

Seton



MAGAZINE

"Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church"

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2012



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

My child is behind in schoolwork, how can I help him catch up?

page 4

BOOK REVIEW

Seton has prepared an exciting new edition of the *Ballad of the White Horse*.

page 10

GOING HOME

A father's work can have a tremendous impact on the lives of his children.

page 8

*“With you every day,
every step of the way”*

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Did you know?



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton had a special devotion to Psalm 22/23: *“The Lord is my Shepherd...”*

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**NOVEMBER / DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS ISSUE**

Due to production issues involved with switching from the newsletter to our current magazine format, we have decided to combine the November and December issues into this one holiday issue. In January, we will resume monthly issues of the Seton Magazine.

WE HOPE YOU HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS!

*From the Director of
Seton Home Study School*



BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

Christ the King

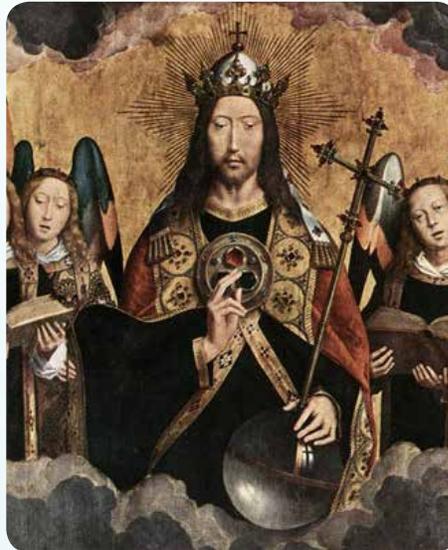
On the fourth Sunday of November, only three weeks after the national elections, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King. It is a time to remind ourselves that we have a Divine King, Jesus Christ, and He is the One on Whom we rely for our happiness on this Earth and for Eternity.

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote in his *Summa Theologica* about the three kings, the Magi, who visited the Baby King Jesus and paid Him homage. St. Thomas wrote that the three kings represented different nations. They were leaders in their countries who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to follow the star to Bethlehem to worship Christ the King.

The three kings came from distant lands to a strange place because they believed that a Divine King was born. They believed that by adoring Him, they would obtain eternal salvation. This reminds us that governments from all nations should be giving homage to Christ the King by basing their laws, especially in regard to the Church, on what is taught by the Divine King of Kings.

We are all aware of the problems in our American culture, especially the laws and court rulings which go against the laws of God. There has always been a conflict between the laws of God and the laws of the state. Long ago, evil rulers attempted to force God's Chosen People to worship golden statues which represented the false idols of money and power. Many Jews chose to be tortured and killed rather than deny the One True God. Let us not forget why Daniel was imprisoned in the lions' den.

Some religious leaders, as well as the Romans and other political leaders, saw Jesus as a troublemaker who encouraged people to pray to the One True God, to look to the Church and not to the state. Jesus preached, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Leaders are not to treat others as slaves or as property to abuse at will.



We parents need to remind our children that a nation that follows the laws of God and puts itself under the protection of the Almighty is a nation that will be blessed by God. We certainly learned that from the history of the Jewish people. When they turned from His laws, they were allowed to be enslaved by the Egyptians and other foreign nations.

St. Augustine believed that God temporarily but purposefully took away the view of the star from the three kings so that they would stop in Jerusalem, the center of the Jewish nation, to proclaim that the Messiah was born. The Jewish leaders knew that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem as predicted in the Scriptures. King Herod told his advisors to provide the three kings with the name of the town and the direction to go. King Herod even told them he would go and worship the King as well.

Far from believing or desiring to follow the three kings, Herod and the religious and political leaders were afraid of this possible new King who might take away their power. As a precaution, King Herod sent his soldiers to kill all the Jewish boy babies, in case one should grow up and be a threat to his earthly kingdom.

St. John Chrysostom wrote that the three kings did not find a king wearing royal robes. However, inspired by grace and guided by the heavenly star, they had faith. They knelt down in homage, "for they saw a man, and they acknowledged God." The three kings offered Him royal gifts: gold, which befits a great King; incense, used in sacrifices to God; and myrrh, used in embalming, a sign of the God-Man Who was to die for the salvation of all.

Would that our current "kings," our government leaders, would kneel in homage and offer royal gifts of obedience to His laws.

It is difficult for some in our current culture to remain true to the teachings of Christ our King. It is difficult for some not to fall into the trap of believing that the majority must be right, or believing that since something is a law, or since the law allows certain activities, we must learn to live with it. Some might say, "It does not affect me and mine." That is never true, however. The children in the government schools are being taught to accept the laws of the government first, and our children will be interacting with them in years to come. Many who protest the new definition of marriage, or who protest the murder of unborn children, are persecuted in one way or another. Religious people are being forced to fight against the government mandate requiring individuals to pay for contraceptives and abortion through mandatory health insurance policies.

We Catholic homeschooling parents are living in dangerous times for ourselves and for our children, and for the very existence of our Catholic churches, hospitals, and other charitable institutions. Yet Our King of kings does not falter, and we must follow Him faithfully to the glory He offers to those who hold true to His teachings.

Your Questions...

answered by Dr. Clark

Virtual Views

On Facebook, we asked:

Care to share your family's Advent activities? Traditions, crafts, recipes, or prayers? Do you craft a calendar or Jesse Tree? Or share a favorite family Advent recollection!

One year we made our own candles out of melted crayons.
-Sally K.

We enjoy this one:
<http://www.first-school.ws/activities/bible/advent1.htm>
-Connie B.

We will make a Jesse Tree this year again, the kids love it. What we also do during Advent is set up a little basket with a small figure of the Baby Jesus. We put Jesus in the basket and tell the kids that Jesus needs a softer crib. And so, every day that they listened very well or did something extra good they can put one cotton ball inside the basket, in the hopes that by the end of the month Jesus will lay softly on a layer of cotton balls.
-Petra T.

continued on page 8

May we mail in just some of the subjects which my 5th grader has finished, or do I need to wait until the tests for all the subjects have been taken?

If you are mailing in the tests, we suggest that you send the tests for all the subjects for the quarter at the same time. Sending all the tests at once allows you to check off every item for the quarter and make sure you have everything together. That tends to be easier and saves on mailing costs both for your family and for Seton.

However, if you have a concern that a particular concept has not been learned properly and you want to have feedback sooner, feel free to mail the tests in as they are done. This is sometimes a good idea for courses such as Algebra, in which the concepts build upon themselves week by week. If your child does poorly on the Algebra home tests, you don't want to wait a full quarter before sending in the Seton-graded tests.

Of course, the quickest and easiest way to get grades is to use the electronic grading, either by uploading assignments or taking tests online.

How does the computer process the quarterly tests?

