**Why are we called St Elizabeth’s?**

Written by Sister Patricia Ainsworth

No explanation is given as to why St Elizabeth of Hungary was chosen to be the patron of this establishment, though when one reads the life of St Elizabeth, it is not difficult to extract the reason why. Although a Queen, Elizabeth was known for her charity to the poor, and she built hospitals for the sick and needy, particularly for people with leprosy.

It is common knowledge that people with leprosy were treated as outcasts, people to be avoided – they were ‘untouchables’. Attitudes towards people with leprosy were due mainly to fear and ignorance. A parallel may be drawn; people with epilepsy, especially during the last century and the early part of the twentieth century, were regarded with fear and ignorance, and in many cases treated as outcasts. Elizabeth of Hungary had no regard for taboos concerning leprosy, and even brought someone with leprosy into her own home.

After the death of her husband she was despoiled of all her possessions and turned out of her castle with her three little children. She endured insults and abuse, much like those with leprosy. She continued her work amongst the poor and the sick until she died at the early age of 24.

The Daughters of the Cross would imitate her by working for the relief of suffering and by bringing Christ’s love into the lives of the sufferers.