

Seton MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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Letter from the Editor

Is anyone else in full planning mode? I love planning for my school year and I devote most of August to doing so. The lesson plans are all crisp and new and the planner books are neatly filling in, color coded and full of promise. The coffee rings and mangled pages have yet to appear and I can convince myself, still, that this year we will be neat and organized. Toward that end I've shared a little practical advice regarding how to make the workload a little more efficient, and maybe a little more fun as well, when teaching several children. Some time-saving tricks are always appreciated aren't they? We'd love to hear yours on the Seton Facebook page.

In this issue we introduce you (and me) to St. Alphonsus Liguori who is a really outstanding example for a homeschooling family. I was unaware of what a perfect prayer intercessor for homeschooling families this great saint is and we will be adding him to our personal litany as we begin each day.

When planning your year, you may want to consider dual enrollment for your upper classman. Nick Marmalejo continues to share the process by which Seton students can earn college credits whilst completing their high school studies. This fits in with Dr. Mary Kay Clark's charge for us to fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.

My favorite article in this month's magazine was written by John Clark, author and National Catholic Register writer. It gives just the right kind of encouragement so many of us are looking for as we gaze down the barrel of another long school year. Mr. Clark writes very eloquently of All that Matters.

All this and much more awaits you in this issue and it was such a joy to bring it to you. Now as I pick up my colored pens and pretty new planners I'll be praying for us all that we begin our year safe in the knowledge that God blesses our efforts to bring His children closer to Him, to provide them with the best education possible rooted in His Word and the faithful traditions of His one true Church.

God bless you.

Mary Ellen Barrett

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St. Alphonsus Liguori

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

August 1st is the feast day of St. Alphonsus Liguori. St. Alphonsus has a special place in my heart and in my daily prayers. When I was about 12, I accompanied my mother on a trip to Rome. While we prayed to all the saints, whose statues we saw and whose churches were named after them, a special saint was and has continued to be St. Alphonsus Liguori.

I was given a relic of St. Alphonsus Liguori and have continued to wear it every day and have continued to pray daily to this holy saint, who has helped me in so many ways that I cannot begin to know.

Alphonsus was born of a noble Italian family, whose parents were serious about practicing their faith with daily Mass and prayers. When his father went on spiritual retreats, he took Alphonsus with him. Alphonsus was the oldest of seven children and helped his brothers and sisters in the prayers and practices of the Catholic Faith.

The parents of Alphonsus hired tutors to teach their children at home. It is recorded that the parents, especially their father, was daily involved and present during the children's home schooling.

The close attention his father gave to the proper education of Alphonsus resulted in his learning quickly and developing memory and thinking skills well beyond his age. He advanced so quickly that he graduated from high school before his teen years. Amazingly, he studied university courses at fourteen and, at 16, earned a law degree.

Alphonsus loved his studies and dedicated almost full time to them. It is believed, as a teenager, he was more than a little proud of his academic achievements and aware of the local attorneys, who expressed amazement at his insightful perceptions. Prominent citizens noted his successful record in the law courts, where for eight years, he never lost one of his court cases. He became popular among the

wealthy, educated, and prominent citizens and found time to attend the social affairs of the leaders of the community.

Though he lived a comfortable upper-class life, he was a faithful practicing Catholic. Then, suddenly, he lost a court case. He was disturbed and upset this could have happened to him. He had such a high opinion of himself that he could not accept losing a court case.

His Turning Point

In his daily prayers at Mass, he reflected on his life, especially his spiritual life. He came to realize what he had become, a lawyer filled with pride because of his gifts of intellect. He turned to God, who helped him see himself as proud of his abilities but not giving proper recognition to God for his intellectual gifts, nor using them for the Church.

Alphonsus came to realize his focus on himself and his personal success was not pleasing to God. He came to realize, with the help of the Holy Spirit, he needed to change his life. He talked to his parents, especially to his father, to help him. He gave up his successful law practice to become a priest.

Alphonsus Liguori studied for the priesthood and became a priest and eventually a bishop. He used his unique intellectual talents not only to draw closer to Jesus, but to write about the lives of Jesus and Mary to help others learn about the Faith. His writings are inspired, as can be recognized in his spiritual meditations. His most well-read book is a spiritual classic: *The Glories of Mary*.

August is a good month to reflect on our home schooling, to be re-inspired by favorite saints, asking them in prayer to help our children learn their lessons, especially their religion lessons. St. Alphonsus should remind us parents, and we need to remind our children, that our ultimate goal is not



learning just facts but how to live our lives as Catholics. It is not enough to memorize the catechism, as St. Alphonsus teaches us. We must live the Catholic life of prayer, attending daily Mass if possible, receiving the sacraments, and saying the Rosary, a favorite practice of St. Alphonsus.