The process is not the same for all tests. Objective tests are immediately graded by the computer, while subjective tests are graded by a person using the computer. If you send your test papers over the internet, the computer does much of the processing, such as recording the student's name, the date, and the specific test which saves a considerable amount of time and money, and gives you more information online. In addition, the tests are graded more quickly, and graded tests are returned instantly. Plus, a copy of the test or assignment is kept on the Seton data servers, meaning that you can go back and review all those items at a later date without worrying about misplacing anything.

By sending the tests over the internet to the Seton website, any problems which might be of concern or might be developing can be found more quickly.

Can you give me a specific amount of time that my 7th grader should spend on each subject?

In several subject areas, we have given a suggested amount of time, based on what the schools are doing as well as what we believe is reasonable in the homeschooling situation. In a classroom, a teacher must be strict about the

time frames for each subject to be sure everything is covered. However, what often happens is that the better students in some subjects tend to read a book or occupy themselves while the rest of the class is still doing the lesson. The students who are struggling are often frustrated when the teacher must move on to the next subject before these students have mastered the concept.

In homeschooling, while we give general time amounts, those times should be adjusted to the student's abilities in each subject. It is important to pray about this, and seriously evaluate your student's abilities. One student in 7th grade might be able to finish the math assignment in half an hour, but needs 45 minutes to write a single paragraph. A huge advantage in homeschooling is making adjustments for each child to be successful without being frustrated because he is too slow or too fast for the classroom schedule. The goal is always learning, not simply completing assignments.

My son is behind in his high school work. What can I do to help him believe he can finish his work in a timely manner?

Many parents choose homeschooling for a student who has been sick, or who has "fallen behind" due to taking care of sick parents or grandparents, or because of family disruptions. Whatever the reason, many high school homeschooling students need to be reassured that they can be successful quickly.

This can be done by changing the schedule considerably. These students need uplifting quickly. They cannot start in September, and they see this long road ahead of them, to do five or six subjects and have them finished in June when their friends have already graduated from high school.

We recommend that older students in high school take one course at a time, doing it all day every day, until it is finished. Older students usually can move faster, and secondly, they can focus on only one subject for maybe five or six weeks, and have the course finished.

A second option would be to take one course a half day, and a second course a half day. Focusing on only two courses each day, and barring major outside distractions, older students are likely to finish these two courses in eight weeks.

There are a couple of considerations, however. Obviously, in the area of math and foreign languages, the student would need to take the second year course of the math or foreign language immediately after the first is finished. A student cannot finish



are important statements or acts which show what kind of person the character is. These notes would be the basis for starting an outline.

Most students just want to write out something without thinking, without taking notes, without outlining, without organizing. That is the main problem. As a parent, you need to show him the process of thinking and outlining before he starts writing.

Can we write our own topic sentences for my children for the book reports?

We wish we could answer yes, but our graders cannot grade reports on different topics. They are familiar with all the books, of course, but since most grade levels have a selection of books, it would be difficult for our graders to take the time to re-read a book to become familiar enough with it to grade on different topics which students choose.

We certainly encourage you to inspire your child to write an additional report on the additional topic, for which you can give a grade or a special reward. Any further experience in writing or in composition can be very valuable for future analytical and thinking skills for all subjects.

Don't forget that on the Seton website, we have chapter notes for almost all the books for grade levels four through twelve. These can be found on your family's My Seton page. Simply click on Resources for the Reading courses, or click on All Resources for your student's grade level.

Will you be putting all the high school courses online?

We don't want Seton to become an online school. We feel that homeschooling is mainly about home and family values, about relationships between parents and children, relationships among the children, children caring for each other and for the family as a whole. Catholic homeschooling is about learning our Faith and living the Catholic life. Secondly, it is about reading, writing, and arithmetic. We don't want a situation whereby students are looking at the computer for their studies and not learning with their parents.

Jesus came as a Person to teach us to care about each other, and to care about living the Godly lifestyle. While the writers of the Bible were inspired by God to write what they were told to write, the apostles and disciples were told to "go out and teach." Jesus meant for His Word to be spread from person to person and, most importantly, from parents to children.

Spanish One in two or three months, and then a year later, take the second year Spanish. The second year course would need to immediately follow the first year course.

Older students who follow this schedule, by the way, tend to do very well in their courses. When they receive a grade, usually a good grade, every six to eight weeks, they are energized to continue to the next course.

My son filled in the Book Report outline, but he seems to need more help. How much help am I expected to give him?

First, do your best to read, or skim-read the book yourself so you can give your son some direction. Keep in mind questions you want to ask your son to lead him to find the answers himself. For instance, if he is supposed to think of certain characteristics of the main character, have a conversation with your son, asking him what the character did and said in the story. What kind of person do these actions and statements show?

When you are helping your child with a math problem, for instance a multiplication problem, take him through it step by step. "What do you do first? What do you think about first? What is the second step in a multiplication problem? So then what are you adding?"

In the same way, ask your son to think about what the character did and said, and how he reacted in situations. Have him write down, briefly, in a few words, what he thinks

That is not to say that we will not have any online courses. There will likely be three or four online science courses at the high school level. The "textbook" or lessons will be online. The "textbook" will include embedded images and videos which can show scientific topics better than any textbook. An online course can be constantly updated, which is important in the area of Biology, Life Science, and Earth Science.

We are doing these in the area of science for 9th and 10 graders, primarily because we want Catholic courses in these areas, much of which in the secular arena has been conformed to the politically-correct agenda.

In Virginia, the state education board has declared that all students graduating in four years must have taken at least one online high school course for the purpose of preparing them for taking college online courses, which are becoming very common.

Textbooks will still be available. In addition, we hope to provide supplemental tutorial videos by teachers, as we now have in the areas of English and Spanish.

The 10th and 11th high school science courses have optional CDs in conjunction with their textbook to help the students learn the material. The math textbooks in the high school levels also have optional CDs to teach every lesson.

My high school son really likes the online supplemental videos for the English courses. Will you be doing similar videos for other courses?

Yes. We started the English online supplemental videos because we often receive the same questions from several students. While we try to answer these questions in the Course Manual, the questions still come. Therefore, the videos are focusing on answering those most-frequently-asked questions.

However, we have plans to do special videos on special topics. We plan to do a series on the American Literature course, with special emphasis on American history and its relation to the literature selections. We plan a Shakespeare video and a video to explain the value of the online chapter notes for the high school courses. We plan a video on what colleges expect students to know when they enter college. We have done a video on "Juggling Your Time" for high school students. The beginning videos for Spanish I are already available. The computer programming course has a series of 36 videos which go over most of the topics covered by the course.

We should emphasize that these videos are not meant to be more than supplemental. They will not replace the courses. They usually take about 15 or 20 minutes each.



THE

Over the past few months, we have been highlighting a few of the many diverse families who homeschool with Seton. We have seen families with many differences, but also many similarities—because, in the end, all Catholic families are striving toward the same goal.

This month, we highlight the Holy Family. Although separated by two-thousand years and many thousands of miles from our Seton families, the Holy Family struggled with many of the same challenges that modern families face every day.

