

Seton



MAGAZINE

"Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church"

FEBRUARY 2013



THIRTEEN YEARS OF SETON SUCCESS

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HER SCHOOL YEARS WITH SETON

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

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Did you know?



Though she was raised
Episcopalian, St. Elizabeth Ann
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Faith when she was 30.

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On the cover: The Felsheim family with
Cardinal Burke, a family friend, at the Shrine
of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, WI.
From left to right: Mary (13), Joyce, Elizabeth
(17), Cardinal Burke, Jack, John (9), and
Emily (15)



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There is a Great Story

behind every homeschooling family



Homeschooling is an adventure, and each
family who embarks on the adventure has a
unique story, touched and guided by
Divine Providence.

We'd like to feature your story. If you have a
story, or would like to share part of your
adventure with us, please contact Christine
Smitha at cmsmitha@setonhome.org

SHARE YOUR STORY AND INSPIRE ANOTHER FAMILY!

Letter from the Director of Seton Home Study School

Dr. Mary Kay Clark



Our Lady of Lourdes

The Blessed Mother appeared to St. Bernadette in 1858 in Lourdes, France, a little over 150 years ago. Her message was to encourage prayer, especially saying the daily Rosary. However, her appearance at Lourdes had another purpose, to confirm in a supernatural way the new dogma of the Immaculate Conception. This dogma was proclaimed four years earlier by Pope Pius IX, but was a traditional belief of the Catholic faithful.

The EWTN website has reprinted the whole story as written by St. Bernadette of the miraculous appearance by the Blessed Mother. The following is a small section.

“On March 25th, I was roused from sleep by an inner insistence to go to the grotto. It was still dark when I reached Massabielle. The Lady was there and waiting for me. I apologized for keeping her waiting, for I had caught a cold. She smiled, I knelt down, we said the Rosary together. Then the Lady came very close to me. I told her how I loved her, and how happy I was to see her again.

“Mademoiselle,” I said, “would you be so kind as to tell me who you are, if you please?” Instead of replying, she only smiled. I said again, “Would you be so kind as to tell me who you are?” I said this four times altogether.

The Lady extended her hands towards the ground, swept them upwards to join them on her heart, raised her eyes, but not her head to Heaven, leaned tenderly towards me and said, “Que soy era Immaculada Conception.” She smiled at me. She disappeared. I was alone.

“I did not understand the words, but I knew the Priest would. I knew also the Lady loved the Priest. Leaving my candle at the grotto, I went straight to Fr. Peyramale, saying the Lady’s name to myself along the way. Father was waiting for me. I bowed and said, “I am the Immaculate

Conception.” Seeing his surprise, I explained, “Aquero [the lady] said, ‘I am the Immaculate Conception.’”

The Blessed Virgin did not say “I am the one who was immaculately conceived” but rather “I am the Immaculate Conception.” This unusual statement is a declaration from Heaven of the essential personhood of every unborn human from the moment of conception.

God creates each new human life immediately as a person. In other words, a new human life is never in existence without it also always being a person. The newly-conceived is immediately an immortal, intellectual soul. If this person died a moment after being conceived, his soul would be immediately appearing before His Creator, and this person would receive his eternal reward as a sinless person.

Let’s remember this year to pray for each unborn child whom God has created and also let’s pray for each mother and father to respect God’s wishes and allow the newly-created child to live the life God wants for that child.

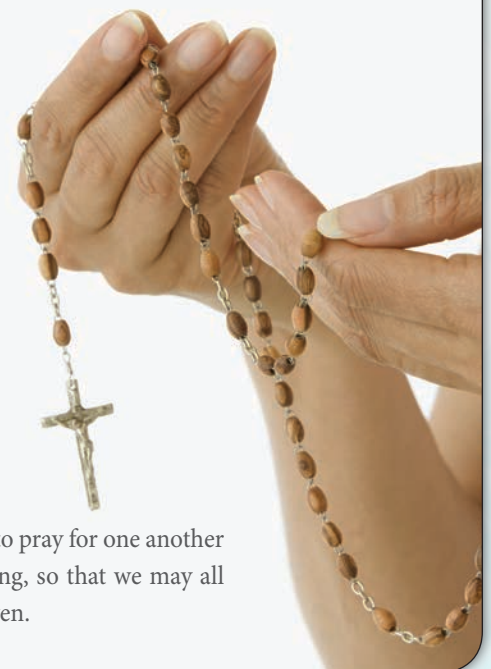
In addition, we home schooling parents must perpetually keep in mind that God gave us our children for the purpose of educating them in the Faith and of practicing the Faith so that they will receive the place in Heaven that He has prepared for them from all eternity.

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us Catholic home schooling parents to teach our children the truths of the Faith so that they may be faithful in practicing the Faith and attain eternal happiness with You and Your Blessed Mother.

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.



Your Questions...

answered by Dr. Clark

Virtual Views

On Facebook, we asked:

What advice would you give to other homeschooling families?

That you can do it and that it is very rewarding. Seton is there to help anytime. My kids love it and are absolutely proud to be Seton homeschool Students. I love the curriculum and it brings faith right into the family, something that a public school never could offer.

-Petra T.

It doesn't all fall into place all at once. There is a learning curve. Stick with it and you won't regret it. -Andrea C.

Don't Stress! Be patient and give breaks/recesses. Keep good track of your notes and grades - have a system set up and use it! Go on dates with your husband. And pray for and love your children! -Jari W.

Homeschooling my daughter has been an amazing experience. I thank our Lord for working in our lives through Seton. We love it!!!

-Evelyn J.

continued on page 10

Because of illness, we are not as far along in our studies as I would like. What tips do you have for us to catch up?

For some subjects, you can use a few shortcuts. For instance, to catch up in Spelling or Vocabulary, you could assign your student two chapters in one week, with the student doing only the essential work. If your student is very good in math, perhaps he could do two chapters in one week by working out only every other problem. You need to be careful that shortcuts should be used only for subjects for which you know your child will not be missing something for which he needs to take the regular length of time.

For many subjects, you could have your child do assignments orally, giving answers either directly to you or recording them for you to review later.

Sometimes it is faster for a student to focus on a couple of subjects and work exclusively on those for a time. For example, a high school student might work exclusively on math in the morning and English in the afternoon for a month. Students tend to move very quickly through courses with this narrow focus.

