

Sea Services pilgrimage is Oct. 4

Members of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Merchant Marine and the public will come together on Oct. 4 to honor St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, "Patroness of the Sea Services."

The annual pilgrimage for the Sea Services is hosted by the Daughters of Charity, and is supported by a committee of retired naval officers and their spouses, chaired by Admiral James D. Watkins.

The Mass begins at 3 p.m. in the Basilica at the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg and the public is invited to attend. The Seton Shrine will be open between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. for tours.

"It is powerful to know that St. Elizabeth Ann's two sons were mariners and that she shared the same worries and concerns for their safety as we (parents and spouses) do for our loved ones who are serving in the military," said Eugene and Heidi Castle, parents of a Navy lieutenant.

The principal celebrant and homilist for the Mass will be Bishop J. Kevin Boland of Savannah, Ga. Bishop Boland was appointed the national bishop of the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS), by Cardinal Francis George, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Bishop Boland is responsible for fostering the work of the maritime apostolate among the U.S. bishops and overseeing the work of the AOS national director.

Admiral Watkins has been closely associated with the Seton Shrine and the Daughters of Charity since 1977 when, with then Chief of Navy Chaplains John O'Connor (later Cardinal John O'Connor of New York), he worked to proclaim the St. Elizabeth Ann as "Patroness of the Sea Services" because of her link to the Navy through her two sons.

Music for the liturgy will be provided by the Naval Academy Catholic Midshipmen Choir from Annapolis.

Call 301-447-6606 for more information.