One of the first challenges faced by the Holy Family was their forced relocation to Egypt when Jesus was but a young Child. According to the Scriptures, an angel appeared in a dream to St. Joseph and told him immediately to take Mary and Jesus and flee to Egypt (Mt. 2:13). The Holy Family stayed in Egypt until the death of Herod. Although this story takes only a few sentences in the Gospels, we can imagine the difficulties encountered in this move. To start, the Holy Family must have left many possessions, taking only with them what they could carry, and perhaps pack onto a donkey or an ox. They must have sold some items to secure money for the trip. Once they made their way to Egypt, they must have started over with almost nothing, in a strange land, speaking a strange language, and looked upon as strangers themselves.

A constant concern for the Holy Family must have been finding enough work to support themselves. Matthew tells us that Joseph was a carpenter, and Mark adds that Jesus Himself was a carpenter as well (Mt. 13:55, Mk 6:3). Jesus and Joseph did not make a living from interest on their investments; they worked each day (excluding the Sabbath) with their own hands. They certainly built the tables and chairs that graced their own home, and then built wooden objects for other families. It was an honest living, but hardly could have made the family rich.

Of course, the Holy Family did not need to be poor. They could have been the wealthiest of families with every material good. However, they chose poverty in solidarity with all the poor throughout the ages. Scripture tells us, “The poor you will always have with you” (Mt.

We hope you have a Blessed Christmas...

HOLY FAMILY

26:11), and these poor can always look to the Holy Family for an example of joy despite lack of material possessions.

The Holy Family was certainly a homeschooling family, but we cannot know exactly how education progressed. They would have prayed the traditional Jewish prayers in their household, and perhaps they had a treasured scroll from which to read the commands of God. Or perhaps they heard God's word read only at the Temple. In these years, Jesus grew in both stature and wisdom, before God and men. (Lk 2:52) By the time he was twelve years old, he held the attention and esteem of the learned rabbis in the Temple. When Joseph and Mary found Jesus teaching in the Temple, surely they felt some parental pride in their child.

Although the Scriptures do not mention it, tradition holds that St. Joseph died before Jesus began His public mission. Mary is mentioned at different times, such as at the wedding feast of Cana (Jn 2:1-11), and also at the foot of the Cross. Had Joseph been alive, he would certainly have joined his wife and son at these times. At the time of His death, Jesus entrusted Mary to St. John (Jn 19:27). After the death of Jesus, His body was given to Joseph of Arimathea (Mk 15:43). These would both have been roles for Joseph, had he been available.

So much has changed in two-thousand years, but perhaps more has remained constant.

Like the Holy Family, many families today are uprooted, often due to the necessity of moving far from family and friends to secure employment. Families must abandon all that they know and move to new places, packing little more than their hope and faith. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus told Peter to step out of the boat and walk on the water toward Him. Many families each year take such a step out into the unknown, with no guarantee of a firm footing beneath them.

For these families, homeschooling can be a constant and familiar activity in their lives. Families may need to leave their homes, but they can bring their school along with them. There is no disruption. There is no need for a child to sit through scores of classes going over already-

learned materials, or alternatively, being thrown in the middle of a course where he is not prepared.

Like the Holy Family, most modern families endure a constant struggle to make ends meet, to pay the bills which never stop coming, and always, somehow, seem to be more than the available income. Many homeschooling families work on farms, or in skilled labor. Such work allows children to work alongside their parents, just as Jesus worked alongside Joseph.

We might say also that the Holy Family knows our families, because they went through many of the same difficulties and triumphs that we find in our lives.

In other families, fathers or mothers or both go outside the home to work. Especially in this economy, we have the sad situation of many families who cannot find work, or who have lost their jobs or their businesses.

Like the Holy Family, many homeschooling families have chosen poverty, or at least have chosen to have less than they could have had. Many families have chosen to be generous in accepting new life, and many families have chosen to forgo a second income so that one parent may stay home with the children. Homeschooling families are a sign of contradiction to the world, a living embodiment of the choice to give up wealth to pursue other—better—goals.

However the work is done, homeschooling helps in several ways. First, it is inexpensive compared to other private schooling. It can even be less expensive than public schooling, once all the expenses (travel, clothing, school extras) are added up. Also, for families in which children need to work, homeschooling allows for a flexibility that a traditional school cannot match. Homeschooling can work around family schedules as necessary.

Families often homeschool because their children are not challenged in traditional schools. Having an academically precocious and gifted child can be both a joy and a challenge—a joy to see the child grow in wisdom as well as stature, but a challenge to help the child reach his or her full potential. In a school, this difficulty is exacerbated by the need to help twenty or thirty children at the same time, each of whom has individual needs. At home, however, adapting the curriculum to the child is much more possible.

The absence of a parent is a challenge faced by many homeschooling families. Some have suffered the tragedy of a parental death, while others have suffered from the family being broken by divorce. Regardless of how it happens, the absence of a parent has a profound impact on the family, emotionally, psychologically, and financially. Families may be forced to move, new employment may need to be sought. New schedules and new daily routines need to be worked out.

In times of tragedy, a new and deeper reliance on family can be sought, even when the family is wounded. As a single homeschooling mother writes in *Catholic Home Schooling*, at these times “it is essential that the order and structure of a solid family life be preserved. . . . During such an emotional upheaval as the loss of a parent, would not the best place for these children be in their homes? Is it not important for them to be able to cry when they feel like it, to scream when they have to, to act out in any other way that they need to, but most importantly, to know that one parent is still there for them?”

Scripture tells us that Jesus knows us because He is one of us (Hb 4:15). He knows our sufferings and our joys because he suffered and rejoiced as well. We might say also that the Holy Family knows our families, because they went through many of the same difficulties and triumphs that we find in our lives. In our work, in our play, in our joys, in our sufferings, in our times together, and in our solitude, they know what we feel because they felt it as well.

...and a joyful start to the New Year!

Virtual Views

continued from page 4

I am collecting craft ideas to incorporate into our schooling and advent celebrating. We do our advent wreath and read Jotham's Journey, we also celebrate St. Nicholas Day, leaving shoes out the night before. We will be doing a Jesse Tree this year and also the *O Antiphons*, we always get the traditional chocolate countdown calendar and this year I also found a scripture chain. Love any other ideas I can get. My kids range from 15-4 so anything is game.
-Darcy K.

The O Antiphons

The "O Antiphons" refer to a series of names given to Our Lord in the Church's liturgy leading up to Christmas. From December 17 until December 23, the Church sings of the coming of Christ and refers to Him with a different name each day. You may recognize the names from the hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. They are as follows:

December 17: O Sapientia
(O Wisdom)

December 18: O Adonai
(O Lord)

December 19: O Radix Jesse
(O Root of Jesse)

December 20: O Clavis David
(O Key of David)

December 21: O Oriens
(O Dayspring)

December 22: O Rex Gentium
(O King of the Nations)

December 23: O Emmanuel
(O God is With Us)



According to Dads



BY JOHN CLARK

Going Home

Most of us probably don't think about it much, but a father's work can have a big impact on the lives of his children. I hadn't thought about this much until last year; up until then, I had been a financial consultant for many years. I never fully realized how much that shaped me in the eyes of my children, but after a recent career change, it is finally dawning on me.