Remember that the lesson plans are a suggestion, not a command. Although students need to complete the Seton-graded assignments to receive a course grade, the other assignments can be modified and streamlined as necessary.

Can you give me some ideas to help me teach my son to write his book report?

The best way to help your son is to use the Book Report Worksheets which Seton provides as an online supplemental Resource for each elementary grade level. Some students struggle with "Where do I start?" They don't realize what is important, what should be included in their report. The worksheets encourage the student to think about the major ideas or the major characteristics of the main character in the book.

If your student is in Grade 4, for example, the "Writing a Book Report" worksheet is about 7 pages. On these sheets, the student writes the time the story takes place, where it takes place, who is the main character, and who are the other important characters. They are to list the main topics of the book, as explained on the worksheet.

Explanations and lines are provided for the student to write two main topics as well as a conclusion. The following pages provide an outline and lines for the student to write examples proving or showing the topics. This is followed

by pages which show how to write the introductory paragraph to include the three topics. The worksheets provide space for writing the paragraphs. The final pages provide instructions and lines for writing the concluding paragraph.

We will be providing supplemental videos for writing book reports, as well as paragraphs and other compositions.

What should I do to prepare my child for a test?

It depends on the student and the grade level. Most students from 7th grade up don't need much help at all. However, some students even in high school need some help with preparing for a test.

For younger students, look at the test yourself, be aware of what is expected for your student to know, and review those concepts. For instance, if the English test asks your child to identify the parts of speech, go back and review the relevant lessons.

Simply direct older students by telling them that you have reviewed the test, and warn them they must know how to divide fractions, or be able to identify the main characteristics of the hero. The point is that you are giving a general rather than a specific idea of the questions without actually giving the exact question. (Giving the student a general idea of what is on the test is not cheating; in fact, it is a commonly accepted practice in schools.)

Look over every test before you send it to Seton. We find students skip questions, or mix up questions with the wrong number for the answer. Sometimes words are carelessly left out, or a misspelled word has a different meaning.

Many students are now taking online tests, and the process seems so easy and so comfortable that it can lead to mistakes. Unfortunately, some students do not check their work before sending it to Seton, which can result in a needlessly low grade.

Students need to learn the process: First: study, study, study. Second, answer questions in the textbook in writing, not just in the head. The process of writing out the answer uses the eyes, the ears and the mouth (if they repeat it out loud), and the physical process of handwriting solidifies the answer in the brain.

My son seems to be struggling with his math, but I don't know why.

The most common problem with students, especially boys, is that they understand the concepts but they are careless in working out the problems. Because they think they know it, they don't take the time to be careful and accurate. Of course, sometimes

they think they understand it, but they don't fully understand the concept, so they make continuing mistakes in further lessons.

Our math counselors advise that students work all the practice problems and the chapter problems but as they do each problem, they should check the answer. Otherwise, they may pick up a wrong idea or process, and continue it for all the problems. Obviously, if he finds any problem has a wrong answer, he needs to go back and find out if he misunderstood a concept, or was he just careless. With the Saxon Solution Manuals in the upper grades, he can see the procedure explicitly. He then needs to redo the problem completely, from beginning to end, to make sure he understands each step.

The counselors say that this procedure does not overwhelm the student. If he finishes the whole exercise, and has five problems wrong, maybe each with a different "problem," the student becomes overwhelmed or disheartened. By working each problem and checking each problem, he can focus on, usually, one issue or concept.

The counselors say it is better to do one problem incorrectly and then correct it, rather than practice an incorrect procedure for fifteen or twenty problems, which then needs to be undone! One trick for a bright but careless young student is to provide a small piece of candy, an M & M for instance, for each correct problem! A reward for older students (in 7th through 11th) is to encourage them to finish with a good grade so they can go on to the next grade level immediately after finishing the book. This is a huge incentive for the bright, bored, but careless student.

Seton carries two CD series which provide tutoring lessons for the Saxon textbooks. For any student having problems, these are a terrific help for busy moms and dads. Check our online catalog for both the D.I.V.E. series at \$50 each and the SAXON Teacher interactive CD ROMS at \$70 each. The first series runs 10 to 20 minutes per lesson, the second runs 20 to 30 minutes.

Our counselors like to recommend the three Ps: Practice, Perseverance, and Prayer.

My daughter in 8th grade is doing very well, and has finished some of her courses. Could she start taking a 9th grade course for high school credit?

Yes, we do have some students who do that, as long as it is not too burdensome for the student, and as long as there is a good chance for a good grade. Remember that high school students want to aim for high grades because college scholarships and financial aid is often based on the Grade Point Average as one factor.

If your daughter is obtaining good scores in her grammar, start her with the high school Grammar course. Many students with good scores in the pre-Algebra take Algebra I early and finish in the summer. Some students start a foreign language. These students are able to start their 9th grade with one credit already earned. By the way, we have students who regularly take a course over the summer, adding to their course credits, and lessening the daily work during the year.

Home schooling means flexibility. However, before you make the decision, consider contacting one of our high school guidance counselors, such as Gene McGuirk, Bob Weisner, or Chris Smith.

“ Our counselors recommend the three Ps: Practice, Perseverance, and Prayer. ”

My husband supports the decision to home school, but doesn't really do anything to help. How can I convince my husband to help me with the home schooling?

Some husbands are happy to help, even anxious to help. They want to teach their favorite subject, history or math or science. They want to be involved with the home schooling. However, some husbands are working long hours, and have work problems on their minds, and simply cannot "engage" with the teaching. In these cases, you must think of other ways they can help.

You might have the children prepare an oral report to give to dad when he gets home; or, ask dad to quiz the children on what they learned that day. Taking the children on field trips is popular with many dads. Some dads might be helpful with building bookcases or a closet, maybe with the children learning with him. We encourage fathers to take a child to work, especially the junior high or high school students. Not only is a good relationship encouraged, but young people learn how much work Dad does to support the family. Students learn the value of their schooling as they see their father fill out reports using math skills or writing up reports using English, spelling, and vocabulary skills.

Most important, as you say the daily prayers with your children, always include prayers for your husband. The children need to recognize the sacrifices of their father as well as the well-being and dependency of the family on their father and his work.

Are you going to offer full courses online?

