

Seton



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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

As I write this letter, the day is gray and windy, and the snow is swirling around outside, reminding me that going out later is going to be less than desirable. Honestly, no matter the weather, I'd always rather be home. Home is where it is warm and comfortable, where people love me and all the people I love best come together every day to learn, pray, work and play.

This is a good time of year to freshen our perspective about home. Not home in terms of décor but home as a haven, a place to escape the culture and create our own Catholic sanctuary for our families. We've dedicated this issue to home as a haven, so if it pleases you, pour yourself a cup of something warm and comforting and join us as we explore home.

Last year we were delighted to welcome the Early family to our "home" here at the Seton offices. Mrs. Early is herself a Seton graduate and is now homeschooling her children with Seton. Everyone was delighted to meet her beautiful family, and Dr. Clark particularly enjoyed the visit. If you are in the area, please stop by; everyone loves a visit from our homeschooling families and we are always happy to show you around! Mrs. Early was kind enough to share her reasons for keeping on Seton based upon her own success with the program.

Please take a moment to read the update on Catholic Harbor. It's an online forum for our high school students that provides community and connection as well as a few skills that will serve them well in the future. Mr. Warren gives all the details, and I'm certain you'll be impressed.

On behalf of all the Seton employees, I'd like to wish you all a very happy 2019 and to thank you for allowing us to serve you in your homes in the educating of your children. It's a pleasure and a privilege to be part of your homes.

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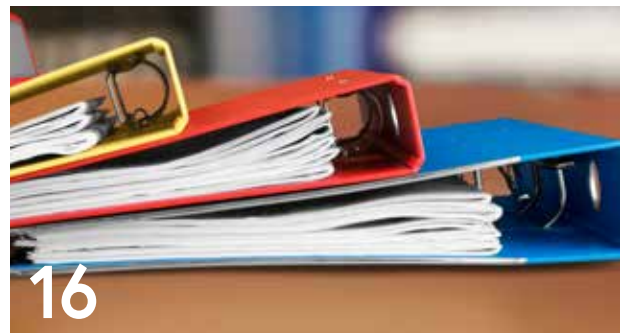
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Pictured: The Bravata Family

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL

“

A lot of people ask: why do we homeschool? Is it the academics? Faith? Values? Safety? Yes, it is all of these, but most importantly, it is teaching our children "how" to learn and to develop a love for it. The children are safe and secure...which leads to confidence and an eagerness to learn.

~ Jennifer Bravata

”



SHARE YOUR **WHY WE HOMESCHOOL** ON **FACEBOOK**



Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774–1821)
Mother + Convert + Educator + Foundress

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

There surely is no saint more appropriate to inspire us Catholic homeschooling mothers than Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. If you have a special devotion to this homeschooling pioneer, there is a great book that grants many insights into her life and work: *The Soul of Elizabeth Seton, A Spiritual Portrait*, by Father Joseph Dirvin.

Elizabeth was raised by a strong Protestant mother who encouraged Elizabeth in learning about Jesus. Mother Seton wrote that even as a young girl, she would enthusiastically talk about Jesus to other children in the neighborhood. After she married and had her first two girls, she did not send them to school. She admitted that she did not want to send her little girls out in the New York cold, “through snow and wet.” So she began homeschooling.

Later, when Elizabeth and her husband traveled to Italy, she homeschooled her children for a few years while living with a Catholic family. She attended Mass and learned about the Real Presence, and taught her children about the Catholic Faith as well. After her husband died from an illness, she eventually returned home to New York where she continued to teach her own children, and happily added a few other neighborhood children to her children’s homeschool classes.

When Elizabeth began teaching other children, Father Dirvin says, “The little parlor on Stone Street in lower New York was in a rudimentary sense, the forerunner of every Catholic parish classroom in the United States. It was real education, not playacting. School began at ten o’clock each morning and the subjects studied were ‘grammar, reading, writing, spelling of large and small words, marking, sewing, and figures.’”

While Elizabeth taught a variety of subjects, including the geography of the United States, she emphasized their religion lessons, especially the Ten Commandments. Even the young kindergarten children were asked to recite the Commandments. Father wrote that Elizabeth Seton managed to teach the Commandments whenever she could bring it into other classes.