The following is a prayer by St. Alphonsus: Eternal Father, your Son has promised that whatever we ask in His Name will be given to us. In His Name I pray, give me a burning faith, a joyful hope, a holy love for Jesus Christ. Give me the grace of perseverance in doing Your Will in all things. Do with me what You will. I repent of having offended You. Grant, O Lord, that I may love you always and never let me be separated from You. O my God and my All, make me a saint. Amen.



Dr. Mary Kay Clark has been the Director of Seton Home Study School for more than 30 years. She writes columns for the *Seton Magazine* and is the author of *Catholic Homeschooling: A Handbook for Parents*.

your Questions ANSWERED

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

My friend is not home schooling with Seton, but can she still order your standardized tests?

Seton Testing offers tests to all families, not just those enrolled with Seton. We offer a variety of tests so your friend should research what might be the best test for her student. She can visit the Seton Testing website at www.setontesting.com/test-comparison-charts/ and view the test comparison chart where she can receive information or order the CAT, TerraNova 2, and Iowa tests or call one of our Testing Consultants at 800-542-1066. The Stanford 10 is available online for students in grades 3-12.

Which test should I take in high school if I intend to go to a college?

Most colleges accept the SAT test and the ACT test. If you have a specific college in mind, you could email or phone their admissions department and ask if they have a preference of one test over the other. If the college doesn't care, then the best way for you to decide which to choose is take an SAT and ACT practice test online. If you do better on one than the other, or just prefer the format of one over the other, then choose the one with which you are most comfortable.

Many Christian and Catholic colleges are now accepting a new college-entrance test called the Classic Learning Test as an alternative to the ACT and SAT. Most of Seton's college partners accept this test. It can be found at www.cltextam.com.

What services do Seton counselors provide? Can they do daily tutoring?

While we want to answer questions from students and parents, daily tutoring is beyond the scope of what counselors can provide. Counselors can provide general help for students who are struggling. Counselors can explain difficult concepts, or explain why a student missed a question on a test, or talk to parents about the best way to teach a subject. While there is no firm time limit to how much help counselors can give, when it is clear to a counselor that a student needs extensive help, the counselor will suggest that the student should seek more individualized instruction.

Seton has set our prices as low as possible since we know that most homeschooling families have a single income. If we were to provide extensive tutoring for students, we would need to substantially increase the cost to enroll.

Besides counseling, Seton provides many helps for students. For example, courses often

have additional materials, such as online audio or video lessons. For Saxon math courses, there are CD-ROMs available which go over every lesson in the books. These interactive video supplements are like having a math tutor present during each lesson found in the Saxon text. For other courses, we often have supplemental workbooks which can be purchased through Seton Educational Media (www.setonbooks.com).

When a tutor is needed, we suggest first seeing if a family member or friend might fill the need. If not, perhaps there is a retired teacher or college student at your parish who could help. If those resources are not available, then there are many tutoring sites online, such as tutor.com. These sites usually allow families to buy as little as an hour of tutoring at a time, at a reasonable price.

My friend wants to enroll, but she wants to grade her child's tests. Can Seton provide answers for the tests?

Seton provides answers for the daily work, parent-graded quizzes, and some other assignments. However, Seton does not provide answers for quarterly tests, book reports, and some compositions which need to be submitted to the school for grading. The Seton report card reflects the average grades from the parents and Seton.

When we send grades or high school transcripts to other institutions, the receiving schools must feel confident in the integrity of the grades. If we were to give out all the answers to the Seton-graded materials, then it could severely reduce that confidence in transcripts from Seton.

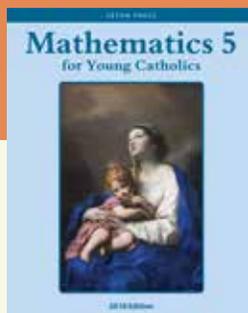
However, we understand that some families want to do their own grading and record-keeping so as to have more control over their children's education. We firmly believe that parents are the primary educators of their children, so we have no problem with parents making that decision.



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In such a case, parents could still receive all the other services which Seton offers; plus, we will grade any normally Seton-graded item which such a parent sends to us. But, Seton would not be able to send out grades or transcripts for families who do their own grading; parents would need to do that themselves.

Has Seton produced a Seton Math text-workbook for Grade 5 or 6?

Seton's 5th grade math text-workbook is now available. A Seton 6th grade math text-workbook is in development. Keep this project in your prayers.

For 7th grade, while we will not produce a text-workbook for this grade, we are developing a workbook with practice math problems, specifically for the 7th grade Saxon book, lesson by lesson.

Sometimes I get discouraged and pray for a better attitude for myself. Do you have any other ideas?

Prayer is essential for success in everything we do. I would encourage you to have your children pray along with you, not only at certain times of the day, morning and noon and evening, but also at those difficult moments as they occur. Those moments of discouragement are a great opportunity for

grace. Your children, too, need to learn to pray at difficult times.

When children seem frustrated with studying their lessons, writing a book report, or taking a test, teach them to pray to his or her guardian angel. Alternatively, teach them to pray to a favorite saint, the saint of the day, or the special saint after whom your child was named. God works miracles, and we can see them every day in the words and actions of our children.