We have several lesson plans online now, but they are to be used in conjunction with the textbook.

Recently, we have put Biology online, our first full course, fully online. All the text is online. No book is used but students can print out the chapters if they wish to highlight important points for study purposes. We have added images and are constantly adding videos. The Review Questions and the chapter tests are online also. Earth Science will be added soon.

We do not see ourselves putting the entire curriculum online. Besides the fact that reading it usually easier with books than on screens, we believe that the interaction between child and parent is an important part of the educational process. We plan, in general, to use computer technology to assist the educational process but not as the main component of the process.

How can I find all the online video resources you have available?

We have more than 50 tutorial or supplemental videos available for enrolled students. For the full list, go to your My Seton page, click on the Resources tab, and then on Video Tutorials. Many are on various English courses, since most inquiries are about English courses. However, we intend to expand to other areas, such as history, science, and religion. (Right now, we have 100 audios on History, and numerous weekly audios on the high school English courses.)

The online supplemental video resources are meant to help students in many different ways. Videos are presented to help understand how to use the course manuals and all the features of the English manuals. The high school videos present certain points about particular assignments, especially those assignments for which we receive the most calls. We might have three videos for the first quarter of English 9 to explain certain concepts for which students have asked for help. For instance, a student in 12th grade could go on our website and see a presentation of most frequently-asked questions for the first week of the first quarter.

While most of our video presentations are by our in-house staff, we have been blessed to have English videos done by Dr. Lisa Marciano of the English department of Christendom College. Dr. Katie Moran has done a series of videos on recognizing certain learning styles and even learning problems. Ginny Seuffert has done some videos for helpful ideas for homeschooling. John Clark has done a video of homeschooling tips for Dads.

Thirteen Years of Seton Success

BY ELIZABETH FELSHEIM
CLASS OF 2013

“The UPS truck just dropped off our school books!” My sisters, Emily and Mary, my brother John, and I race to the door hoping to arrive first at the four brown boxes that hold our new curriculum. Mine is the easiest to find since it is the biggest and heaviest of them all. There is an advantage of being the oldest: I get all the new books! Boxes are sorted, scissors are found, and packing peanuts start to fly as the boxes are opened. Soon, fresh books emerge which captivate our attention. Thus, our family’s thirteenth year of Seton Homeschooling begins and we all eagerly anticipate the new year’s adventures.

As the Catholic Faith is the center of our lives, we appreciate Seton’s enriching Catholic curriculum. One of the reasons we chose Seton was that all the Seton books and lesson plans are filled with Catholicism. English exercises, math word problems, and history stories incorporate Catholic artwork and themes. This year, as I am taking Religion 12, I am reading through the Catechism. Personally, I have found this a beautiful way to discover more deeply the richness of my faith. Emily, a sophomore, is

taking Latin 1 and enjoys learning the official language of the Church. Mary’s new 8th grade Church History book includes stories from a Catholic perspective. In John’s 4th grade spelling book, there are Old Testament stories which incorporate his spelling words. Every subject relates to the Catholic Faith, from the examples used to the instructions given.

Seton’s academics challenge us to become better students. We have grown in discipline, have learned to accomplish goals, and possess self-motivation. Our writing skills are greatly enriched and I have come to love writing. I started two bi-monthly Catholic newsletters for girls, which I send to over 100 girls throughout the United States! The accountability from graders other than our mother has encouraged us to strive for A’s and feel confident in our work. Sometimes, people shake their heads at us and comment, “Seton! I hear that’s a difficult program,” but that has not stopped us. We have always finished and passed all our classes successfully and on time. Seton provides high academic standards, which shape our daily goals.



A “Senior Picture”- Elizabeth Felsheim, Age 17

After individual prayers, breakfast, and a generous dose of “Goodbyes” to our dad before he leaves for his job as an Information Technology Coordinator, Mom starts our school day at 8:00 AM. Lunch is at 11:00 AM followed by noon Mass. Weekday Mass, which we have attended daily for 12 years, gives us the necessary grace and strength to homeschool. Without these graces, we would struggle to make it through the week. After Mass and a few occasional errands, we resume our school from 1:30-5:00 PM. Then homework, choir practices, meetings, or Eucharistic Adoration fill the evening hours after dinner. It might seem like there is a lot of available “school time,” but some days don’t go according to our ideal plan!

Dad is the “principal” of our school and also serves as the substitute teacher. He has been a great help to me with anything from Geometry to Economics. Although my mom does most of the teaching, my dad has just as big a role. When he is not directly helping



If someone asked us to describe our family in two words, we would have to say “musical creativity.” Our family connects through the harmonic tones of music.



Bottom left: Our parents, Jack & Joyce Felsheim

Left: From left to right: Mary (13), Elizabeth (17), John (9), and Emily (15)

Above: This is the four of us doing what we love: music! Mary (13) is on the piano, John (9) on maracas, Elizabeth (17) on vocals and Emily (15) on the electric bass!

Below: Left to Right: Mary (13), Elizabeth (17), John (9), and Emily (15)

with assignments, he is brainstorming with us to get creative juices flowing, listening to an oral presentation of a book analysis, or just being our #1 fan and supporter. I have fond memories of sitting on our porch with him patiently explaining a difficult concept until that “light bulb moment” occurred. As we are hurriedly finishing our subjects he, being a man of many talents, assists with meal preparation after coming home from work. As the school load gets heavier and to help free my mom’s time, he fills in the gaps by helping to clean and complete household tasks.

We strive for a consistent schedule, but there are times when we benefit from the beautiful flexibility of homeschooling. I have been able to take on part-time jobs, such as babysitting, dog walking, and house cleaning. I’m able to work, earn money, and still get my homework done! Since we are available during the day, we are able to volunteer frequently at our Church. John loves

servicing at daily Mass, I am a substitute lector, and Emily and Mary wash and iron the altar linens. We also take days off on our birthdays, enjoy special breakfasts with our grandparents, and occasionally take fieldtrips. Not being tied down with a rigid schedule, we take advantage of all the golden opportunities.

Homeschooling has blessed us in so many ways. Studying at home allows us to avoid the stress and time of traveling to and from various schools, giving us the opportunity to spend more time together. We have a lot of family time, which has formed a strong bond between the six of us and we usually “move as a unit.”

