in July there had been an exchange of letters between Elizabeth and Bishop John Carroll. Elizabeth’s letter of July 7 is not extant. Carroll’s letter is dated July 10 and is ASJPH 1-3-3-1:44. In his letter Carroll says he has not heard anything from the Sulpicians about a change in community governance. He states that he is opposed to Elizabeth’s removal from her office as head of the community.
To George Weis

[July 1810]

My dear Wise

Two precious treasures to me\(^1\) come with this—Why my heart is so heavy about their going to Baltimore I know not—but it is heavy about many things - Yet rejoicing and always on the Note of Alleluiah while it sinks within my body Souls Father [will] understand so do you perhaps—if my Boys are permitted to go out I know he will give them some recreation - but what their orders will be I know not, only this I am sure of that he will encourage them to mind their duty and be submissive in every thing - and you will do the same—poor fellows—their mothers soul {goes}\(^2\) is with them or at least will be where they are—

tell our dearest Father [Babade] I dare not let Anna write as the Bishop [Carroll] has again {committed himself for me. Everything is now in confusion. When and how it will end God only knows.} I am always quiet on the subject as I know he will bring his own end out of the painful warfare. Mr. [John] Dubois sees {plainly now what my situation} is, and his kindness is doubled but I look to no one but God alone—in a few weeks all will be settled. —tell him I have this day passed an hour with the good Sarah on the steps of the Mountain church repeating to her his method of prayer and meditation—She is a precious soul indeed = when she first steped in our door I took her hand and told her - “I dont know you but am glad to see you” and Annina whispered “Father sent her” - but I loved her before that - how much more afterwards. Charlotte Speak I have not seen - she gave Fathers letters to Annina to some one who came with Mr. Dubois and as it was seen by every body I told him Father had written and forgot my

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\(^1\)Elizabeth’s two sons, William and Richard Seton

\(^2\)In the original of this letter some portions are crossed out in a different ink and are illegible. This was probably done by someone other than Elizabeth. ASJPH 1-3-3-2:62a is a manuscript copy which includes the crossed out portions of the original. The inserted portions in in this text are from the manuscript copy.
obligations - {this state of violence} cannot last long, some change must happen, mean while Peace and good will to all - L.J.C. Beni soit - Love and adore and c 1000000

poor Veronique is much more recovered than we could have expected - but her complaint is immovable and her sufferings must be continual - She knows nothing of the misery of her family except James’s [O’Conway] illness - the sufferings of mind and body all are lost in her fears of {my being dismissed which is whispered generally and the state of mind and body it put my poor adorers in as they are called is truly sorrowful} but L.J.C. again and again and forever - and for everything

When William was very ill and his death expected I promised him to send to N[ew] York for his Fathers gun, or rather his dear aunt Maddelene promised him, or else to give him a new one - he claims the promise now and tho’ I tremble, must perform it. do you my friend manage it for me and if you cannot put him out of the notion teach him prudence with it, and manage their gold piece to the best advantage - it belongs to them I have no right to keep a present from them, but do you advise them how to spend it. - - - - a thousand loves to your Minon [Weis] Many little trifles we would wish to send but know not if the boys will have a trunk to themselves, or if they would go safe.

tell our Pere [Babade] the daily Journal goes on - and after all are asleep the prayers are most awake—laying down or kneeling is all one to Him our all. Adieu A Dieu U.₄

Sunday Evening

tomorrow general Communion L.J.C. 1000000

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³Harriet Seton

⁴Elizabeth sometimes signed her letters to George Weis as “U,” meaning Unique.
6.53 To Matthias O’Conway

July 30 Monday [1810]

My dear Oconway

Our Blessed Rebecca [O’Conway] arrived safe but sorely tired this day week ago - Tuesday - and gave the Darling Petrus [Peter O’Conway] to the longing arms of his second Mother.—dear dear little angel - how long shall I think with delight of his fascinating smiles and caresses. we have Your whole Treasure with us every day - fortunately you chose the right time for their visit for the next week the Superior and all his Philotheés¹ are to come - L. J. C. your not writing by

¹Philotheés refers to devout persons living in the world. Saint Francis de Sales addressed An Introduction to the Devout Life to “Philothea.”