About fifteen years ago, I had a friend who used to comment that he didn't know what he was supposed to do in life. Until these conversations with him, I never realized how big a cross that a lack of direction can be for a man to carry. Personally, I never had that problem—the first time I saw a copy of *The Wall Street Journal*, I knew what I wanted to do: I wanted to be a stockbroker. I discounted the stress that others warned me about; I had visions of Italian suits, trading floors, and green and brass bankers lamps dancing through my head. That was the life I wanted.

Being from a family that holds intelligence in high regard, it also struck me that stockbrokers seemed really smart. Someone once said: "Nothing makes a person sound smarter than talking about currency markets." It's true. The next time you want to impress someone, just start talking about the New Zealand Dollar, the Australian Dollar, and the Swiss Franc, and make sure that you know the nicknames for the currencies. When you're at a party, and the conversation inevitably turns toward finance, just say something like: "You guys should seriously consider shorting the Swissie against the Kiwi, and go long the Aussie." Trust me, they'll be impressed. They won't know what the heck you're talking about (and neither will you), but they will be sure of one thing: you are one smart cookie.

I don't know if my kids thought much about the "smart" thing. In fact, I don't know if they really understood what I did at work. Try as they might, my younger children never seemed to un-

derstand the world in which I worked. Years ago, when my son Demetrius was about 10 years old, I took him with me to work. He sat on the couch in my office for most of the day doing his homework, with a curious corner of his eye and mind on me, as I spent almost the entire day sitting at my desk and speaking with clients on the phone. At about 5:00, I started to shut down my computer, and announced to Demetrius that I was done with my work, and that it was time to go home. He looked up from his science book with a quizzical look, and said: "What do you mean, you're done? The only thing you've done all day is talk on the phone!"

They also didn't understand why I would voluntarily watch boring shows. With the constant teletype running across the bottom of the screen, I tried to convince Lisa over the years that watching CNBC was a great way for the children to learn their letters. Growing up, some of our children were probably more familiar with Maria Bartiromo than with Dora the Explorer.

When they asked me what I did at work, I don't know if I ever gave them an answer that they understood. What the children did seem to understand was that, first, there was some correlation between Daddy's work and the fact that our family was able to buy things, and second, Daddy's work made him tired.

Really tired.

It's strange how much the global financial world itself resembles the geographical center in which it resides: New York City. As the song says: "I want to wake up in a city that never sleeps." As I discovered, with the stark reality of international time-zones and foreign markets, the financial world never sleeps either, and that meant, by extension, that I rarely slept either. Particularly in the last few years of my career in finance, I would keep my laptop computer by

continued on page 9

According to Dads

continued from page 9

my bed, in case I missed an all-important pronouncement by the Secretary of Finance of Finland or Greece. Somewhere along the line, I realized that my body may have been home, but my mind was somewhere else—and that wasn't good enough. It wasn't good enough for my wife, or for my children.

When we get job offers and opportunities, we men tend to ask lots of questions about the details, like: "Will I get a corner office?" or "Will I get to travel much?" Maybe it's time we analyzed our work with a question that I never really thought to ask myself until last year, namely: "Will this job make me a better father?" With some pretty wise advice from some pretty smart people, I finally asked myself that question, and with the help of St. Joseph and St. Anthony, I found one as a real estate salesperson. When my children ask me what I do now, I can tell them: "I help people come home."

Whether it's a plumber, a waiter, a construction worker, or an attorney, I don't think it matters too much what a father actually does; as Pope John Paul II recently taught, all work has dignity. What matters is whether a father is able to mentally come home to be with his children. Or, if you're really lucky, you do bring your work home, but only the part of the work that gives you a feeling of fulfillment. Either way, your heart, soul, and mind are where they belong.

**Seton Family Appointment Calendar
16 Month 2012-2013 Calendar**

New, larger format doubles the space for notes and appointments!

Bring the most beautiful stained glass art from around the world into your home! This official calendar begins with September 2012 to help you organize your school year. Shows solemnities, Lenten regulations, and liturgical year information.

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College Prep

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AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

BOB WIESNER

College applications can be rather intimidating documents. Students may be confronted with pages upon pages of questions not only about academics, but about family circumstances, attitudes about life, accomplishments outside of school, and other seemingly irrelevant matters. Don't be disheartened; simply take the application piece by piece in an orderly fashion and soon it will be finished.

One area of concern is the essay which many colleges require. Seton students should not be worried about this; you have been well-trained in the art of writing! The concern arises not in how to write, but in what to say. Some colleges actually give a topic, others ask you to write on any subject of interest. In either case, be direct in your comments and honest in presenting your ideas. The college is looking for students who can express their opinions in a logical, well-organized fashion. What you say is generally of less importance than how you say it, your opinion of less concern than the coherence of your essay.

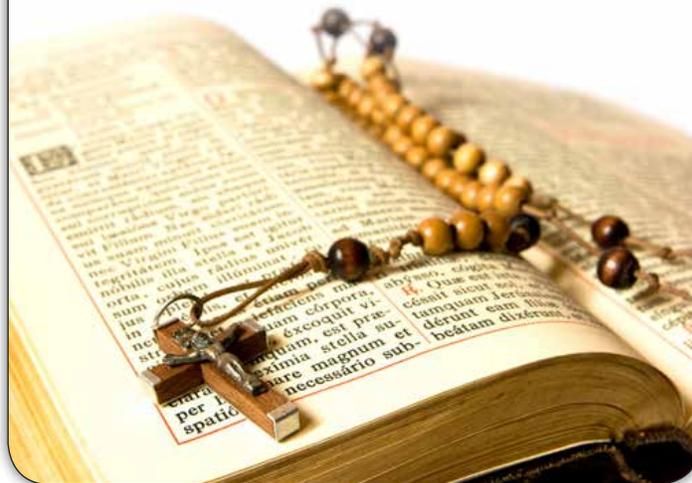
In seeking recommendations, you should ask people who are personally familiar with your academic progress and your character. Tutors, pastors, coaches, and family friends are often good choices. Seton can provide recommendations, but they are necessarily a bit generic since usually we are not personally acquainted with students.

The transcript is indispensable to applications. You can order your transcript by going to My Seton; the Transcript Request form is under the Resources tab. If there are other questions, please feel free to contact Seton. Guidance Counselors Chris Smith and Bob Wiesner can answer your questions.

**LET US PRAY
FOR ONE ANOTHER**

Every day at Seton, gathered before the altar at our afternoon Angelus, we offer prayers for our families and friends. We encourage you also to pray for other homeschooling families, especially those who may be suffering from illness, unemployment, or other crosses.