If someone asked us to describe our family in two words, we would have to say “musical creativity.” Our family connects through the harmonic tones of music. Our two professionally trained musical parents encourage us and we feel that we have been blessed with their musical genes. This is quite obvious after walking into our “music room” which is the home of a grand piano, multiple instruments hanging on the wall, three guitars, five

violins, an electric bass, an electric keyboard, maracas, an autoharp, amps, microphones, picks, and piles of sheet music, as well as a large collection of musical CDs from all genres. During the day, you might find one of us “jamming” on a readily available instrument between classes, perfecting an original composition. My sisters and I have also found that school is a lot more fun when we sing in three-part harmony. Imagine your Catechism questions sung to the tune of “O Susanna!” It doesn’t matter if it is in the shower or the Cathedral Choir, our family loves to sing anywhere. A favorite family activity is family music night, with six instruments and voices blending together, illustrating our family’s joy and love for one another. The family friendly atmosphere of homeschooling allows us to explore and express our talents and join together in the activities that we love.

Looking back on where we started and where we are now, it is amazing to see how we have all grown in faith and love. I have many fond memories of doing school in my pajamas, in clubhouses, on car trips, at the dentist office, in bed, at the park, on my porch, in coffee shops, or at the library. I thank Seton for providing me with an excellent education. I thank my mom for choosing it and both of my parents for supporting me. I thank my sisters and brother for putting up with me and loving me. Most importantly, I thank God for the wonderful gift of life and faith! Graduation, here I come!



Catholic Homeschooling Conferences

2013 may well be the most important year in the history of Catholic homeschooling conferences due to a new national campaign focused on getting 10,000 people to attend conferences across the country. Before the season begins with the first few conferences in March, it seems fitting to try to answer the question, "Why does Seton care so much about conferences?"

How it Began

In the 1980's and early 90's, before the advent of the internet, Catholic homeschooling was rare and marginalized. Many parents assumed that it was actually illegal. Dr. Mary Kay Clark, along with several homeschooling parents and priests, traveled the country putting on small conferences, sponsored by Seton, where parents could learn about what Catholic homeschooling was and how it was done. The seeds that they planted have blossomed into the robust Catholic homeschooling communities we now see all over the country. The conferences were not merely responsible for the growth of Seton, but also for the growth of Catholic homeschooling as a whole.

At a time when information was scarce and misinformation rampant,

conferences were the means by which the fledging Catholic homeschooling movement was nourished and took wing. Even today, when homeschooling has become popular and information abounds online, conferences remain a vital component of the success of Catholic homeschooling. Both veteran homeschooling parents and those just discerning whether homeschooling is the right choice can find encouragement, information, and community.

The Heart of the Vendor Area

Seton may no longer host specifically "Seton" conferences, but Seton is still usually the largest vendor at any conference. When you approach the Seton tables, usually the first books you see belong to the Pre-K program. From there, the books for each grade are set out

in a large rectangle arrangement of tables with a check out table at one end, and an enrollment table at the other. All of the Seton Press books, and nearly every single book used in the Pre-K through 8th Grade curriculum are present as well as sample lesson plans.

At some conferences (those that are driving distance from Front Royal) have additional tables for Seton used books, School Spirit shirts, and a large variety of popular materials from the Seton Educational Media Catalog like Young Scientist Kits, Apologia Science, Bethlehem Books, Saxon Math, saint biographies, atlases, DVDs, Memoria Press Language series, and Melissa and Doug educational toys. The largest Seton presence each year is at the IHM National Conference where the Seton materials cover 45 tables.



Ginny Seuffert Speaks to Conference Attendees

Conferences feature a selection of excellent Catholic speakers to guide and inspire your homeschooling.



A Homeschooling Mom Hunts for Used Books

Some conferences feature a variety of Catholic used books at bargain prices.

10K Strong.org

STAND UP TO SUPPORT CATHOLIC HOMESCHOOLING



10K Strong Campaign

2013 is a special year for Catholic homeschooling conferences. For the first time in history, there will be a national campaign to show support for Catholic homeschooling by having 10,000 people attend conferences during the Year of Faith. Seton is supporting this campaign along with many other Catholic homeschooling organizations.

If you haven't attended a conference recently, this is the year to go. If you are a regular attendee, this is the year to bring your sister, your mother, and your three closest friends. Reaching 10,000 is a monumental goal and literally every person counts.

With your help, parents across the country will be encouraged to give the greatest possible gift to their children... the Catholic Faith!

You can track the progress of the 10K Strong Campaign by visiting the www.10KStrong.org website.

For a list of upcoming conferences, see page 11 of the magazine.

For the most up-to-date and extensive listing of Seton conferences visit our conference website at www.setonhome.org/conferences

Save When You Enroll

Enrolling their children with Seton has become a very important part of conferences for many families. Many years ago, Seton started to offer a \$30 per child discount (Grades 1-12) at every conference. It began as a way to off-set each conference's admission fee—to make it easier for Seton families to attend the conferences. However, even when conferences offer free admission, Seton has been happy to keep this discount available as yet another way to encourage families to attend conferences and be strengthened and encouraged in their mission to teach their children and pass on the Catholic Faith.



Families Meet with Admissions Counselors

Conferences provide an opportunity to enroll with Seton or get your homeschooling questions answered.

Virtual Views

What advice would you give to other homeschooling families?*continued from page 4*

Relax and pray. It will all get done. -Tracey S.

Don't compare your home school or your kids' achievements to others!
-Jamie B.

Enjoy being with your children everyday! Don't stress if you feel the need to change your schedule for one reason or another. God always provides!
-Deana B.

You work the curriculum; don't let the curriculum work you.
-Samantha P.

Pray together, read together, practice the virtues together and give God room in your schedules to do the rest.
-Jessica S.

Never give up. This is a journey you are going through with your child and it is the best gift you could ever give to your child. -Karen L.

Homeschooling takes a lot of work, but the rewards are great! If you put God first....the rest will fall into place! Do it!
-Michelle A.

Pray a Rosary together every day as a family...you'll need the extra graces! -Linda W.

Independent Work

Many home schooling teachers wonder how much parental help with schoolwork is too much. Some would like to sit with each individual student, but simply do not have the time. A number of us have children who seem not to do anything on their own, while other students seem to fly through assignments with little teacher input. While we all know about -- and love -- the individual attention that home education affords, we wonder just how much is too much, or too little. Each home schooling parent must make up his or her own mind, but here are a few ideas to consider for some basic subjects in the early elementary grades.