Saint Francis de Sales (1567-1622), bishop of Geneva, was a noted writer, apologist, cofounder of the Visitation Order (1610), and spiritual director of clergy, religious, and laity. He had a profound influence on Saints Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac and collaborated with them in the renewal of the Church in seventeenth century France. Elizabeth Seton studied de Sales’ life and works, including An Introduction of the Devout Life.

Rev. John David, S.S., arrived from Baltimore August 1 accompanied by Sister Rose White, her seven-year-old son Charles, and three new candidates for the community:

Ellen Brady (1793-1825), a native of Ireland, was known as Sister Angela after her admission July 29, 1810. She pronounced her vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. Sister Angela became the first Secretary of the community (1809), was elected Procuratrix (1815), and was appointed the first Sister Servant at Mount St. Mary’s (1816). She was the niece of John Mullanphy, Catholic philanthropist of St. Louis, Missouri, who financed the Sisters of Charity establishing the first Catholic hospital west of the Mississippi River, for which Bishop Joseph Rosati, C.M., requested Sisters. She died at Emmitsburg and is buried in the original community cemetery.

Anne Frances (Fanny) Jordan (1793-1867) was born in St. Croix in the Virgin Islands (formerly Santa Cruz of the Antilles). Admitted as a candidate July 31, 1809, she pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. She was the first member of the community to live to celebrate her golden jubilee of vocation. Known as Sister Ann Frances or Sister Fanny, she was on mission at the Asylum in Philadelphia (1815 and 1819) and was Sister Servant there (1817); at St. Joseph’s Central House as Treasurer (1819); at New York Asylum as Sister Servant (1822); at St. Mary’s Asylum, Baltimore as Sister Servant; at St. Peter’s, Cincinnati as Sister Servant (1829); at St. Louis Asylum (1833); at St. Peter’s Asylum, Wilmington (1834); at Washington Asylum (1843); at St. Mary’s Asylum, Baltimore (1850); and at St. Joseph’s Central House where she died June 13, 1867. She is buried in the original community cemetery at Emmitsburg.

Julia Shirk (1793?-1848) was admitted as a candidate July 29, 1810, and pronounced vows July 19, 1813, after completing the first novitiate. Known as Sister Julia, she was sent on mission to the Philadelphia Asylum (1813), St. Joseph’s (1815), New York Asylum (1819), the Baltimore Infirmary (1824), Baltimore Asylum (1832), Norfolk (1840), Boston (1841), the male asylum in Washington, DC (1846), and Charity Hospital, New Orleans (1848) where she died.
this week's post is a great disappointment and She knows not what to do - but as Columbkille [O'Conway] had gone to Baltimore to pass the Vacation at the Seminary college, with my Boys and many others who could not go to their parents, She wishes to go home by way of Baltim[ore] = Veronique is sitting by me and I cannot get her to drop the [unclear] of Joseph [O'Conway] [unclear] tho’ she does not know any thing that has happened [unclear] since he left us—She is [an] Angel - but I fear to trust her strength so far - could I tell you of her meeting with her Mother - No - Your souls eye alone can concieve it. Blessed blessed Lord! how he must love such hearts . . .

Your beloved Rebecca is so comforted by your letter - and poor Vero so contented to hear you are really well - yet if there is no obstacle I cannot help wishing her to go to you - our Lord will declare when the Superior comes = a shabby gentleman has disappointed us by not coming for our letters, and your poor heart has perhaps again been torn with new anxieties—Sweet Lord - strengthen and console the faint and weary—Your <own> wish shall be Ours, except the demon of contradiction is too strong for me - but everything is not at a stand—I am as I ought to be, Nobody. have written many letters for the post—

forgive this scratch - I have still Vero’s work on hand, and the bones grow old - but he will revive animate and knit them again together. Courage and Patience My Brother - and prudence too, I grieve to see the promise of another picture. you do not know the persons you address - their plans, views, and

speculations require the Value more than the gift. you understand—Peace - long suffering and joy in the Holy Host]. L.J.C.

Kiss the hand of your dear parent for me and a thousand bless[ings] to the little ones
How do you do my own dear Eliza Sad.