You might also look at all you've actually accomplished, because you may find it's more than you think. It's easy to get bogged down every day in what you have or have not done. But education is about a lifetime, not just whether you finished everything you planned on a certain afternoon. We hear from parents who say they wish they could get more done; and we hear from parents who tell us their students scored very high on the SAT or just graduated from college *summa cum laude*. These are sometimes the same parents. What you are doing now may well lead to a rich harvest in the future, even if you feel you aren't accomplishing as much as you would like.

Do you have any materials for me to help my child with dyslexia?

Our Special Services Department offers two highly effective programs that teach literacy skills to children with dyslexia. The Stevenson Language Program uses multisensory techniques and visual mnemonics to help children better retain the skills they are learning. With this program, parents would teach their children directly.

The other program we offer is the Dyslexia Training Program. This is a video program which Seton was given permission to reproduce for our students. There are 336 DVD lessons, though historically, many students have found that completing the first 150 lessons was all that was necessary for them. For more information about either program, please contact the Special Services Department at ssdept@setonhome.org or 540-622-5576. We also have several online presentations on Learning Styles, which you can access via your My Seton page.



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The Seton College Partner Program is a way to encourage students to continue their Catholic education by attending solidly Catholic Colleges after high school.



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Booked For The Season: The Seton Summer Reading Club

BY JEFF MINICK



When most of us imagine the diversions of summer, we dream of days at the beach, the Fourth of July, cool morning breezes, fireflies in the twilight, badminton, canoeing, and other outdoor sports, lazy afternoons, icy beverages, cookouts, and all of the season's other delights.

This year, Seton Home Study School has once again added its own gem to summer's treasure box of bliss: a reading club.

Many schools nowadays, especially those at the secondary level, encourage—or sometimes, compel—their students to read books while on summer vacation. Some high schools expect all students of a certain grade to read one specific book. Meanwhile, others require their students to choose titles from a restrictive reading list, giving them limited choices in their book selection.

Sounds a trifle grim, yes?

Welcome, instead, to the Seton Summer Reading Club.

Like these other schools, Seton recognizes that reading books over the summer benefits students. Seton's counselors and teachers understand the importance of reading for personal and academic growth, an understanding borne from the care with which Seton selects the books found in its curricula and its catalog. Everyone at Seton in whatever capacity affirms the value of literature and reading for success both in academics and in

The Seton Summer Reading Club

Here's how it works

- 1** First, go online to setonbooks.com/summerreading.
- 2** At the website, you'll find the Summer Book Club guidelines as well as suggested book lists for ages ranging from pre-kindergarten through high school.
- 3** Want to read a book not found on the list? The Summer Reading Club gives you the freedom to select your own work of literature. You then read six books.
- 4** After reading each book, you write a short report about the book or deliver an oral summary to a parent.
- 5** When you finish the six books and your reports, you send Seton your list of the books, and you'll receive a Certificate of Achievement you can add to your portfolio. *(Parents have the choice, of course, of offering their young readers additional incentives. Mr. Hibl suggested an ice cream treat for each book read).*

life, and believes that reading develops the mind, expands our horizons, and makes us more fully human.

Through its sponsorship of the Summer Reading Club, however, Seton also trumpets another reason for opening a book.

Sheer enjoyment.

Chip Hibl, Director of Seton Educational Media, originated the idea of the summer reading club. “We wanted to make people aware of the great collection of children’s literature we have at Seton,” Mr. Hibl said. People quickly did become aware, as seen from the summer of 2016, the year Mr. Hibl and others launched the reading club, when over five hundred families jumped on board and participated in the program.

Mr. Hibl also pointed out that while Seton provides the framework of the club and incentives for reading, it is the parents who help their students select the books and guide the reading. The Seton Summer Reading Club has no compulsory list of books, no favorite work selected by a teacher or an administrator and delivered to students in a “one size fits all” format. The Seton counselors do encourage students to read edifying books—hence, the suggestions in the school catalog—but they also want young people to unlock a book, hop in, and enjoy the ride.

The best part of the Summer Reading Club, however, is not the certificate but the books themselves. Members of the Seton staff read and review dozens of books, welcoming some into the Seton catalog, as well as rejecting others. Catholic families, including some of the children, also help hone these lists, exploring the books and offering Seton their thoughts.

The books included in the Seton catalog reflect this careful culling of titles and authors. The younger set, for example, will enjoy *Clare’s Costly Cookie*, the story of a nine-year-old girl who journeys into the heart of Jesus, abandoning along the way her own love of self. Elementary school classics like Hilda van Stockum’s *A Day on Skates*, *The Mad Scientists’ Club*, and *Martha Washington* of the *Childhood of Famous*



Classic Children’s Literature

Besides its summer reading club, Seton has just introduced a collection of superior literary works for young people under the title “Classic Children’s Literature”. Among these selections, chosen for literary merit and their inclusion of insightful remarks by editors

or writers, students and parents will find such appealing literary masterpieces as *Old Yeller*, *The Incredible Journey*, *My Friend Flicka*, and *The Time Machine*.