Handwriting

Handwriting is a subject that virtually all children can tackle on their own. If you find your Pre-K, K, or 1st grade student really struggles with small motor coordination, take heart. My experience is that practice does indeed make perfect, or pretty perfect. Handwriting may be the ideal subject for young children to start the school day, leaving Mom a bit of time to finish her morning chores.

Spelling

Many children are able to tackle the daily exercises in their spelling worktexts by themselves. It's usually a good idea to read through the word list and ensure that the student knows the words. I find it helps to sit through the first lesson or two with the child to make sure he or she understands what is expected, but then most children can handle the work alone. If you find that is not the case, consider what you can do to help the process along. For example, some younger children struggle with ABC order. Have the child make a bookmark with the ABC's written on it that he can use it as an aid until he masters the process.

Vocabulary

Seton introduces vocabulary as a formal subject in the 3rd grade, and many students find this to be relatively easy and lots of fun. The worktexts again follow the same pattern in each lesson, so once students grasp the basic idea, and mom makes sure they can read the words, they will often work independently.

Phonics

Phonics is an essential building block when children are still learning the basics of reading. During the early stages, Mom is wise to make sure that the student pronounces the sound correctly, and can recognize it at the beginning, middle or

end of a word as required in the lesson. In the later grades, phonics becomes more about word study incorporating advanced sounds, spelling, vocabulary, and word parts. Many children can finish their daily phonics lessons on their own with just a bit of occasional direction.



BY GINNY SEUFFERT

Mathematics

Some kids just get math. I remember when my daughter Laura first learned addition requiring "carrying." I explained that with $28 + 36$, we add $8 + 6$ and get 14, so we put the 4 in the one's column and "carry" the 1 ten to the ten's column. Then we add 2 tens + 3 tens + the 1 ten we carried to get 6 tens, so our answer is 64.

She looked at me with a puzzled expression. "Why can't I just say that $20 + 30 = 50$ and $8 + 6 = 14$, so $50 + 14$ is 64?" Like I say, some kids just get math. Others need more help, but years of teaching math have convinced me that repetition and daily review will lead to success in this subject.

When the student is still using workbooks, it is a good idea to make sure that he or she understands the concept being practiced each day. Do the first several problems together. If she seems to know what to do, assign the rest of the page. If she still seems shaky, ask her to finish a section on her own, maybe a row, and then bring it to you. This will help you to determine if she still needs you.

Once the children start the Saxon books, it is a good idea to review the beginning of each lesson where the new concept is introduced. Do the practice problems together. The daily "problem set" is intended to be completed independently. Do not worry if a student does not master a particular concept right away. The Saxon method calls for concepts to be practiced over weeks, even months, giving the child plenty of time to gain mastery.

It is a good idea to correct daily some or all of the math assignments to make sure that the independent work demonstrates proper understanding of the concepts. There are a couple of ways to do this. If you trust your student's intentions, let him check his own work with the answer key. If you have a few children around the same age, you can allow them to check each other's work with the answer keys. My children loved it when I allowed them to check their work using a calculator. They thought it was fun, but they were learning a necessary skill at the same time.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Seton Home Study School

2013 CONFERENCES

TN, Nashville—March 8, 2013 (Fri.) IHM Tennessee Homeschool & Parent Conference

Nashville Expo Center – Wilson Hall
625 Smith Avenue, Nashville, TN 37203
2 pm – 8 pm
Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

FL, Jacksonville—March 15, 2013 (Fri.) IHM Jacksonville Homeschool & Parent Conference

Embassy Suites Jacksonville-Baymeadows
9300 Baymeadows Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32256
2 pm – 8 pm, Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

LA, Covington—March 23, 2013 (Sat.) Roman Catholic Homeschool Association of Louisiana “Catholic Homeschooling: A Way of Life”

St. Peter’s Catholic Church (St. Mary’s Hall)
125 E. 19th Avenue, Covington, LA 70433
After 8:30 am Mass – 5 pm
Info: Beth at 985-796-1274 or 504-220-4626
beth@montelepre.com or rchalinfo@rchal.org
www.rchal.org

MO, St. Louis—April 5-6, 2013 (Fri.-Sat.) 2013 St. Louis Catholic Homeschool Conference

Cardinal Rigali Center
20 Archbishop May Drive, St. Louis, MO 63119
Fri.: 6 pm – 9 pm (Exhibits only)
Sat.: After 8 am Mass – 4:30 pm
Info: Cassie at 636-398-4001 or
www.stlouiscatholichomeschool.com

GA, Atlanta—April 12-13, 2013 (Fri.-Sat.) IHM Georgia Homeschool & Parent Conference

Gwinnett Center
6400 Sugarloaf Parkway, Duluth, GA 30097
Fri.: 2 pm – 8 pm, Sat.: 9:30 am – 3:30 pm
Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

TX, Houston—April 19-20, 2013 (Fri.-Sat.) IHM Houston Homeschool & Parent Conference

University of St. Thomas – Jerabeck Athletic Center
3800 Montrose Blvd, Houston, TX 77006
Hours: Fri.: 4pm - 9pm, Sat.: 9am - 4pm
Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

NJ, Berlin—April 13, 2013 (Sat.) 14th Annual CHAPLET Catholic Homeschool Conference

Mater Ecclesiae Roman Catholic Church
261 Cross Keys Road, Berlin, NJ 08009 (actually in Pine Hill w/Berlin mailing address)
9 am – 5 pm
Info: Tony Schiavo
www.chaplet.org or conference@chaplet.org

PA, Monroeville—April 26, 2013 (Fri.)
IHM Pittsburgh Homeschool & Parent Conference
DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh–Monroeville Convention Center
101 Mall Boulevard, Monroeville, PA 15146
12 pm – 8 pm
Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

NY, Buffalo—May 3, 2013 (Fri.)
IHM Buffalo Homeschool & Parent Conference
Buffalo Niagara Convention Center
153 Franklin Street, Buffalo, NY 14202
2 pm – 8 pm
Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

IN, Indianapolis—May 4, 2013 (Sat.) 2013 Quo Vadis Catholic Homeschool Conference

Holy Rosary Parish
520 Stevens Street
Indianapolis, IN 46203
Sat.: 8:30 am – 5:30 pm
Info: 317-786-3629
hfheindy@yahoo.com or
www.hfheindy.org

LA, Lafayette—May 10, 2013 (Fri.) IHM Lafayette Homeschool & Parent Conference

Cajundome and Convention Center
444 Cajundome Boulevard
Lafayette, LA 70506
2 pm – 8 pm
Info: 540-636-1946
www.ihmconference.org

INDEPENDENT WORK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Review time

Repetition and review have gotten a bum rap from the educational establishment in recent years, which have nicknamed them “drill and kill.”

