

[March 12, 1980]

It was St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's instinctive interest in education that attracted other dedicated women to her and led to the founding of the Sisters of Charity in 1809 in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

A year later, St. Joseph's Academy was begun with three neighborhood children enrolled. Its replica today is a monument to the beginnings of the Catholic parochial school system in America.

For the 170 years that followed, the Sisters of Mother Elizabeth Seton founded innumerable elementary and secondary schools and played their part in the development of Catholic colleges and universities. At Notre Dame, our Assistant Provost is a Sister of Charity, Sister John Miriam Jones. However, one of the best monuments to her holy life and educational efforts is Seton Hall University that today celebrates her day. I am proud to be a part of this and would like to discuss with you today the Catholic university in the modern context.

be and do what every great university is and does. Beyond being a house of the intellect, the Catholic university must also be the intellect searching for faith and values and deeper meaning, faith searching for greater understanding and grace, closed to none, open to all, seated in time, yearning for eternity, a pilgrim institution with a pilgrim's faith and hope and love.

This is what we celebrate here at Seton Hall University today. We do not celebrate our accomplishments, as much as our yearnings and our strivings during all the years of Seton Hall's history. And we commit ourselves today to continue yearning and striving for a dream ever ancient, ever new, ever a goal worthy of our best efforts, not unrelated to that ultimate transcendent goal which is the Kingdom of God.