See them all at
Setonbooks.com/ClassicChildrensLit

Having a list of books that have been vetted by faithful Catholic homeschooling families was extremely helpful. Unfortunately, our local library is often a disappointment, in terms of the range and quality of available books (even with interlibrary loan).

- Reading Club Mom

American series are just a few of the fine books featured in the catalog.

Seventh and eighth graders will also find treasures in these book selections. Luise Rinser’s *Leave If You Can*, the tale of a young Italian partisan fighting the Nazis in Italy while also fighting to believe in God; *The Bloody Red Crescent*, the fictional account of a fourteen year old boy who joins the forces of Don Juan of Austria to repel the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto; *That Girl of Pierre’s*, a novel telling the story of Danielle, a girl who must nurture her family after the devastation of World War II; these and dozens more literary works found in the Seton library should engage the twelve to fourteen year old crowd.

For young adults, the Summer Reading Club offers excellent selections such as the Louis de Wohl novels, featuring saints such as Helena, Longinus, and Ignatius of Loyola, Bruce Clark’s *Rebels and Redcoats*, Thomas Woods’ *How The Catholic Church Built Civilization*, and Paolo Belzoni’s *Belisarius* books. Such a variety of works should

appeal to a broad spectrum of readers.

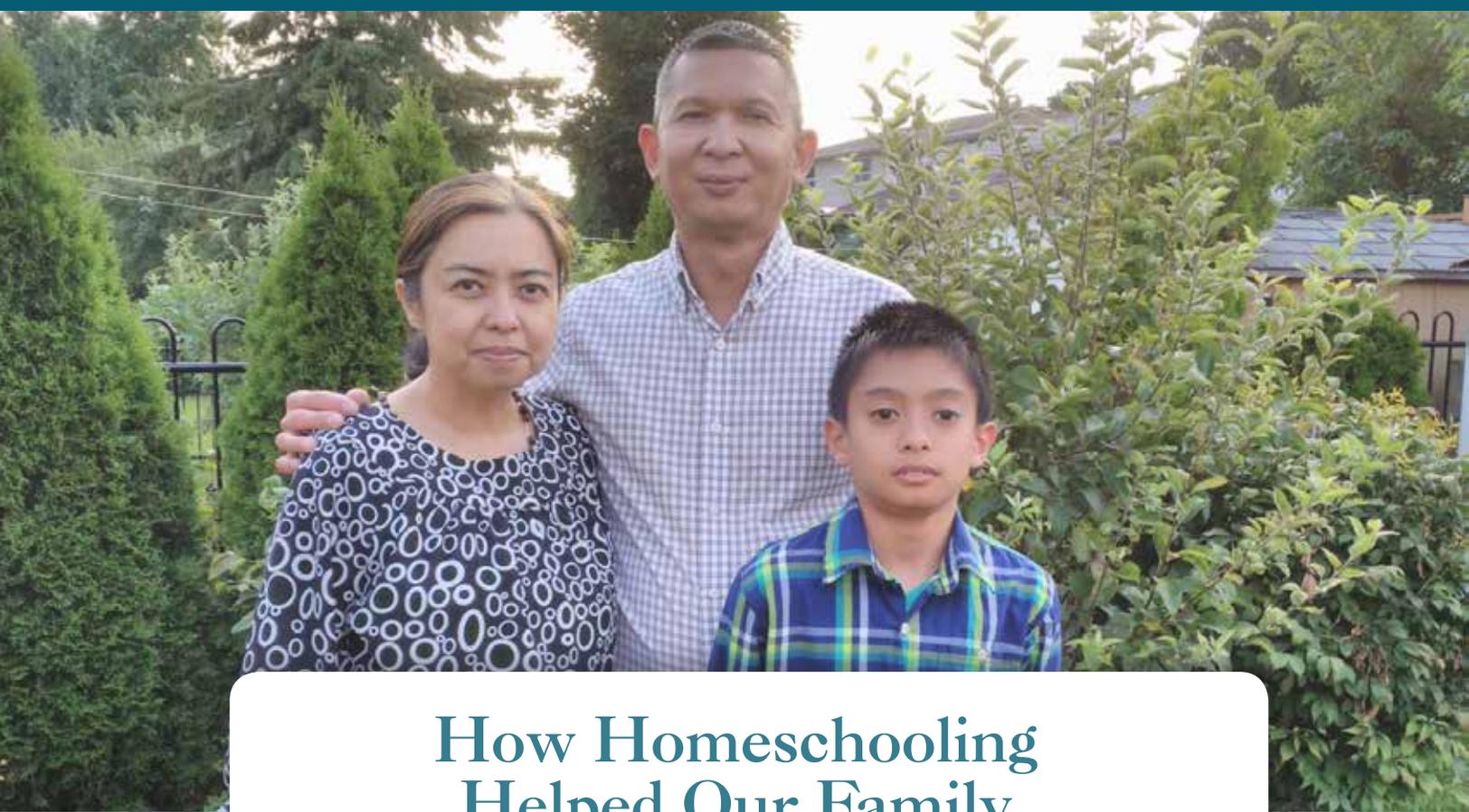
You may order any of these books for the Summer Reading Club from Seton. If you prefer, look for them in your local parish and public libraries. And if you wish to read a book not listed in Seton’s catalog, remember you have the freedom to choose your own titles.