What does the world say to you. my thoughts cannot turn to you without being bedizzened by confused ideas of ladies and plumb cake rack and ham and all the old fashioned story of a Wedding, or perhaps the rocks of the wilderness is the scene of filicity - rocks of the wilderness - hush memory - Cecil[jia Seton] was once Queen there - where is now her little train - where is she - where am I - the plumb cakes and ladies disappear—

The wandering of fancy stops and I see only my angel Cate (who is my right hand) adorned with her thousand graces making copy books at the table I write on and reminding me by every expression of the heaven we are travelling to, for you must know Cate is a living book, young and old find their lesson in her - she is of that kind you sometimes read of, but cannot meet with in a multitude of thousands. Will I ever put my children in your arms again Eliza? I have told you my present situation is of all I could imagine in the world most congenial to my views sentiments and disposition - the liberty of solitude, a country life, and plenty without the trouble or care of providing would tie me to the valley for the remainder of days, if I belonged to myself but the claim of the dear ones must ever remain inviolate consequently if at any time the duties I am engaged in should be inconsistent with my duty to them the one must give place to the other, it was the only condition on which Our good and blessed Bishop [John] Carrol would permit me or rather consent to my coming here—

- All these things are in the hand of the chief shepherd I am at Peace. I am at Peace. a lazy sleepy soul give me but quiet, and all is given - yet that quiet is in the midst of 50 children, all day except the early part of the morning and the last of the afternoon. but quiet it is - order and regularity cannot be skipped over here, and I am in the full

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6.54 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:43

1On the outside of this letter is written “1810 or 1811.” The contents suggest 1810.
exercise of that principle which in the world passed either for hypocrisy or a species of it - you know - that manner of looking upon twenty people in the room with a look of affection and interest, showing an interest for all and a concern in all their concerns— 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—I assure you the little woman is quite a Somebody—and perhaps you are the only one of all who ever knew her who could justly appreciate her means of happiness.

Anna is a picture of quiet sober solid virtue - but with a fund of gaiety in our hours of recreation - four very sweet girls² of our good Bishops connection her own age well brought up and innocent in their habits are some compensation for the chasm our Cecil has left - they are her constant companions, but in the fall she has promised to go again to Mrs. [Mary Ann] Barry in Baltimore.

tell me all about yourself - dearest Dué - Craigé - tell me something of dear Mrs. McV[icker]s family - and even dear M[ary] Barette [Baretto]³

- good Mrs. [Sarah] Startin I must not name She is what is called mad with the fanatic - poor me— but surely she might consider many mad ones lived before me, they are passed away, I shall pass away, neither one or the other is out of the order of Gods Providence

—Peace - Eliza love me - imitate the patience of him We adore. all the little cells and corners he keeps hidden will one day be seen in clear day—L.J.C.

*Laudate Jesus Christus. à Dieu chere and plus que chere*

—do you hear from Paulina. our Blessed Reverend⁴ is said to be on his way—EAS

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²Among these were Jane Brent, Henrietta Smith, and Mary Diana Harper.
³Catherine Dupleix, William Craig, Mrs. McVickers, and M. Baretto are friends from New York.
⁴Possibly Rev. John Tisserant
6.55 To George Weis

[August 1810]

My dear Wise

In the name of our Lord I beg you and our Minon [Weis] to receive me once more in the person of my poor Veronique for one single night—forever blessed be his Name—

MEAS

6.56 To George Weis

[August 1810] Tuesday Evening

My dear friend

- tell your Minon [Weis] her poor Mother is at the feet of you both to supplicate you to receive Our Veronique and her mother for one or two nights and be sure you receive an angel - give them a mattress on the floor down stairs in the spot our Colombe[kille O’Conway] laid.—She will be in your company—I can only catch a moment to say this to you and L.J.C.

you know my hands and heart are full but, heaven and eternity.

6.57 Copy to George Weis¹

August 9, 1809 or - 1810

Every thing here is again suspended and I am casting about to prepare for beginning the world again with my poor Anina, Josephine and Rebecca, as we have reason to expect from many things passed

¹The text is in the handwriting of Rev. Simon Brute, S.S. Brute erroneously dated it 1809. Above the text he wrote, “Expecting to leave? had it been so oh Providence! it was not—”
lately that our situation is more unsettled than ever\^2 but, we will be under every case under the refuge of the most high,\^3 and glad indeed would I be, if I could inspire your dear soul with as much indifference as is in mine, provided his adorable will be done during the few remaining days of my tiresome journey, which being made with so many tears and sown so thick with crosses will certainly be concluded with joy and crowned with eternal rest—look up the highest there, were the lowest here, and coveted most the poverty and humility which accompanied their and our Master every step of his suffering life. but I do not care for your friend George, but for her in whom you suffer much more than for yourself. if our Lord suffered us to bear our misery alone without affecting the dearest part of ourselves, we would not suffer like himself whose whole suffering was for us, and the injuries endured by his Eternal father. now my friend we are in the true and sure way of salvation for that long, long eternity before us, if only we keep courage, we will go to Heaven on horseback instead of idling and creeping along = our Master is too good to us, that is all I can say if we even end our lives as he lived, without a place to lay His head.\^4