The Bishop's Invitation

Elizabeth taught at that little school for only a few months before she received an invitation from the bishop of Baltimore, who asked her to move to his diocese and start a Catholic school. The Baltimore bishop even provided a home for her and her children, which was next door to a chapel, where she went to Mass every day. Elizabeth was extremely happy to teach in a Catholic school where she could bring aspects of the Faith into all the classes.

Father Dirvin wrote in her biography that Elizabeth opened her little school for girls in February of 1810 with three students. The school grew quickly and soon other sisters arrived and offered to help her without pay. With such strong support from her bishop and a few priests who arrived to help, she soon realized that this school was the special apostolate God was calling her to accomplish. She became more enthusiastic about this “work of God” to educate children and quickly realized the eternal value of Catholic education for children.

Elizabeth was always concerned about teaching the truths about Jesus and about what Jesus taught. She emphasized to parents that while she was teaching their children the Catholic Faith in the classroom, they must be concerned about teaching and living the Faith at home. Mother Seton might not

have used the words “home schooling,” but she did write, “I would wish to fit you for that world in which you are destined to live, to teach you how to be good...mothers of families.” Though Elizabeth is generally recognized as a pioneer for Catholic schools, her own homeschooling, as well as her emphasis on parental responsibility to continue their children’s education at home, has made her a patron for homeschooling as well.

Pope Paul VI, at the canonization of Mother Seton, said “We render homage to those who have expended their lives to communicate Christ through the apostolate of the school, and to give to generations of young Americans true education imbued with Christian principles.” The pope praised the “powerful example of joyful love and of selfless service” of Mother Seton and spoke about the “absolute necessity of prayer and of the transforming power of the Eucharist” which Elizabeth Seton recognized.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, homeschooling mother in early America, help us Catholic homeschooling mothers to persist in our dedication to teach our own children at home how to learn and live the Catholic Faith. Help us mothers to recognize that only with Catholic teachings as the basis for learning all subjects, and only with the dedicated love of parents, can children and parents reach the eternal heavenly goal that Jesus intends for all of us.



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

How should my son prepare for a chapter test?

Before he starts reading a chapter, he should read the questions at the end of the chapter. They are usually in the order as they are presented in the chapter. He should keep the question page open as he reads the chapter, and should underline the answers he reads. In most cases, the chapter test will focus on the same important points that are in the end-of-chapter questions.

Teachers often tell students what to focus on studying to prepare for a test. If possible, you should emphasize what he needs to remember, such as “You need to know the four reasons for ...” It is rare but possible that a question on the test was not noted in the end of chapter questions.

Do students need to study every subject every day?

Absolutely not. You already know that Music, Phys Ed, and Art are taken only once a week. In subjects like spelling and vocabulary, a student could take a practice test the first day. If the student obtains a perfect score, the student does not need to do any other exercises in that chapter, though the crossword puzzles are fun! Another student could study only the words he missed. However, some students like the challenge of the exercises and could choose to do them anyway, maybe all of them in one or two days.

What subjects should an elementary student do every day?

All students should do Religion, Reading, English, and Math every day. No exceptions. Our Faith is essential to study and think about every day. In addition,

one cannot survive in America without high skills in reading comprehension and English grammar and writing skills. Math is not essential for Heaven, but it sure helps in balancing the checkbook and staying out of financial trouble with the bank or paying the bills. Math is important for young people wanting to obtain work in a field using a computer, which has become essential. One does not need to be a math expert, but the regular high school math courses are important for many future careers.

With several students, I have a difficult time teaching everyone.

There are several ideas to consider. First, put two children together in some courses. For example, the Music, PE, and Art should be put together for all the children in the family, as much as possible. They don't need the exact same lessons, but they can be all done together in some way.

Second, just because a child is a certain age does not mean he or she needs to be in a certain grade. That is an idea the public schools devised. The child should be in the grade, course by course, that is best for the child or that is best for the parent-teacher. For instance, having two students in the same math level, even if they are different ages, is an easy solution. In fact, if an older student can help with the math for the younger student, put them both together. In addition, an older student might benefit from reviewing and helping a younger student.

Rules for students in the schools are based on what is convenient for the

school, not for the student. Parents need to teach their children according to what is best for the student as well as what is best for the mother/teacher.