So, step aboard and join the Seton Summer Reading Club, the club that charges no membership fees, exists to foster student readers of all ages and dispositions, and offers the pleasure of uplifting stories and vibrant histories and biographies.

No time to lose. Pour yourself a cool drink, grab a snack, find a quiet place—a hammock, your bedroom, the screened-in porch—open your book, and let the adventure begin.



Jeff Minick is the Latin Counselor at Seton Home Study School. He has spent the last twenty-five years teaching Henle Latin to hundreds of Home-educated students. He is the father of four, all of whom were homeschooled, and grandfather to twenty-one, three of whom he homeschooled.



How Homeschooling Helped Our Family

BY MARSHA CLARIDAD

Homeschooling is so important to our family because we think it provides the best means for us to achieve our goal of reaching heaven.

With homeschooling, we have an environment in which our Faith is nurtured and can flourish. It also provides the flexibility and independence we need to develop our child's talents and hone his

skills. These things are often overlooked in the traditional brick and mortar classroom.

As parents, we are responsible for training our child in Christian virtues, impressing upon him the reasons he has to follow his elders, obey the laws, learn about his faith, and behave with gentleness, kindness, and generosity. As homeschoolers, we feel confident we have covered those basics, but also have had time to explore more advanced and valuable lessons that Benedict Joseph would not have been exposed to in a regular school setting.

Also, the flexibility of homeschooling allows us to have time for activities, like altar boy practice, piano lessons, and sports. These pursuits give us the opportunity to teach our son about morality (which unfortunately, is found so wanting in a pagan world) scholastic pursuits, or society in general.

I love that homeschooling is always based on what our child is ready for. Because of that, we always try to tap into those areas at which he will excel. For Benedict, one area was music.

Finding What's Right For Us

Benedict Joseph took up piano lessons when he was five. Seton had indicated music education, specifically piano and violin lessons, help students tremendously, so that was an area we were ready to explore. He is now 10 years old, and last month, he qualified for scholarship performance with the Ontario Registered Music Teachers' Association.

He did well, playing two pieces from the Royal Conservatory of Music's author Janet Geick's "The Trucker" and "The Juggler." He recently gained a gold medal scholarship award with the local music teachers' association, and last weekend, he garnered an honorable mention at the scholarship recital. We are very proud of what he has done to develop his musical talents and know the flexibility of homeschooling has played a significant part in it all.

Seton also emphasized that participating in sports is important. Benedict Joseph took up swimming lessons and found this was an ideal fit for him. He is now level seven out of ten. Once he reaches level



10, he will be qualified as a lifeguard and swimming instructor.

Grounded in Faith

He is a member of the Federation of North American Explorers. Seton's emphasis in traditional homeschooling and love for the Eucharist and the Sacraments also coincide with the FNE's goals. More than any achievements in life, his spiritual development is of greater importance.

We chose Seton Home Study School because we knew the curriculum teaches him to be grounded thoroughly in the Catholic faith through the Baltimore Catechism, Catholic art, and history. I like Seton because the subjects are both flexible and "meaty". There is always something to learn in every subject. I appreciate the great service we get from the patient staff when there is something we don't know, and I feel like we could ask about anything under the sun and they would help. They do not just say, "We'll pray for your family", but listen and send complementary literature and suggestions on how we can handle any concerns.

Seton has helped us in tremendous ways to overcome educational challenges. At one point, it was time to memorize the multiplication facts, and there was a struggle. I called one of the counselors, and she was so generous and was gracious enough to send me some tables and instructions on how to use them daily. It was my biggest challenge. I felt Seton was supporting me, and I know Seton staff are parents who have overcome challenges like mine, and they are always happy to pass along helpful tips and information they had learned.

What we like most about Seton is that the staff is genuine, faithful Catholics, who are parents and teachers. We appreciate that Seton books are researched well and written with substantial information that is never boring or too light. The texts incorporate Catholic stories and art in all subjects.