I could not disagree more! After more than two decades of teaching my own children, and now helping my grandchildren with their schoolwork, I am convinced that repetition and review are essential keys to lifetime learning. By reviewing spelling or vocabulary words, and math facts, children gain mastery over them, and oral review actually makes it fun.

You can purchase math flash cards, and make your own from index cards for spelling, phonics, and vocabulary. The children may carry homemade study cards in their pockets so you can catch a review opportunity when it presents itself:

- when Mom is doing the dishes or folding laundry;
- during car rides to various activities;
- having a daily review session at the end of the school day or before bed.

Keep this review a bit light-hearted. When a child reviews spelling for example, have him study the cards and then give them to you. When the child spells a word correctly, hang on to the card. If he misspells it, hand the card back to him. Now instead of reviewing twenty words, perhaps he needs to take a second look at only eight. Tomorrow, he may need to look at only three. By test time, on Friday, he will feel confident because he knows he can spell the words.

Summary

- Make sure your children understand an assignment before assigning it as independent work.
- Encourage your children to accept responsibility for their assignments, as they are capable.
- Subjects that follow a similar pattern every week are good choices for independent work.
- Review and drill content for children to gain mastery.



College Prep

SERVICE ACADEMIES

BOB WIESNER

The United States Military Academies offer an outstanding education for applicants interested in a military career. Students accepted to the Academies pay no tuition and minimal fees in exchange for a four-year commitment to the armed forces. Many Seton students have attended the Academies, with great success. One of our graduates, Jonathan Bate, graduated first in his class at West Point in 2006! Gaining the appointment to an Academy does require a bit of extra work, however.

Planning to attend an Academy should start with the Freshman year, or, preferably, even in Eighth Grade. Seton has taken most of the guesswork from the process. With input from Academy staffs, a course outline has been designed which will satisfy the academic requirements. A Blue and Gold Officer is also available for advice concerning the non-academic aspects of the process. This officer can provide scheduling tips for completing each step of the process as well as guidance for contacting your Representative or Senator to apply for the appointment.

A vitally important part of the preparation will consist of a rigorous physical education program. Any applicant to the Academies is expected to be in top physical condition. Usually it is best if the student has a formal supervised program, such as involvement in organized sports, a home school basketball team, for example. Martial Arts or Fencing would certainly be great choices as well.

Seton is proud of our students who have excelled at the Academies and we look forward to many years of helping outstanding students to join the United States Armed Forces Officer Corps!

Good is Great

Some homeschooling parents believe that unless they can do a great job, then homeschooling is not for them. That must be a tremendous cross for these Moms and Dads to carry. Thankfully, it is one that I do not shoulder. If you are burdened by this “great-or-nothing” form of what I call academic scrupulosity, let me suggest something to you: stop trying to do a great job; do a good job instead.

Maybe I can explain the difference.

Alexis de Tocqueville famously wrote: “America is great because she is good. When she ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.” Written over a century ago, these words have proven prophetic. As a culture, in our desire to become great, we somehow forgot to be good. And this may never be so evident as in our educational system.

Never in history has there been a greater sum of human knowledge, but I’m struggling to decipher how that has made us good. For that matter, in the light of history, which was the society in which there was an overall positive correlation between knowledge and goodness? Even in ecclesiastical history, although the Catholic Church can certainly boast that it had more than Her fair share of great intellectuals, it is also true that some of the greatest minds in the Christian world were not faithful Catholics, but heretics.

As this “great education” argument has gained momentum, some fathers say things like: “I know my wife wants to homeschool, but my daughter needs to go to a real school. I want her to get a great education.” Well, she might get one, but she might lose her Faith in the process. Case in point: recent polling showed that American women are 75% pro-life. Ever seen that statistic?

Oops. Let me clarify that. Non-college educated American women are 75% pro-life. College educated American women poll are 25% pro-life. That is not meant to be an indictment of American women—it’s an indictment of an educational system in which the good is viewed as separable from—or even opposed to—the great.

When I was in college about twenty-five years ago, we learned how to argue against “situation ethics.” When I was a teenager, that was a term of common parlance. Why don’t you hear it anymore? Because situation ethics implies that, in some situations, you actually use ethics. As a society, our feet are already dry from crossing that philosophical Rubicon; we often cannot think of a situation in which to use ethics.

Though intended as a macro-political statement, de Tocqueville struck upon a truth that seems even truer in micro: that good is great. If that’s true for a nation, it’s even more true for a family. The writings

of St. Therese are a hallmark to the idea that good trumps great. She writes: “You know well enough that Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them.” St. Therese is gently telling us: “there is no greatness without goodness.” I suspect she is also alluding to something else, namely, that the desire to be great may easily be a vice, but the desire to be good is a virtue.

Maybe it’s just sour grapes, but I don’t think I want to be great even if it were in my power.

Here’s why.

I looked up the definitions of “great” and “good” on dictionary.com. Here are the first three definitions of “great”:

- 1) “Unusually or comparatively large in size or dimensions.” I’m not even sure I want to be that.
- 2) “Large in number; numerous.” I know I’m not that.
- 3) “Unusual or considerable in degree, power, intensity, etc.: great pain.” I’ve had that a few times, but I took aspirin and it went away.

Then I looked up the definition of “good.” The first entry reads: “Morally excellent; virtuous; righteous; pious: a good man.”

That, I want.

Give me the choice between good and great, and I’ll take good.