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YEAR ONE REPORT

BY DRAPER WARREN

We recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of Catholic Harbor, Seton’s online social community for enrolled students (ages 13 and up). The anniversary provided an excellent occasion to look back over our first year and to see the impact the site has had for the students.

We have had 360,000 posts in the past year, 7,300 topics, and over 1,000 photos of members uploaded to our gallery. Some of our recent debates have included the topics of evolution, the moral principle of double-effect, capital punishment, and the perennial “Is Harry Potter appropriate literature for Catholics?” While the students who participate in Catholic Harbor are incredibly active, only a small percentage of our eligible student body has joined to try it out. These debates, and the community as a whole, provide an amazing opportunity for students, not just to socialize, but to improve their reasoning and communication skills.

For those of you not familiar with Catholic Harbor, I recently heard one parent describe it as “Seton’s version of Facebook” and while it is true that it does have most of the same features of the popular social media platform, Catholic Harbor is different in some very important ways. 1) It is not public and members must be actively enrolled in Seton or have graduated with Seton—but the alumni and current students are in separate groups. 2) There is a large staff of student-moderators who actively remove any content that violates the rules of the community. 3) The rules are truly designed to create an environment parents would be proud of. As an example, Rule #1 is: “Anything that is anti-Catholic in nature will not be tolerated.” 4) Catholic Harbor is centered around actual discussions, not just pictures, links, or limited-character tweets.

Over this past year, as the Administrator of the site, I have really gotten an invaluable view of how Seton students interact with each other. I am so impressed. These students are caring, curious, fun, intelligent, and animated by a strong adherence to a life of virtue. It gives me such a sense of hope knowing that these exemplary students will graduate from Seton soon and go out into the world, no doubt improving the lives of everyone with whom they come in contact.



www.catholic harbor.com

Catholic Harbor members at the 2018 Seton Graduation



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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CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



NORTHEAST
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AVE MARIA
UNIVERSITY



THOMAS AQUINAS
COLLEGE



OUR LADY
SEAT OF WISDOM
COLLEGE

setonhome.org/colleges



Homeschooling as a Haven

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

Home is important. We know this for many reasons, but the most important reason to regard the home as sacred is because the Son of God became man and lived in a home. This forever sanctified home and family life. Jesus had a home with a mother and a father who cared for Him, nurtured Him, fed and clothed Him, and loved Him.

The Incarnation speaks to how important family and home are to human beings, because God did not have to send His Son to us as a child who grew through all stages of development. That He chose, in His infinite wisdom, to do this shows us that mothers, fathers, and home life are important, sacred, and necessary.

Homeschooling offers a unique opportunity to create a home that grounds our children in all that is good and true and beautiful before exposing them to the outside world. Seton has always sought to provide that homeschooling haven by laying the foundation for families to have the best homeschool experience possible. Lesson plans, counselors, online resources, and forums all seek to provide parents and students the tools to make learning as approachable and enjoyable as possible. When your lesson plans are already written up, you can choose how you are going to allow them to serve your homeschool needs. This allows for ample time to build your family culture and create some memories. Board games, outside play, reading for pleasure, cooking, crafting, and creating are all ways to lay the foundations of a cozy home life and strong family connections.

It generally falls to the mother to create the atmosphere in the home. Atmosphere doesn't really refer to décor (although that can be part of it), but rather the feeling that, when in this place with these people, you are at peace. It's a refuge from the world, a soft place to land. Mothers are uniquely wired to do this in many ways. Creating an inviting home where people are comfortable and happy means that children can spread their wings and truly explore what God wills for them as they get older. Does this mean there is never conflict? That all is idyllic and the children learn readily, obey always, and clean their

rooms daily with diligence and cheer? I wish. Homeschooling does not guarantee perfection but it does allow us to form our children's minds and consciences properly using our faith as a guide.

Parents who send their children to brick and mortar schools may have the best of intentions. They may rigorously restrict the media within the home, the friends their children associate with, the books they read in the home, and the speech that they use. However, when a child is out of the home for six to seven hours a day, all bets are off. Parents then have considerably less control over what their children ingest over the course of their education.

The child may not have access to certain television and movies within the home, but those who do have that access are likely to share it with that child. The call of the worldly is strong and society wants your child to belong. It wants your child to embrace the ethics of social media and the morals of contemporary society, and to reject those who interfere with doing what society demands.