Putting It All Together

Our Catholic faith plays an important role in our schooling and family life in ways too numerous to count. When life situations arise that may compromise who we are, as individuals, we always ask



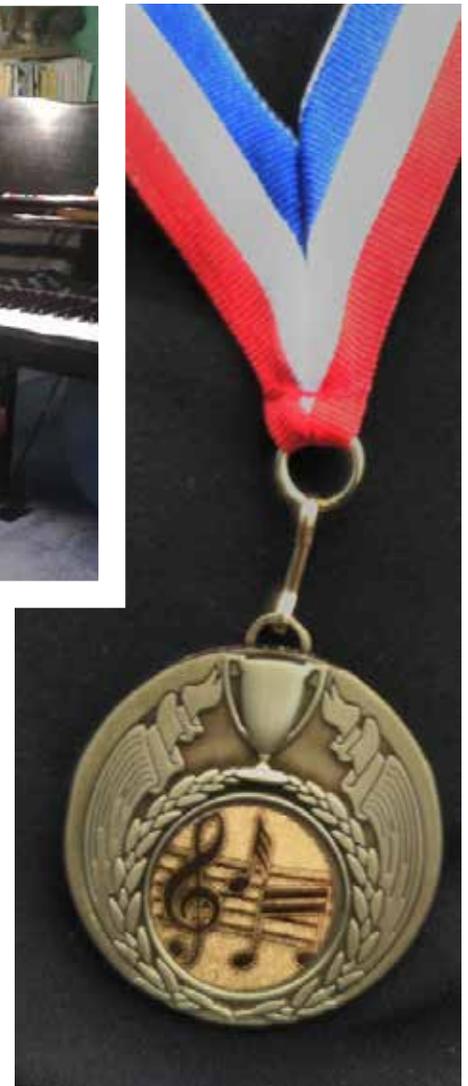
I love that homeschooling is always based on what our child is ready for.

ourselves, "Is this acceptable to God, and are we serving the purpose He wants for us?"

In our schooling, we pause and pray the Angelus, morning offering, Divine Mercy chaplet, and most especially, the Holy Rosary as a family. We read the Bible and lives of the Saints. We go to Mass, adoration, and interact with fellow families and the Catholic Federation of North American explorers, whom we find traditionally practise the Catholic faith powerfully through kneeling when receiving Communion and respecting others and oneself.

We start our day by praying the Litany of the Sacred Heart, reciting the morning offering, prayer to St. Michael and the Memorare. We then proceed to doing chores, such as preparing breakfast, organizing, and feeding the pets. During summer, we walk to church, go to Adoration, and play at the playground.

We then do our schoolwork. We make religion our first subject of the day. We do memory work from the Baltimore Catechism. We do floor exercises afterwards. If this is not possible, we take



a walk outside in the afternoon as a family. During lunchtime, we read more Baltimore Catechism, continue with the subjects, and do light chores. Piano lessons, sports, and FNE meetings make up the bulk of our afternoons and weekends.

Our family has a veil apostolate, Fleur de Lis Veils, and from this, our son Benedict's interest in website design, programming, and entrepreneurial skills are developed and applied, while learning to value the sanctity of life, and devotion to the Eucharist.

A piece of advice I would like to offer to new families is not to despair. You can do it! If something is hard at first glance, it is not the end of the world. Homeschooling affords the opportunity to learn Godly values and protect to our children until they are ready for the world.

All That Matters

BY JOHN CLARK

“In the end, all that matters is the end.”

I recently attended a conference at Christendom College at which Rick Santorum, former U. S. Senator from Pennsylvania, gave an inspiring talk on fatherhood, marriage, and family and delivered these words. He was recounting the heartbreaking story of his infant son dying just two hours after his premature birth. Santorum expressed that he knew that his son was going to Heaven, and “that was the most important thing for me as a father to be concerned about.”

Santorum’s words stayed with me over the next few days; my mind and soul kept coming back to them. And for some reason, another set of words also arrived at the forefront of my mind. They are these: “No one man can

carry this burden, I tell you. It is far too heavy. Saving their souls is too costly.” These were the words mouthed by the character of the devil in the movie, *The Passion of The Christ*.

At first, I wasn’t sure why these two seemingly unrelated things seemed so connected. But as I thought about them, it struck me that they provided a contrast—more than a contrast, they form a polar opposition. They are words of great encouragement versus words of great discouragement; they are words of profound hope versus words of profound despair.

It also struck me how they both relate to homeschooling.

All Catholic parents—by virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony—are called to educate their children, and they are granted a latitude in determining the best way to accomplish that education. In some way that is uniquely expressed by each person, many parents believe that the best way for their children and for their families is through homeschooling. If a parent’s job is to help his child get to Heaven—if that is the most important goal in the end—then teaching them about the faith in the homeschooling environment is thought by them as the best and most wonderful choice.

Yet, as almost any homeschool veteran can attest, homeschooling can be quite difficult indeed. Homeschooling can be exhausting and discouraging. And I think that in these difficult moments, the devils tempt us with the thought of giving up, and they tempt us with the idea that homeschooling is too heavy a burden to carry.