O, my mouth waters when I think of that if he ever grant me so great a favor—but let all be in the order of his providence neither asking nor refusing—blessed a thousand million times his own beloved and blessed name forever.

George, George; be a Man but a supernatural man crucified in Christ—Eternity

6.58 Copy to George Weis\^1

August 28, 1810

George is then sick and suffering; added to your daily cup that is hard indeed, but we must often draw the comparison between time

\^2 Speculation continued concerning what Elizabeth’s future role in the community would be.
\^3 Cf. Ps. 91.
\^4 Cf. Mt. 8:20.

6.58 ASJPH 1-3-3-12:99 (7-8) (manuscript copy) No original exists.
\^1 The text is in the handwriting of Rev. Simon Bruté, S.S.
and eternity, - that is the remedy for all trouble. O, my friend, how insignificant will the present moment appear when we enter that great ocean. How much we will then wish we had doubled our penances and sufferings while that moment lasted. How we will laugh when we look behind, at the troubles we have endured and which will then appear in their true light. And that bright and glorious Cross which we now drag through the mud and dirt how beautiful and lovely it will appear when we find it opens the door of our eternal happiness to us. O, my dear friend, follow on with courage. You do not suffer alone, you well know, and remember there is but one place of true rendez-vous for true souls.

6.59 To Archbishop John Carroll

[9/n.d.]

My most honored dear Father

Your much esteemed letter was accompanied by one from the Reverend Mr. David announcing his intention to give us a retreat immediately - and as there are neither rules arranged, or his successor appointed\(^1\) nothing but confusion can be expected from his plan. General confessions (which have already been made to Mr. [John] Dubois by almost every individual) and a new set of examinations in those dear hearts now quiet and tranquil will be the consequence of a retreat whenever it takes place, and why should it be agitated before the regulations\(^2\) are made which are hereafter to bind them and why

6.59 AAB 7N1

\(^1\)Archbishop John Carroll wrote to Elizabeth September 11 telling her that Bishop Benedict Flaget, S.S., intended to take Rev. John David, S.S., with him to his new diocese of Bardstown, Kentucky. This would necessitate the appointment of a new superior.

\(^2\)The Sulpicians were considering the adoption of a permanent rule for the community. The Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity were eventually obtained, modified, and approved by Archbishop John Carroll. Several models of government were under study, and a contingent of French Daughters of Charity had been assigned to make a foundation in Baltimore in order to form the American women as members of the Paris-based community. Elizabeth had serious reservations about this proposal for herself as a mother to young children. Here she expresses her concern that the sisters be consulted about the rule of life they wished to adopt.
should they be made by a Superior on the point of leaving us to be revised and probably new molded by his successor and thereby subjecting us to a new change—I do beg and intreat you as you so much wish our peace and tranquility not to consent to a retreat until you have given a formal approbation

I would not urge you my Reverend Father on the subject if I had not witnessed the effect on the minds of our Sisters when the retreat was proposed at the time of Mr. Davids Visitiation in the summer and the great disappointment it will cause when they will find there are no more regulations after the retreat than before - and certainly if any are proposed to us without going thro’ the necessary discussion and approbation I can never give the example of Accepting them.

—the messenger who takes this letter will also take one to Mr. [John] David suggesting the inconvenience attending his plan - if afterwards it takes place I must refer all to the Almighty Ruler.

—thank you very much for sending Mrs. Brent3 to us, as she has promised to come again in order to see all our good Sisters which accidentally she missed as she came when they were all engaged in an employment at the old house which was not fit to take her to =

Our dear dear dear Mrs. [Joanna] Barry - how truly hard is her case - O that it was in our power to solace her as soon as [she] arrives I hope I shall know it = in haste but always yours

Most truly and affectionately MEAS

It is useless to tell you my our Father that every individual here young and old reveres you with devoted affection.