We are all united in the Communion of Saints, and God allows us through our prayers to uphold, support, and console other members of His Church. Let us, then, remember to pray for one another as we all walk the path of homeschooling, so that we may all join together in prayer, one day, in Heaven.



Next Month's Column

The Scholarship Search

G.K. Chesterton's

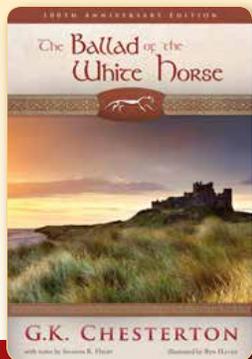
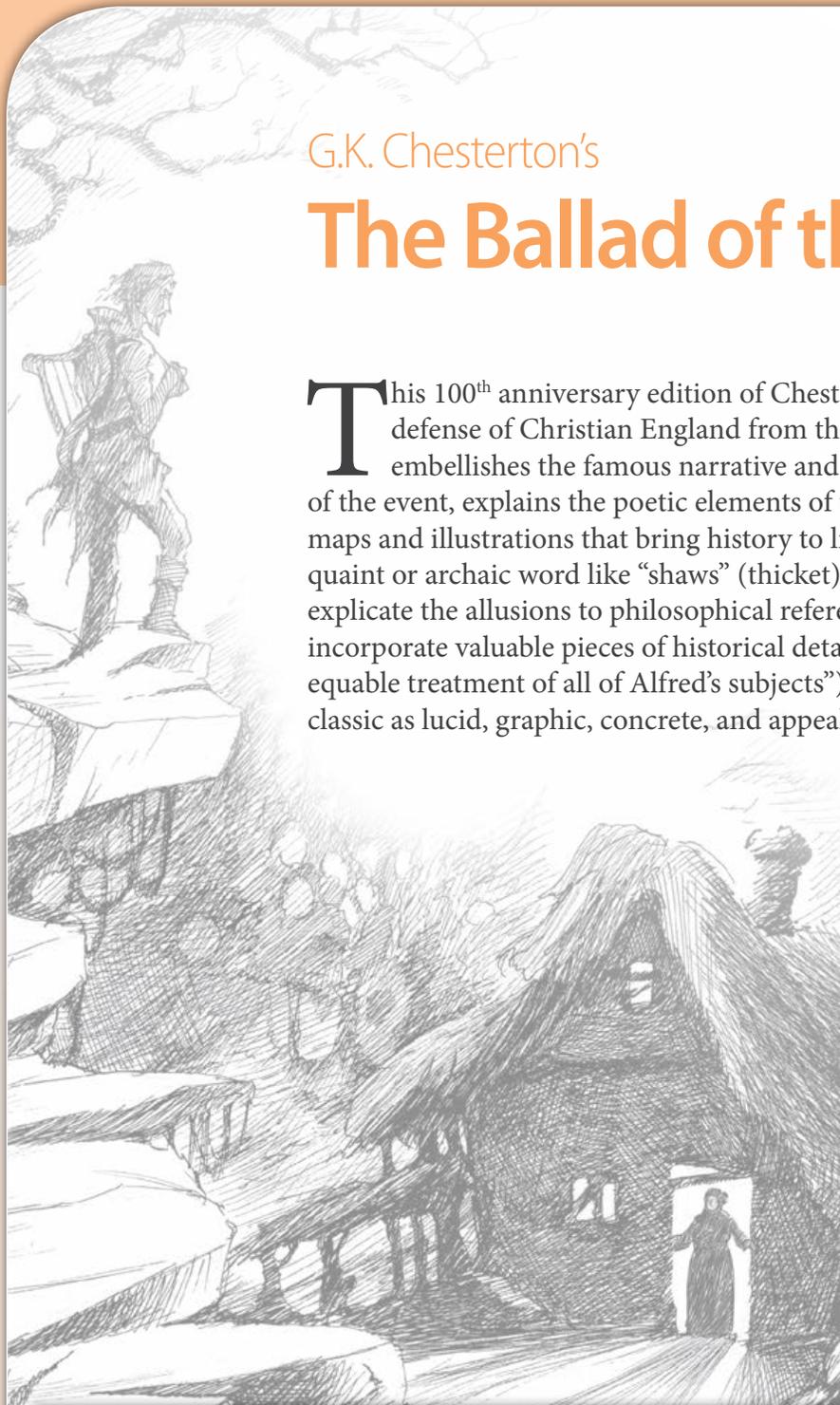
The Ballad of the White Horse

REVIEW BY DR. MITCHELL KALPAKIAN

This 100th anniversary edition of Chesterton's poetic version of King Alfred's heroic defense of Christian England from the pagan Danes is an exquisite publication. It embellishes the famous narrative and provides it with the historical background of the event, explains the poetic elements of the ballad structure of the story, and offers maps and illustrations that bring history to life. The footnotes on each page explain every quaint or archaic word like "shaws" (thicket) and "hod" (container for carrying stones), explicate the allusions to philosophical references like "nihilism" and "existentialism," and incorporate valuable pieces of historical detail ("The laws of Alfred were famous for their equitable treatment of all of Alfred's subjects"). In short, this edition makes Chesterton's classic as lucid, graphic, concrete, and appealing as possible for readers.

The greatest attraction, of course, is the story itself and the greatness of King Alfred as a Christian hero. Chesterton's rendition of the historical events in ballad form illuminates the Christian providential view of history, the reality of miracles and surprises as signs of God's presence in human affairs, the Christian virtues that Alfred embodies as a man and king, and the meaning of Christian culture as a civilizing power in the pagan world.

Overwhelmed by the Danish invaders and bribing them with gold to maintain some semblance of peace, Alfred has retreated to the island of Athelney and views the future with a defeatism, especially after witnessing the ruins of burned monasteries. Recalling the vision of the Blessed Mother in a book from his childhood, Alfred resists the despair that depresses him: "He looked, and there Our Lady was, / She stood and stroked the tall live grass / As a man strokes his steed." When he implores the Holy Mother "To see a secret thing," that is, to foresee the outcome of the English conflict with the Danes, he receives a cryptic answer: "The gates of heaven are lightly locked . . . But if he fail or if he win / To no good man is told." Alfred as Christian king must act with faith and trust in Divine Providence, not resort to the magic of foreknowledge. The Holy Mother's words, "Go gaily in the dark," that urge him to "have joy without a cause" and "faith without a hope" enjoin the king to resist the Danes and prepare for war, entrusting the outcome to God's will and cooperating with God's divine plan rather than expecting a guarantee of victory.



The Ballad of the White Horse

Annotated by College English professor Sharon Higby, and illustrated by New York Times bestselling artist, Ben Hatke, this groundbreaking new edition of Chesterton's epic masterpiece is a great gift for any Catholic high schooler or adult.