When we bring our children home to educate them, particularly when using Seton, they are grounded in good theology,

excellent writing, the habit of thinking deeply and often (a lost skill to be sure), and the love of their family. They form solid relationships with those who love them best and they learn to serve those in need before they even know that's what they are doing. Diapering a baby, folding some laundry, pushing a stroller for mom, carrying grocery bags are all ways in which children serve. They will not learn this from a teacher who doesn't love them, nor will they be inclined to it if they are away from family for seven hours a day.

In the haven of the Domestic Church, homeschoolers build up their resilience and acquire the skills and formation needed to bring the change this world so desperately needs.

Seton mom Tara Brelinsky has this to say about homeschooling as a haven, "We are called to be in the world, but not of it. I firmly believe that homeschooling is God's antidote to the chaos we are experiencing in the world. It's a bit of inoculation for each child, a protection we can offer them while they are most vulnerable. In the haven of the Domestic Church, homeschoolers build up their resilience and acquire the skills and formation needed to bring the change this world so desperately needs."

The next time you are frustrated that your home doesn't look as nice as you'd like, or your child is having difficulty mastering something or is even misbehaving, don't lose heart. I have often said the worst day at home is a million times better than the best day at a school, and it's true. Bad days aside, your home is your child's haven, where their thoughts will always return when the world seems cold and chaotic, and the work you do at home will benefit them for all eternity.



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*.



Carrying on the Seton Legacy

A 2nd Generation Seton Family Shares Their Story



by **Nicole Early**

On the third day of our old-fashioned road trip from Sugar Land, Texas to Washington, D.C., we decided to detour through the picturesque rolling pastures of Front Royal, Virginia to visit Seton Home Study headquarters. We received a warm welcome, toured the office, and had the honor of meeting Dr. Clark.

I am a '95 Seton graduate and am now carrying on Seton's legacy by homeschooling my children. During our visit I finally had the opportunity to thank Dr. Clark in person for all the benefits that Seton's education has afforded me and my children. Now, and I say this jokingly, Dr. Mary Kay Clark could not resist tasking me with a writing assignment after I graduated over 20 years ago! I consider it an honor to be asked by Dr. Clark to submit an article for Seton Magazine. I would like to share my insights reflecting the impact of Seton's education on my family's life, including my children's current homeschooling years

and my life since I graduated high school homeschooling.

My parents were always willing to help me find the best educational fit. Over the years, I was enrolled in Catholic school, public school and homeschooled through Seton Home Study. Prior to homeschooling, I was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with my mainstream education. Many classes were not challenging, subject matter was contrary to my Catholic beliefs, and my peers seemed immature or made bad choices. In the early 1990's there were few homeschooling options and Seton's accreditation made it a very appealing choice. Transitioning to Seton in my junior year was not an easy task. I did not have years of rigorous writing instruction to build upon in order to reach Seton's high school writing standards. However, I found the depth of Seton's curriculum enriching enough to balance the increased expectations.

Seton prepared me well for college. I attended the University of St. Thomas in Houston, aced my theology classes,

and received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Management Information Systems. I interned for executives at Schlumberger, the world's largest oilfield services company. Then I pursued a full-time career in information technology at other large companies, including becoming a certified Oracle database administrator at Texaco.

During my early career days, one Sunday after mass in the crowded vestibule of church, I met the man of my dreams, Mark, a Naval officer. Mark and I got engaged and married a year later in the same beautiful historic church where we had met. We are now blessed with three children ages 17 to 11: Brendan, Kevin and Kristen. After the birth of my first child, I chose to quit my full-time career to be a stay-at-home mom.

It took years of searching for the "right fit" regarding our children's school choices before we selected Seton Home Study. Among our three children over the past 17 years, they have attended public, private and Catholic school. Mark and I served

years on a school planning committee to start a new Catholic parish school in our community. Currently, one of my high school sons attends a 3-day a week program where he enjoys the flexibility and added responsibility of a non-traditional schedule. Ultimately, enrolling our other two children in Seton Home Study has brought us much peace in our decision to homeschool. It is the right fit at the right time, and here's why...