3Mrs. Brent is probably related to Daniel Brent, nephew of Archbishop John Carroll, who was a clerk in the Department of State. Two sisters of the Archbishop married into the Brent family: Eleanor married William Brent, Jr., and Ann, deceased, had married Robert.
Rev. Father

Your letter of to day by Mrs. Renaudet I believe requires an immediate answer and therefore do not hesitate to send Our Peter to convey to you some reflections which I believe you could not have made = what object can a retreat\(^1\) have at this time except it is to be followed by an immediate application of those rules so long looked for, rules which are to be discussed and presented to the Bishop for his approbation and afterwards to serve as a guide to the Superior providence may assign us - of what use can it be to discuss those rules with any other than the one who is to take your place of Superior as he may on many points think differently from yourself and of course his opinion will subject us to new changes and uncertainty—or if as it has been rumored there is to be no formal appointment of Superior to our house our Rev. Director [John Dubois] as being best acquainted with localities can best point out to our Reverend Bishop the different motives for whatever plan is to be adopted—being now not even possessed of the constitutions but only of\(^2\)

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6.61 To Matthias O’Conway

October 9, 1810

My dear Oconway

—Your letter was indeed a piercing one every way, and our loved and excellent Cecilia [O’Conway], being already acquainted with its

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\(^1\)Rev. John David, S.S., had proposed giving a retreat to the sisters before he left for Kentucky.

\(^2\)Written crosswise at the bottom of the second page, probably by Bruté: “could you think your poor poor mother was guilty of such impertinence O our Jesus pity the ignorance and blindness of such a moment”
truly melancholy contents was spared the additional pang of your cold and distant language to me, which however I do not wonder at as you little know the heart to whom you address it—Never till my last breath will I cease to be interested in all your concerns and every part of your ever dear family—you may think differently of my Sentiments but still they will not alter—and can you in the multiplied trials and cares which surround you suffer a diminution of charity and good will for one who wills nothing to you and yours but the most Sacred affection and alliance in the adorable source of every true attachment? I hope not. Cecilia bears her affliction and heart rending sorrow with a fortitude which can come from him alone.

She looks back as well as myself with many regrets but life is made up of them, and she knows my mind has never changed to you but in the momentary trial you well remember, and even then the heart was unshaken in its good will and desires for you, and has and ever will consider all your family with the most sincere attachment which is founded in our Lord himself.

do write if you know any more particulars Cecilia is very anxious—we have been afraid something else may have happened—With best remembrances to all your dear family especially my own little one I am as ever

Your true friend MEASeton

6.62 To Julia Scott

23rd October 1810

My dear dear dear dear the Woods and mountains Echo dear, but you will not answer—twice I have begged you to say I am alive but either you are very cross, angry, troubled, or MARRIED—Yet in every case your own friend must cry dear dear dear dearest I would take any pain for you but the last mentioned—that admits not of proxy, and—perhaps it is Maria - perhaps Charlott has three - perhaps—but I

6.62 ASJPH 1-3-3-6:84
had better count the parts[y] coloured leaves of the mountains and woods than guess at half the perhaps's of a Lady. what poor mortals they are, and when Lady and fashion spelling in all fashionable lady are put together who can detail the whys and wherefores she may find for not writting to a country friend—a poor body stowed in a corner—with a fool's mark upon her too. but my well beloved I hope before the frost benumbs your little dear fingers you will be pleased to address one word of remembrance to your woodland friend you may direct to Madame Goose if you think proper tacking the name of Mr. [John] Dubois who will know to which of his flock it belongs—do not scold me for nonsense, what in the world can be done - if I preach, you do not mind - if I beg you laugh at me—should sadness or gravity be uppermost - it would be affectation, for the children are so merry, the sun so bright, the country so to my mind all falling and and speaking the promise of the grave—the grave so—dark to—but so bright to the longing, desiring active soul of the prisoner looking beyond its narrow passage to the fields of everlasting Verdure. when I go I should like to be near you dearest—to show you not the imaginary, but true joy of that hour—which however to me seems less to be expected than a year ago—for my breast suffers no more at all and tho’ thin and weak in comparison with healthy and strong people I have little to complain of . . . consider age too miss - if I guess right you are advancing a little, dearest dearest little Gloriana you must at last be old—to be sure—I expect my nose and chin will soon look like nut crackers - but yours turns up I remember—we ought to have some little pickinninys in the corner—