For many families, there are great reasons to homeschool; for many families, there are great reasons not to homeschool. But whatever road we parents choose, whatever road we parents help our children choose, each of us must remember that it is about the end.

For many parents, we need to remind ourselves not only what the end is, but what it isn’t. In his *Summa Theologica*, Saint Thomas

Aquinas helps us clarify our journey, listing eight things that are false ends—false perfect happinesses. The first six false ends are wealth, honor, fame, power, bodily goods, and pleasure. In other words, these are all the things that the secular world might define as man’s ends. Indeed, the modern cynic might look at this list and ask: What else is there? The “good of the soul” is the seventh false end but Thomas explains “that which constitutes happiness is something outside the soul.” The eighth false end is created goods. No created good can be man’s end. The common denominator among these eight things is that while they might make us happy for a time—for fleeting moments—they all leave us wanting more.

What is our end then? What is perfect happiness? Saint Thomas writes: “Final and perfect happiness can consist in nothing else than the vision of the Divine Essence.” The “vision of the Divine Essence” leaves us in desire of nothing else and nothing more; there is nothing more than God. The vision of God makes us perpetually happy. That is our end. That is our children’s end.

Around this time every year, we parents must make educational decisions for our children. Whichever ones we make, we must stop and ask ourselves if those decisions are helping to bring our children closer to God. I don’t have all the answers, and I certainly don’t have the sacramental graces to raise your children; my sacramental graces extend only to my own children. But for us, homeschooling has been part of the answer. It has been our response to the observation that “all that matters is the end.” It is to prepare them not for the end of earthly life, but for the beginning of eternal life.

In the end, all that matters is the beginning.



John Clark is a homeschooling father, a speechwriter, an online course developer for Seton, and a weekly blogger for The National Catholic Register. His latest book is “How to be a Superman Dad in a Kryptonite World, Even When You Can’t Afford a Decent Cape.”

The Low-Down on Dual Enrollment

What every Seton parent (and student) needs to know

BY NICK MARMALEJO

The flexibility of homeschooling is one of its greatest strengths.

Often questions arise about the possibility of receiving high school credit for college courses. This is commonly called “dual-enrollment.” This refers to the student being enrolled in two schools at once and receiving credit for one class at both levels. Because this option typically comes up in the latter years of high school, some Seton families are unaware they can receive high school credit for college work.

There are limitations, however. When considering any dual enrollment courses, the nuances of a student’s total learning program, within the context of courses taken with Seton, need to be examined.

While Seton will grant credit for college level work, there are courses that must be taken with Seton for its most coveted artifact—the diploma. As with an Independent Study, the required Seton high school courses are in the subjects of biology, religion, English, and social studies. If a student takes college level English, Seton will award high school credit for the course, but the student must still take Seton’s required English courses.

There are several reasons for this. Obtaining a diploma is much like receiving a stamp. After enough courses and time of study, some of the school’s particular character and knowledge is imparted to the student. A diploma recognizes or acknowledges this formation in addition to one’s academic achievements.

This means every school must have a set of standards and minimum requirements to bestow its sacred scroll. Each school varies. At Seton, its religion, history, English, and biology classes are required because they provide a solidly Catholic viewpoint. They

create within the student a formidable ability to think and communicate about the highest truths regarding man’s common destiny. In the words of Dr. Clark, Seton’s founder, living and keeping the Faith is the primary purpose of Seton Home Study School. Everything else is secondary.

So what do you do if you want to take a college course and make it count for high school credit? First, consider math, science, and foreign language classes fair game for dual enrollment. You can take English, religion, and social studies courses at the college too, but they will count at Seton as electives.

Second, please know every semester taken at the college counts as a year of high school. Many schools follow this guideline. If you find college is easier than your Seton courses, do not be alarmed. You are not missing something and are not alone—many Seton alumni have reported this sentiment. You are simply more well-prepared than your peers for the college level.

As with any academic question regarding diplomas, requirements, and what is acceptable, please contact the Guidance Office if you still have questions. We are here to help you succeed at Seton and in the educational arenas beyond Seton’s doors. The guidance office can be reached at guidance@setonhome.org.

We pray you have a great rest of your summer and wish you well as you gear up for another academic year.



Nicholas Marmalejo, a history major, graduated from Christendom College in 2001. He holds a Virginia Teacher Certification and lives in the Shenandoah Valley with his wife and three children.



Lesson Plan Tips and Shortcuts

How to Get Those Lessons Done Less Painfully

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

The Seton lesson plans guide parents in teaching skills and concepts but they are not carved in stone nor are they meant to overwhelm any family. Use what is useful and put aside what is not.

I thought that sharing some handy tips passed along to me via the IHM conferences, Facebook groups, and my own observations would be helpful.

Math

If you have a student that generally does well in math and finished well the previous year you may test them out of the first few lessons in the new book, since these are generally just reviews of the previous book. Start by giving the first test of the year right away. If your child does well give the next test and so on until you get to where new material is being taught. You will likely get a few weeks ahead which is always a nice feeling for both student and mom.