I’m not eschewing education. What I am saying is that our concept of education needs to be redefined, or perhaps rediscovered. When the Church teaches that one of the primary purposes of marriage is the education of offspring, I do not believe that She is referring in any particular way to calculus, or literature, or geography. I think that the Church is referring to teaching our children about God, the Source of all Good. I think that She was referring less to the teaching of the “3 R’s” of reading, writing, and ‘rithmetic, and more to the teaching about the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

Good and great are not mutually exclusive, but if the desire for greatness pulls you away from the good, you will acquire neither.

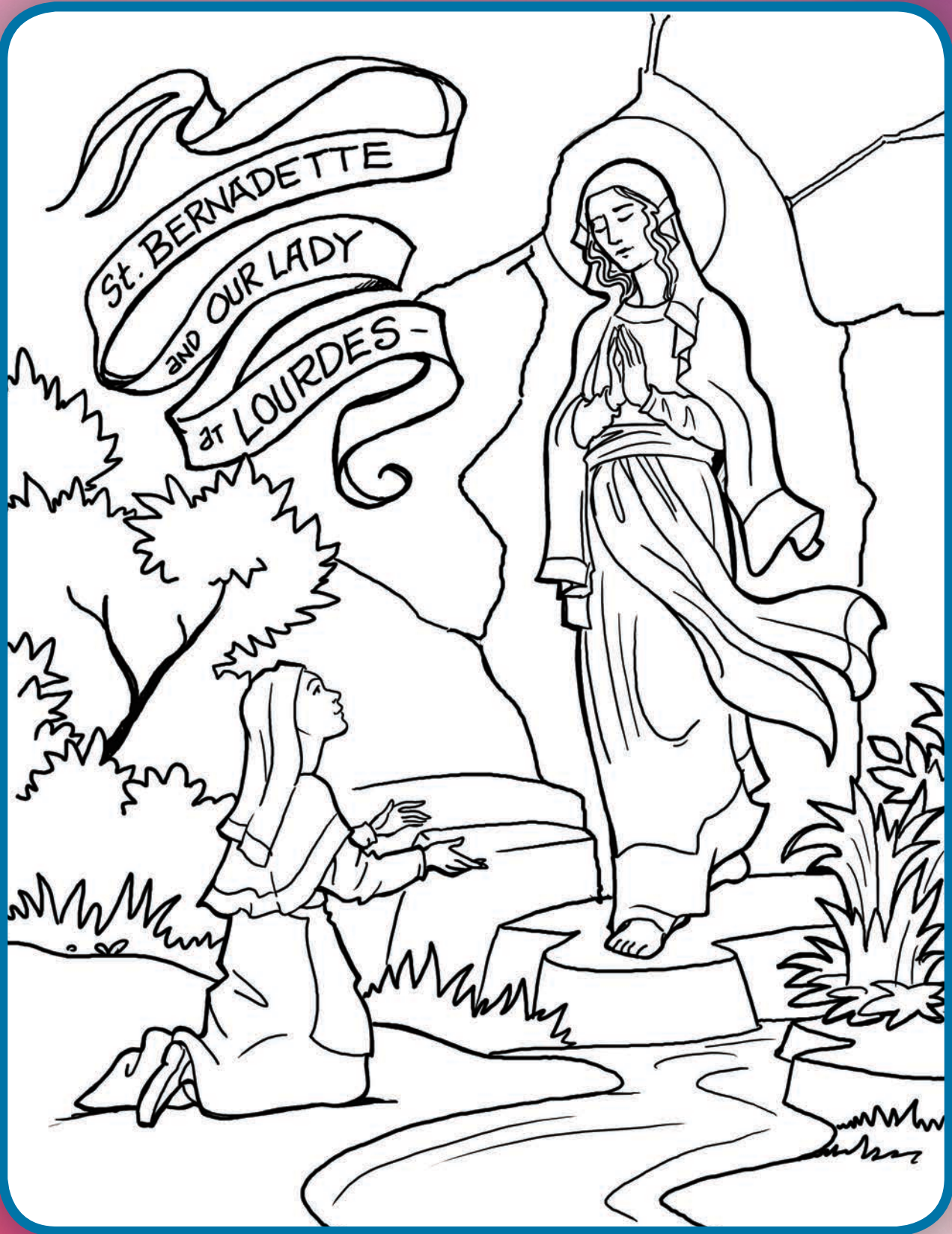
To the parents who live in fear of doing anything less than a great job homeschooling, remember this: my “best” is not the same as yours. You may be much better at teaching your children, and organizing your house, and keeping on a schedule, than I am. But among Catholic homeschooling families, it is not the differences that unite us—it is the similarity.

It is the goodness.