P-EN11-18 **The Ballad of the White Horse** \$12.00

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When Alfred's army clashes with the Danes, his fierce chieftains all die in battle as the English forces are routed. Why did the vision of the Holy Mother move him to battle only to suffer defeat and the loss of his great leaders—Eldred, Mark, and Colan—men who questioned the wisdom of waging war with no chance of victory? As Eldred warns, "Why should my harmless hinds be slain / Because the chiefs cry war again . . . ? Mark sees the battle as a lost cause: "I doubt if you shall take the crown . . ." Nevertheless, Alfred convinces his allies that the battle is waged for the cause of Christian civilization with its belief in the goodness of Creation, the resurrection of the dead, and the glory of eternal life as opposed to the fate of the Danes' paganism whose gods embody only death and destruction. As Guthrum, the Danish king, laments, "There comes no noise but weeping / Out of the ancient sky, / And a tear is in the tiniest flower / because the gods must die." The stakes are so great, the cause is so noble, and the contrast between a Christian culture that builds, beautifies, and refines versus a pagan world that knows only violence, plunder, and destruction is so immense that Alfred views the battle as a crossroads or turning point in history: "But because it is only Christian men / Guard even heathen things."



Surrendering to God's mysterious will with the faith that walks in the darkness of the future, Alfred humbles himself as God's servant and assumes a childlike trust in his heavenly father. When an old woman mistakenly views Alfred as a beggar and offers him food for the task of watching the cakes cook without burning, Alfred neglects his duty only to be struck by the irate woman with the cake he let burn: she "struck him suddenly on the face / Leaving a scarlet scar"—a surprise that not only shocks and humbles the great king but also evokes a burst of laughter, "The giant laughter of Christian men / That roars through a thousand tales, / Where greed is an ape and pride is an ass." Even in the midst of defeat or humiliation, the Christian king imitates Christ's meekness, never retaliating with vengeance or using power ruthlessly. Defeated soundly by the Danes and weakened by the loss of his chieftains, Alfred—again inspired by the vision of the Mother of God on the battlefield—persists in the war, this time approaching battle like a child rather than a great king with a mighty army: "But Alfred fought as gravely / As a good child at play." That is, like a child that builds a tower that falls but who builds the tower again and again, Alfred's faith, hope, trust, and patience endure: "And as a child whose bricks fall down / Re-piles them o'er and o'er . . . He began his life once more."

With a child's immersion in play that he repeats without discouragement, Alfred again blows his horn, this time joined in battle by common laborers, "the men that tear the furrows, the men that fell the trees," who rally to the defense of their king and nation—an effort that changes the whole course of the battle and the history of England, an effort that brings a miraculous victory over the Danes and the surprising conversion of King Guthrum. **As the story shows, in the Christian providential view of history, good can come out of evil, the future does not have to resemble the past, the Lord of surprises changes the course of human events with miracles, and saints and heroes who say "yes" to God in humility and patience and learn from the old woman and**



the child shape the destiny of the world.

This anniversary edition reminds the whole world again of all God can accomplish with one person who goes "gaily in the dark," has "joy without a cause," and fights "as gravely / As a good child at play"—a lesson for all ages.



Dr. Mitchell A. Kalpakgian is a native of New England, the son of Armenian immigrants. He was Professor of English at Simpson College (Iowa) for 31 years and was appointed a visiting professor at Christendom College (Virginia) for two years, and then served two years as a tutor at Magdalen College (New Hampshire). He subsequently became Academic Dean and a teacher of English and Latin at Mt. Royal Academy (Sunapee, New Hampshire), a private Catholic school. During his academic career, Dr. Kalpakgian received many academic honors, among them the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar Fellowship (Brown University, 1981), the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship (University of Kansas, 1985), and an award from the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute on Children's Literature.

Fall Food Prep

Every fall, circumstances in the typical homeschool family line up to create a perfect educational opportunity. First, Mom is wistfully remembering how Dad grilled all summer as she tries to put some sort of well-balanced supper on the table with a toddler clinging to her legs. Second, the produce at farmers' markets and grocery stores is both abundant and reasonably priced during and right after harvest. Third, the children really need to learn some practical life skills. Finally, in my own experience, children who moan about having to mop floors or take out the trash actually seem to enjoy meal preparation. All of these factors ensure that Mom can feel good about herself when passing on some kitchen responsibilities because she is training her sons and daughters in necessary adult skills.

Start with snacks

Even the youngest children, Pre-K and K, can help prepare snacks. Give them a snack schedule and put them in charge of prep, service, and clean up. Several skills are involved here. They will need to count how many brothers and sisters will be snacking, and how much food they need to prepare. Encourage them to present their food in an attractive manner on a pretty dish or platter. A practical idea is to serve the food on a platter, but give each sibling a paper napkin or paper plate, not individual dishes that need to be washed. After the snack, the same children are in charge of throwing out the paper goods, loading the dishwasher, and wiping down the counters or table.

Here are some simple snack ideas that are appropriate for this age group.

- **Monday:** peanut butter and jelly on crackers with some apple slices. Mom might need to help cut the apple.
- **Tuesday:** pre-cut veggies, such as carrot sticks, celery sticks, broccoli, whatever else, with dressing on one side of the dish with some dried fruit on the other.
- **Wednesday:** "ants on a log" consisting of celery sticks filled with peanut butter, covered with raisins.
- **Thursday:** crackers and cheese served with grapes.
- **Friday:** fruit with vanilla yogurt dip.

Besides inculcating kitchen skills and giving the little ones confidence in their own abilities, there is another advantage to letting them prepare daily snacks. I can tell you from long experience that a child is far more likely to eat a celery stalk if he himself filled it with peanut butter and rolled it in raisins.

God's Bounty from the Harvest

Many modern parents were not taught the culinary arts as children and are not quite sure how to train their children to prepare all the beautiful produce that is available in autumn. Learn more about winter squash at: <http://ohmyveggies.com/a-guide-to-winter-squash/>. Squash are readily available this time of year, store well, are a thrifty purchase, and have many uses. Best of all your school age children can help to prepare nutritious dishes and mom can get a bit of a break.

Spaghetti squash is regularly shaped oblong with a uniform yellow color, and is a good choice to start. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Mom, Dad, or an older sibling will need to cut the squash in half lengthwise, as any squash can be tough to split, but grade school children can handle the rest. Scoop out the seeds and the connective fibers into a colander. Put the halves, cut side down onto a baking sheet (lined with foil means easy clean up), and cook for around 40 minutes or until a knife passes easily through the skin and flesh.

In the meantime, wash the seeds and discard the strands. Dry the seeds a bit, and put them onto a jellyroll pan (cookie sheet with sides). Toss them with a bit of olive oil and your favorite spicy sprinkle, like garlic and herb, or taco seasoning. Put them in a single layer into



the oven, but keep an eye on them. After 10 or 15 minutes, the seeds on the outside will begin to brown faster than the rest, so stir them up and put them back into the oven until all the seeds are nicely browned. Serve hot for a deceptively healthy treat.

