

Inside the Core we look forward to films about women saints

By Nancy Enright

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Inside the Core we are looking forward to hosting, along with the Catholic Studies Program and the School of Nursing, two very special films on two deeply important American Saints. The first of these events will be the screening of a film on the life of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American-born saint and our university's patron. This event will be held at 1 p.m., March 11, in the Chancellor's Suite in the University Center. The second event will be a screening of a film about Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, the first American saint (as she was an immigrant and naturalized citizen, not born here). This film will be shown at 2 p.m., March 19, at the IHS (Interprofessional Health Sciences) campus in Nutley in the auditorium.

At both events the directors of the films, Marylou and Jerome Bongiorno, will be present to take questions and for discussion afterward, which will be moderated by Stephen Adubato, who teaches in the Core. The films are particularly important and timely.

Both Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton and Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini were women leaders who made a huge impact on our society. Seton, who was a wife, mother of five, widow and founder of a religious order, was truly the impetus for the founding of our Catholic school system in America. Her nephew, Bishop James Roosevelt Bailey, was the founder of Seton Hall, which he named in honor of his aunt. Cabrini, known as the patron saint of immigrants, worked tirelessly in the impoverished immigrant communities in New York City and eventually her sisters had missions in multiple locations around the world. She started schools, orphanages, and hospitals. Both

women were driven by a powerful faith that expressed itself in deep compassion and empathy for those on the margins, those for whom our Holy Father has consistently advocated in our time.

This is the second event we are hosting with the School of Nursing. Last fall we hosted a panel on Women Saints, co-hosted by Nursing, SHMS, Catholic Studies, and Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology. Nursing and other students in the medical fields will be particularly interested in Cabrini's medical work, as the directors point out that there is a "segment on Mother Cabrini's Sisters acting as vital nurses during the Yellow Fever epidemic in New Orleans -the film delves into the psychological stresses of her ministry on her/her Sisters, which we discussed with the Rutgers medical students in Psychiatry. Mother Cabrini founded several hospitals and nursing schools to meet the needs of the community." As for Elizabeth Ann Seton, she also was involved with health care, though she is even more associated with education. Students from all schools and colleges will be inspired by the transformative nature of these two saints' lives.

Finally, these two women saints are very appropriate figures for celebration during Women's History Month. They both were hugely important figures to the people they served and in their legacy to those of us who follow in their footsteps.

Please join us for one or both films. Light refreshments will be served at both.

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