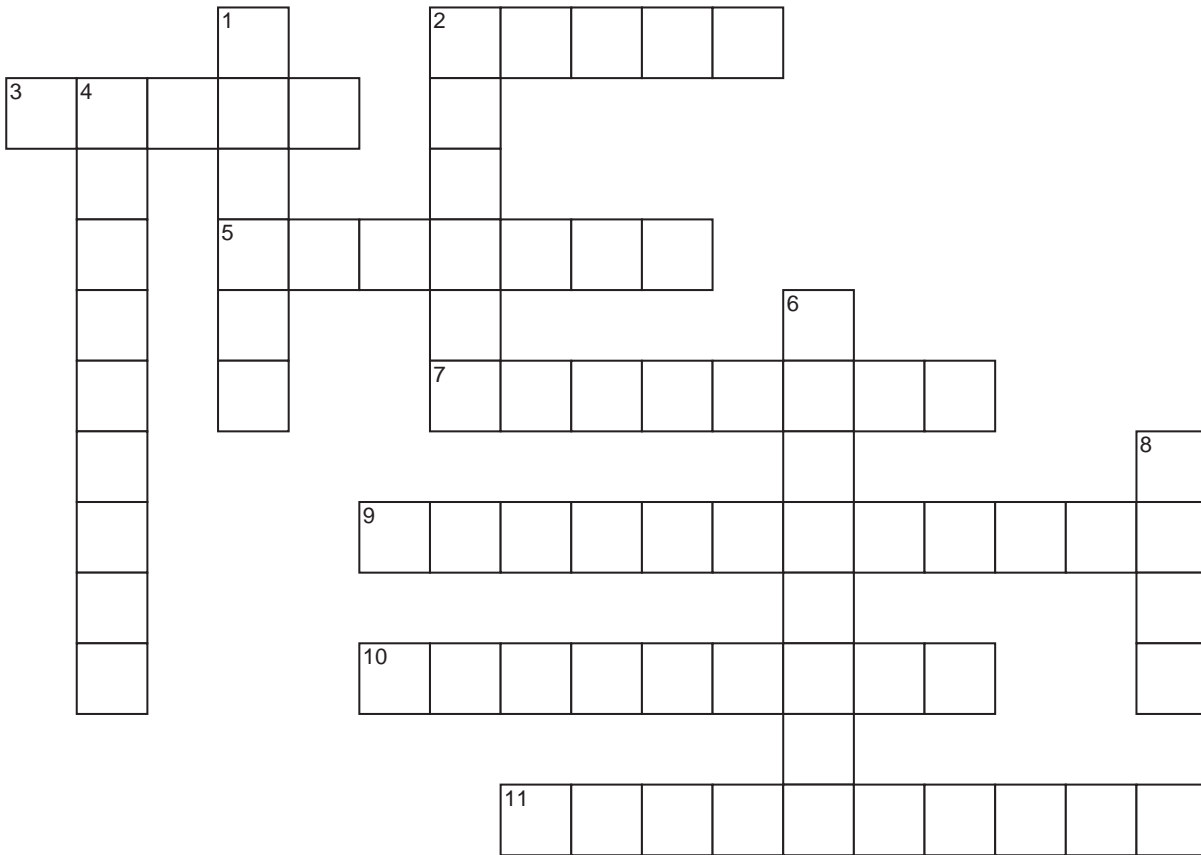


BY JOHN CLARK

Kid's Corner



The Presentation



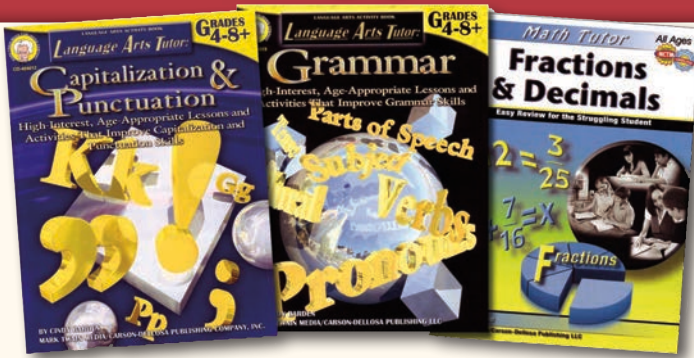
ACROSS

- 2** Mary was told that this would pierce her soul.
- 3** The law of ___ commanded that every firstborn male be presented to the Lord.
- 5** Mary and Joseph offered two young ___ as a sacrifice.
- 7** After they left the Temple, Mary and Joseph took Jesus back home to this town.
- 9** The fourth joyful mystery of the Rosary
- 10** city where the Temple was located
- 11** Simeon was righteous and the _____ was upon him.

DOWN

- 1** place where Mary and Joseph took Jesus to present Him to the Lord
- 2** God revealed to this man that he would not die until he had seen the Christ.
- 4** this virtue prompted Mary and Joseph to present Jesus in the Temple.
- 6** pagans, non-Jews; Simeon prophesied that Jesus would be a light for them.
- 8** Prophetess who stayed in the Temple day and night and witnessed Mary and Joseph presenting Jesus in the Temple

Supplemental Resources



Supplemental Workbooks for extra help

Capitalization & Punctuation. Boost the success of students who struggle with grammar in their writing or just need to tune up their skills! **M-EN06-13 \$8.95**

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We offer two multimedia supplements to the Saxon Mathematics program in CD-ROM format - *D.I.V.E. Into Math* and *Saxon Teacher*.

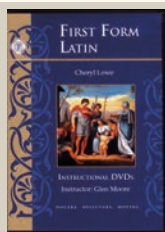
With these CDs, students can:

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Perfect as an instructional tool, or as a useful review, these programs are very popular with home schooling families who use the Saxon math series.

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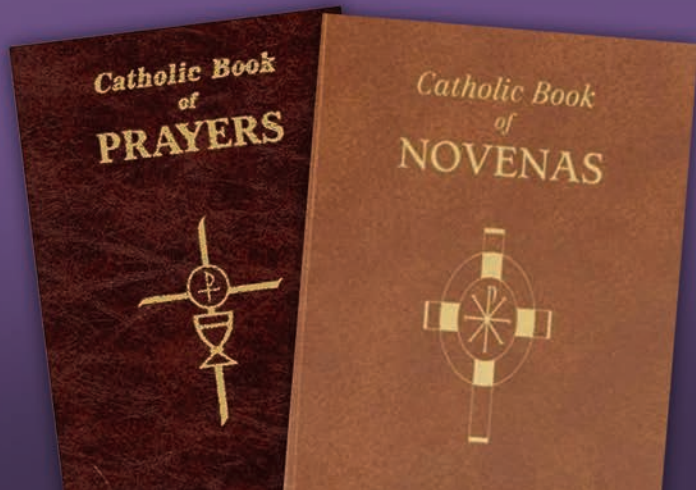
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Prepare for a fruitful Lenten Season

With Lent beginning very early this year, it is a good time to begin preparing for Lenten devotions. The best preparation for Easter is a devout Lent.

Visit setonbooks.com for our selection of Lenten books.

PAPAL WISDOM



Parents are the first and most important educators of their children, and they also possess a fundamental competence in this area: they are educators because they are parents. They share their educational mission with other individuals or institutions, such as the Church and the state. But the mission of education must always be carried out in accordance with a proper application of the principle of subsidiarity. This implies the legitimacy and indeed the need of giving assistance to the parents, but finds its intrinsic and absolute limit in their [parents'] prevailing right and their actual capacities. The principle of subsidiarity is thus at the service of parental love, meeting the good of the family unit...

Certainly one area in which the family has an irreplaceable role is that of religious education, which enables the family to grow as a "domestic church". Religious education and the catechesis of children make the family a true subject of evangelization and the apostolate within the Church. We are speaking of a right intrinsically linked to the principle of religious liberty. Families, and more specifically parents, are free to choose for their children a particular kind of religious and moral education consonant with their own convictions. Even when they entrust these responsibilities to ecclesiastical institutions or to schools administered by religious personnel, their educational presence ought to continue to be constant and active.

Pope John Paul II, Letter to Families, 1994

www.setonhome.org

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