Book Reviews

Make a copy of the questions before the book is read and go over them with your student. Then as he/she is reading, they can make notes on the copied sheet to help remember what they've read. This can serve as a rough first draft.

Making use of post-notes as page markers for pertinent passages is also helpful for students struggling with the writing of the reviews.



Book Reports

Read all of the book report books during summer as soon as possible. Reading aloud along with your child, taking turns reading aloud, or each reading a chapter to yourselves and spending a few minutes in the discussion are all great ways to help a reluctant reader.

When it comes to writing the book report, have your child dictate their first draft into a recorder (on your phone or computer) and then let them type it out as they listen. This gets your first draft on paper in a less painful way and makes edits easier as well.

Have your child read the first draft aloud to you so they can hear for themselves any grammar or punctuation mistakes. This also helps train their ears for good writing and speaking habits. Then all that remains is editing and a final, clean copy.



We would love to see you share your own wisdom on the Seton Facebook page.

Spelling

Write out the week's spelling words on post-it notes and have your child put them in alphabetical order on the wall near where they work. I have them do it on our sliding glass door, so they get to see them every time they go outside to play.

As they complete the work in the spelling book over the week find time to stop and have a few pop quizzes by asking them to spell one or two of the words during the day.

They can spell while they wash dishes, sweep a floor or while you are on the way to the baseball diamond. Correct answers can be rewarded with a small treat, or stopping to play a game such as hangman or word searches.

There is a fun and useful website where you can make many kinds of spelling and vocabulary games for free, and they have a small annual fee that grants you access to more choices. It is www.edhelper.com

Vocabulary

The last page of each lesson in the Seton vocabulary books is a crossword puzzle, complete with the definitions. Do that page first! Once your child knows how to use a dictionary, and you are confident in that skill, you can skip this time-consuming part of the vocabulary lesson and have them start with the puzzle.

It is always more enjoyable to begin with a game and the following day when your student does the first page of the lesson, which is writing the definition, they can just refer to the puzzle page.

It sounds like a small thing but it saves a great deal of time and the student is more likely to learn the definitions if they aren't overwhelmed with the idea of an hour spent searching in the dictionary.

My Seton Page

Using your My Seton page on the website saves a great deal of time when it comes to taking some of the tests, getting extra help (click on the resources tab), and uploading work to be graded. It's an easy and intuitive web page and if you run into difficulty, just call the Seton office and someone will be glad to help.

I hope you find some of these suggestions helpful, and please share your ideas with us on the Seton Facebook page or share by Tweeting or Instagramming them using the hashtag #Setontips.



Mary Ellen Barrett is mother of seven children and two in heaven, wife to David and a lifelong New Yorker. She has homeschooled her children for eleven years using Seton and an enormous amount of books. She is editor of the *Seton Magazine* and also a contributor to *The Long Island Catholic*.

Saint Augustine

CATHOLIC BISHOP AND THEOLOGIAN



PATRON SAINT OF PRINTERS, AND THEOLOGIANS
NOTABLE WORK - CITY OF GOD

FEAST DAY - AUGUST 28



We'd like to hear your story.



Every month, we highlight a homeschooling family in the Seton Magazine. The stories from these families help inspire, encourage, and motivate others within the Catholic homeschooling community.

We'd love to hear your story!

To submit your family story for consideration, visit the website link below and answer a few short questions.

Find out how to share your story at: www.setonmagazine.com/family-story



Seton Student Achievements

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY



A Great Finish | Parents, Adele and Doug, gave their children Seton t-shirts as a reward for finishing their school year. Way to go!



Kira | I was the only Youth to represent Alaska in my first national tournament. I shot in the Youth Female Freestyle division and came in 8th in the nation!

Submit your photo, your achievement and what you like most about homeschooling.

setonmagazine.com/students

Seton Home Study School

1350 Progress Drive

Front Royal, VA 22630

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The Seton Summer Reading Club

A sun way to keep up reading skills over the summer!

setonbooks.com/summerreading



What Makes a Family Holy?

The Family Prays

I would like to ask you, dear families: Do you pray together from time to time as a family? Some of you do, I know. But so many people say to me: But how can we? ...in the family how is this done?

After all, prayer seems to be something personal, and besides there is never a good time, a moment of peace... Yes, all that is true enough, but it is also a matter of humility, of realizing that we need God... all of us!

We need His help, His strength, His blessing, His mercy, His forgiveness. And we need simplicity to pray as a family: simplicity is necessary! Praying the Our Father together, around the table, is not something extraordinary: it's easy.

And praying the Rosary together, as a family, is very beautiful and a source of great strength! And also praying for one another! The husband for his wife, the wife for her husband, both together for their children, the children for their grandparents....praying for each other. This is what it means to pray in the family and it is what makes the family strong: prayer.

*Pope Francis
Holy Mass for the Family
Sunday, 27 October 2013*