The children can use the same technique with chickpeas, which are also known as garbanzo beans. Rinse the water from the can off the beans in a colander; toss them with olive oil and your favorite powered seasoning; cook in a single



BY GINNY SEUFFERT

layer in a 375 degree oven for about 40 minutes, stirring the beans every 10 minutes or so until they get brown

and crunchy. This recipe is a Trojan horse of nutrition, getting the goodness of beans into the children without them ever realizing it.

After 40 minutes or so, the spaghetti squash is soft enough to pass a knife through. Teach the children how to remove the halves from the oven safely with oven mitts. Turn the squash over carefully as some steam has built up. Let them rest a few minutes and then the fun begins. Scrape a fork around the flesh to get the characteristic spaghetti strands of squash. You can transfer the strands into a serving bowl or just use the squash shells to serve them. The strands are a bit bland, so top them with: dots of butter and grated cheese, or a bit of olive oil with garlic and herb sprinkle, or tomato sauce; or meat gravy.

This is another Trojan horse as kids are more likely to eat squash when it is presented as pasta. Remember though, that it is, in fact, not pasta. Apply topping sparingly and do not stir in the butter, oil, or sauce, or it will become mushy.

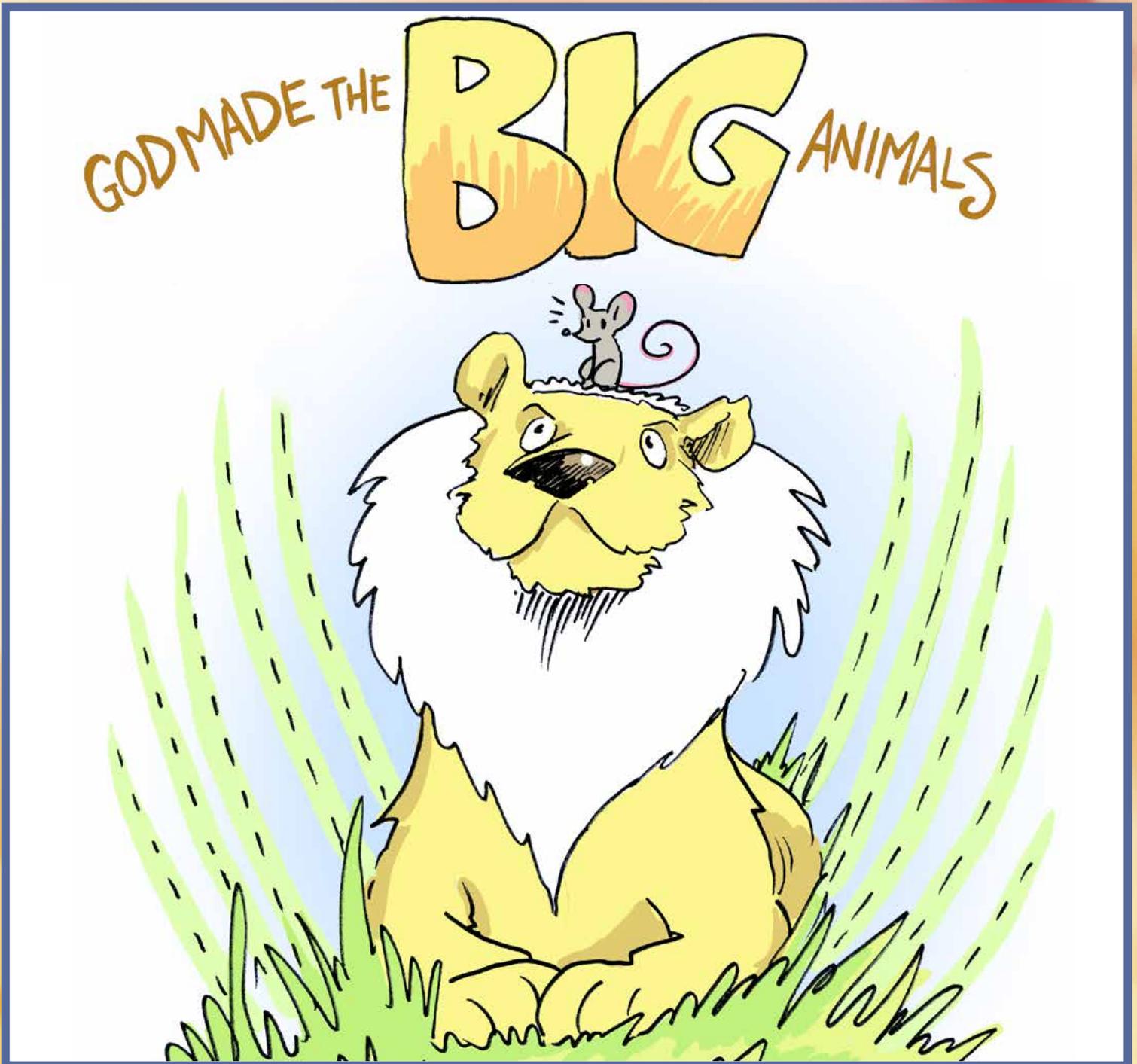
Make food prep a permanent assignment

Teach your children safe use of knives and then let them prepare all the side dishes for family meals. It is easy to cut up fresh greens and veggies for a salad, and a salad spinner will even make it fun to wash and dry them. A steamer makes it easy for children to chop up veggies and cook them, topped with butter or olive oil and some seasoning. Root veggies like potatoes, sweet potatoes, and onions, can be chopped and roasted in the oven with a bit of olive oil and seasoning. If you add some sausage or chicken thighs, you have a one-pot meal. Sweet potato "fries" can be made by

tossing the fry-shaped potatoes with olive oil and taco seasoning and baking them single layered until crispy.

Notice none of these ideas call for frying which does give me safety concerns for younger children. Nevertheless, these recipes are healthy and delicious. Mom can enjoy a break from the chores of homemaking, and students will learn some practical life skills. Best of all, making a real contribution to family life gives children a self-sufficient and confident attitude about life.

Kid's Corner

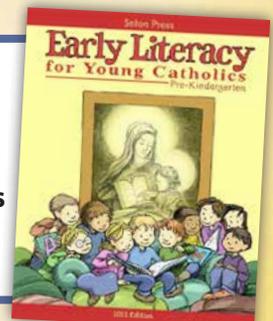


**Color the lion's mane
and trace the grass.**

For more coloring activities
like this one, check out

Early Literacy for Young Catholics

<http://www.setonhome.org/preenrollment/>



PSALMS OF THANKSGIVING CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

2. Unto You, O God, do we give thanks, unto You do we give thanks: for that Your Name is near your wondrous ____ declare. Ps 75:1
6. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His _____. Ps 30:4
8. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a _____ noise unto Him with psalms.
10. Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the ____ unto our God. Ps 147:7
12. Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His _____ endures for ever. Ps 106:1
14. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be _____ unto Him, and bless His name. Ps 100:4
16. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will _____ Him with thanksgiving. Ps 69:30
17. O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name: make known His _____ among the people. Ps 105:1
21. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto your ____, O most High. Ps 92:1
22. O give thanks unto the ____ of gods: for His mercy endures forever. Ps 136:2
23. O give thanks unto the God of _____: for His mercy endures forever. Ps 136:26
24. That I may publish with the _____ of thanksgiving, and tell of all your wondrous works. Ps 26:7
25. Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the _____ of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. Ps 122:4
26. I will give thanks in the great _____: I will praise you among much people. Ps 35:18