how is dear Brother - how is Charlot - how are the young married ones Mothers - and your dear wild John - alas - if he was well bemarried so much the better. What are you doing yourself my days ever the same are spent in eating, keeping, walking, teaching, loving, and praying all the time, all day long at all kind of work, my loadstone is present in all—dont you envy me you darling—to be sure you do - you know it is no fancy - you know that the peace and confidence of the soul in her creator must be her true happiness and the end for which it was created. but to enjoy we must love, and to love we must sacrifice—old preacher you see cannot be still—patience dearest.
we are all all well Anna as qui[e]t as puss in the corner keeps her Sensibilities all in order—has no letters since I wrote you—takes the matter coolly - gathers nuts, dries fruits, and shares in all the amusements of the Boarders of the house, and seems to have resigned all to him who knows best—Yet her D¹ may return when she least expects it.

there is an old lady in the Village near us called [Charlotte] Melmoth, who has often been a Queen, but now hoping at some time or other, to enter in our family (which she never can) has taken [up a] country station, and some have told me in her great admiration of my superior excellence talks a great deal about my health and situation here, which she knows very little about—perhaps as she is just returned from Philadelphia she has told a good history there which may chance to reach your ear as it has done some of our New York friends—“that my health is very bad, that my occupations are fatiguing etc” to which I can say that my greatest delight would be to see all who are most dear to me here, that they might themselves judge of my many comforts - and be convinced that for my disposition there could not be any where found more true and certain content. the little girls you would doat upon . . . W[illia]m and R[ichar]d promise every thing I could wish at their age, except they could be made bright genius’s—which you know must be the gift of Nature—for loveliness and sweetness of character I would not change my five for any I ever saw . . . as you may believe - you know my own [William Magee] Seton wrote you when Anna was born—“Parents are partial and fathers and Mothers see beauties in children concealed from All Others.”

tell me all about your two, and do not be so lazy Glorianna dearest, give Maria the warm and tender blessing of my heart—why did I not answer her sweet little page—not that love was wanting—but many thoughts pushing each other thro’ my head and many letters to write every post must account for the omission—Anna never never writes letters - it is the one selfish habit I know in her—in a year or two it will change I hope—remember your own friend continually as she does you

EAS²

¹Anna Maria’s beau, Charles DuPavillon.
²Written along the left side of page three of this letter: “this is written by twilight dearest.”
6.63 To Françoise Victoire Dubourg Fournier

[11/n.d.]

My dear Friend,

How happy I should be to answer your amiable letter in your own sweet language, but since I left you the imperfect Knowledge I had of it has not been improved and you must now, Ma chère Soeur, take your lesson of English.

I told all our good Sisters in community assembled of the interesting situation of your most dear and excellent Brother and engaged them to direct their prayers for his recovery we agreed to use Sundays communion with the same intention, hoping that He whom we offered would obtain the recovery so much wished for.—

6.64 To Eliza Sadler

November 21st 1810

My own dear Eliza

It will please you to see our Blessed [John] Cheverus, because he carries your friend and the Darlings in his very heart, and we love him with a sentiment not easily described but which you may very well imagine who can conceive what kind of ideas we attach to him—independent of his uncommon amiable manners and his being the most chère confrère of our most valued Mr. [John] Tisserant who has the advantage of Bishop Cheverus exteriorly but not in the Spirit of the mind—look at his purple ring and remember how often We kissed it

6.63 ASJPH 1-3-3-3:23
1When Rev. William Dubourg, S.S. went to Martinique for his health in 1810, his sister wrote to ask for prayers.
2Written in another hand: “Mother Seton”

6.64 ASJPH 1-3-3-7:40
1Rev. John Cheverus was consecrated bishop of Boston November 1 at St. Peter’s Pro-cathedral in Baltimore. He visited Emmitsburg November 21 to 24 when Elizabeth met him for the first time. He carried this letter to Eliza Sadler in New York where he stopped to administer Confirmation when returning to Boston.
and if you have the happiness to hear him preach you will participate in the consolation I have greatly wished You to enjoy—yet everybody has different coloured eyes and different ears on such occasions and perhaps ours may not agree—but I believe they will. I do not take this excellent occasion to send the Book because I expect positively to see you next Summer—it is certain that this so much wished favour is in the power of him who grants me so many favours and I ask it from him with confidence that you will with our Dué come to the mountain and see your poor friend before she is called—not that I believe the time so short, but being weak and worn out nothing but love and good nursing Keeps me agoing—of that I have a super abundance but still my Views are all beyond as yours would be in my place

—All all all are well - all goes well—I cannot write my Sister [Mary Bayley Post] by the dear gentleman as it would not be proper to introduce him—is our Dué still well - is she still with you—is [George] D[uplex] to go out again this winter - is our dear dear [William] Craige renovated by the Nor westers - how is Sad - sorrowful enough if he is suffering - but Peace my own dear Eliza Peace - peace even in sorrow—Why cannot I express to you what I would say—but you understand

ever yours MEAS

6.65 To Archbishop John Carroll

November 29th 1810

Most Reverend and dear Father,

Your kind message by Rev. Mr. Duhamel¹ was a most affectionate reproach to me as the Reverend Bishops² had told me you had heard I was sick - not so sick tho' as is imagined being always well enough to

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6.65 AAB 7N9

¹Rev. Charles Duhamel (1753-1818), a priest of the Society of the Holy Ghost, had come to Emmitsburg from Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1809. He was pastor of the Catholic congregation in the village of Emmitsburg until his death in 1818.

be *Mother* about the house and in the school—which is all indeed I am able to do—if now nursing the sick was in question I should be obliged to be the patient instead of the Assistant—but you will be happy to know that Boarders come so fast that no one of Us has time to be sick and you know how well our dearest Lord *fits the back for the burthen*.

—and will our beloved Mrs. [Joanna] B[arry] soon be with You and possess the dearest consolation She has in this life your supporting counsel and advice and fatherly affection, blessed be his name for ever—and may he grant me the favour of seeing her once more—when you write to, or see her do my Father offer her all the affection of my poor heart. I hope she will one day visit this house where she would be so tenderly received and could pass so many hours uninterrupted with her best Comforter—

I need not tell you Our consolation in receiving the blessed Bishops nor how many benedictions they poured upon us—We have been very sensible of this special favour.

always your most respectful and affectionate *MEAS*eton

give my *our* best best love to our dear friends in Gay Street⁴ tell her Ann is much improved in temper and health and is *Mothers* right hand.

5th December

It will grieve you to hear of our Rose’s [White] indisposition - of which both herself and I have written the Superior [Rev. John David] hoping some remedy may be applied in time. the Superior desires me to send the constitutions of the Sisters of Charity which Rev. Mr. [Benedict] Flaget brought - as you have now leisure to consider them.⁴ they will go by Mr. White who has just sent us your letter for which I thank you a thousand times.

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³Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barry

⁴The recently received *Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity* which Rev. Benedict Flaget, S.S., brought back from Paris. The text required translation into English and some minor revisions before being presented to Archbishop John Carroll for approval. Rev. John Dubois, S.S., did not complete his draft of the *Constitutions of the Sisters of Charity in the United States* until 1812.
If Our Lord does not dispose of us this Winter or strengthen my health, it will be necessary you should (for every reason) be made acquainted with some circumstances which will enable you as my Father and first Superior to give a decision to my ever unsettled mind on the subject of my situation.\(^5\) but it is not necessary now to say more about it till time shall declare if my weakness is a mere debility or actual decline.

our Sisters and dear children old and young are always delighted when we have a letter from you our Dear Father and return your kind mention of them with more than filial affection and I am sure their continual prayers.

as does your most affectionate

\textit{MEASeton}

\textbf{6.66 Notation}^1

[December 1810]

All the beauty of this letter is in its just application to the simplicity of the child it is written to who could not have been just so ... Anninas care in preparing her was continual and she is truly a little one of our dearest (Marie's Sister)

\textit{Jesus Mary}

\textit{Joseph}

\footnotesize{\(^5\)The tension Elizabeth felt as a result of the pull between her positions as superior of the Sisters of Charity and only parent of her young children as well as the matter of governance of the community which remained unresolved.}

\textbf{6.66 ASJPH 1-3-3-9:36 (8)}

\footnotesize{\(^1\)This notation is an addendum to a letter Anna Maria wrote to Therese Carrere. Elizabeth copied Anna Maria's letter which is in A-6.66a. Elizabeth wrote at the top: "a letter written by my dearest Annina to a child preparing to make her first Communion (Theresa)."}