DOWN

1. So we your _____ and sheep of your pasture will give you thanks for ever: we will show forth your praise to all generations. Ps 79:13
3. And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with _____. Ps 107:22
4. At _____ I will rise to give thanks unto you because of your righteous judgments. Ps 119:62
5. Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the _____, and sing praises unto your name. Ps 18:49
7. I will offer to you the _____ of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. Ps 116:17
9. Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous; and give thanks at the _____ of His holiness. Ps 97:12
11. Offer unto God _____; and pay your vows unto the most High. Ps 50:14
13. Save us, O Lord Our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto your holy name, and to _____ in your praise. Ps 106:47
15. O give thanks to the _____ of lords: for His mercy endures forever. Ps 136:3
18. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy _____ forever. Ps 107:1
19. To the end that my glory may sing praises to you, and not be _____. O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto you forever. Ps 30:12
20. Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto your name: the upright shall dwell in your _____. Ps 140:13
22. For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the _____ who shall give thee thanks? Ps 6:5



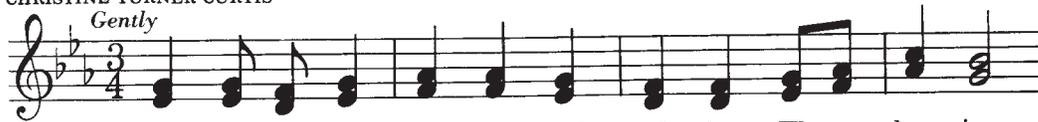
18. endures	7. sacrifice	1. people	25. testimony	21. name	12. mercy	2. works
19. silent	9. remembrance	3. rejoicing	26. congregation	22. God	14. thankful	6. holiness
20. presence	11. thanksgiving	4. midnight	23. heaven	22. God	16. magnify	8. joyful
22. grave	13. triumph	5. heathen	24. voice	21. name	17. deeds	10. harp
	15. Lord					

Christmas Lullaby

English version by
CHRISTINE TURNER CURTIS

POLISH FOLK TUNE

Gently



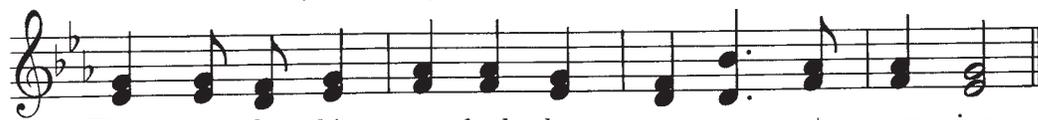
1. Loo - lull - a - by, Je - su, and safe be Thy sleep - ing;
2. Loo - lull - a - by, Je - su, our car - ols we sing Thee;



Near Thee is Thy Moth - er, Her still vig - il keep - ing.
Loaves made of fine wheat and ripe ber - ries we bring Thee.

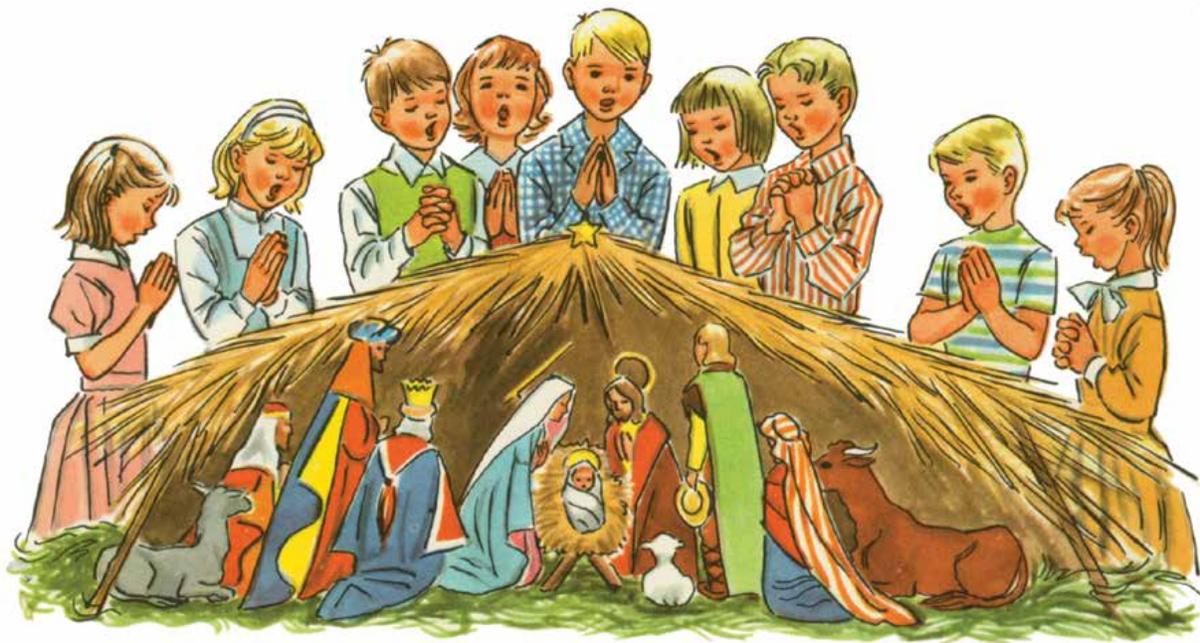


Thou art like a star ev - er - more the heav - ens a - dorn - ing.
Down come snow - y an - gels Thy ho - ly cra - dle at - tend - ing,



Thou art the white rose - bud that o - pens at morn - ing.
Loo - lull - a - by, Je - su, till night - time is end - ing.

If the last flat is *fa*, where will you find *do*?



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setonhome.org/conferences



PAPAL WISDOM

This is the meaning of the Child's name, the name which, by God's will, Mary and Joseph gave Him: He is named **Jesus**, which means "Saviour" (cf. Mt 1:21; Lk 1:31). He was sent by God the Father to save us above all from the evil deeply rooted in man and in history: the evil of separation from God, the prideful presumption of being self-sufficient, of trying to compete with God and to take his place, to decide what is good and evil, to be the master of life and death (cf. Gen 3:1-7). This is the great evil, the great sin, from which we human beings cannot save ourselves unless we rely on God's help, unless we cry out to him: "Veni ad salvandum nos! – Come to save us!"...

Dear Brothers and Sisters, let us turn our gaze anew to the grotto of Bethlehem. The Child whom we contemplate is our salvation! He has brought to the world a universal message of reconciliation and peace. Let us open our hearts to him; let us receive him into our lives. Once more let us say to him, with joy and confidence: "Veni ad salvandum nos!"

Pope Benedict XVI, Christmas Message for 2011

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