Room to Grow Their Talents

Homeschooling has allowed my children to grow their talents in ways that they could not have if they were in a typical classroom setting. Eleven-year-old Kristen has been homeschooling with Seton the longest. She has used the flexibility to participate in FIRST Lego League competitions, Houston Museum of Natural Science classes, Houston Museum of Fine Art classes, swimming, and tennis. My 15-year-old son Kevin takes private tennis lessons on his off-school days and participates in a weekend tennis league. And my 17-year-old son Brendan is our newest Seton enrollee. He has excelled in his computer talents. He placed as regional winner for North America and in the top 12 out of 17,000 contestants internationally in IBM's Master the Mainframe 2017 contest. IBM featured Brendan at their 2018 THINK conference in Las Vegas this year.

Two things that I love about Seton specifically are the efficiency of the program and incorporation of Catholic identity throughout the curriculum. First, the structure of the Seton curriculum is such that the lesson plans are very clear and streamlined. I find it very efficient to be able to pick up the lessons and work with my children without needing hours of training to provide my children with a quality education. We also utilize Seton's online grading system and tests whenever possible. Second, incorporating our Catholic faith throughout the curriculum helps my children grow in their faith as they learn in every subject. Seton's curriculum ensures that my children are mindful of God's presence and have a deeper appreciation for Catholic influence in art and culture, and are aware of where it is lacking.

Clockwise from top-left: Kevin playing tennis, Kristen on her First Communion with her grandmother, Brendan at the IBM Think 2018 Conference, The Early Family with Dr. Clark at Seton

On a lighter note, I highly recommend that homeschool families have a pet. Our giant-breed Shiloh Shepherd named "Admiral" helps break up our day, and he is always available for a belly rub on breaks. We cannot look at him without breaking into a big smile. He is also a bit of a celebrity. His picture next to the statue of the metal man has won a couple of photo contests, including the "city art" category of the City of Sugar Land's 2018 photo contest and

inclusion in the 2018 International Shiloh Shepherd Alliance breed calendar.

It is my experience that Seton has consistently provided homeschooling families with access to high-quality education that is flexible, efficient, accredited and authentic to our Catholic identity. Seton was a refuge for me during my high school years and now, decades later, is steadfastly here for my family. With God's grace it will be there for future generations.



Groundhog Day

BY JOHN CLARK



After parents have homeschooled their children for a few years, they often suffer from something we might call routine-itis, which we could define as an overall sense of malaise that takes place from doing the same thing day after day. Like the cough and cold, routine-itis is much easier to develop in winter as parents and students can begin to feel cooped up in more ways than one.

If you are one such parent, I want to make a movie recommendation to you (along with the boilerplate moral caveats and conditions that accompany the recommendation of just about any film produced since 1919). It is called *Groundhog Day*.

(Spoilers ahead.) The movie tells the story of a self-centered and cynical weatherman named Phil Connors who is forced to cover the Groundhog Day events in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, at which a groundhog emerges from a hole and “predicts” how severe the remaining days of winter will be. Connors would rather be anywhere else, but begrudgingly covers the story for his TV station. He goes to bed that night, glad that the Groundhog Day events are behind him.

Yet something strange happens. When Connors wakes up, it is Groundhog Day again, and the exact same events happen.

And it happens again. In fact, he lives the same day over dozens, even hundreds of times. He knows what everyone will do and say.

At first, he’s scared and wonders if he’s going crazy, so he goes to see a psychiatrist for help. Much to Phil’s chagrin, the psychiatrist recommends that he come back “tomorrow.”

Next, as he realizes that nothing he does matters into the next day which never comes, he’s excited at the prospect of living the same day over and over. He can commit plenty of sins like anger, greed, and gluttony with no lasting effect. He can eat piles of donuts, rob banks, and assault people without a



worry in the world. "I don't worry about anything!" he assures his friend. He can treat people terribly and they won't remember. But he comes to realize that the deadly sins are not just deadly but terribly boring. And the commission of all these sins leads to another sin: the sin of despair. He thought that the sins would make him happy, but instead, they make him miserable beyond comprehension.

In the midst of his despair, his friend Rita mentions that the ability to live this day over and over might be a blessing. Up until then, he never seems to have considered that he could use the day to help people, so he tries it.

When he uses the day to help people, he is surprised to realize that this makes him happy and fulfilled. As he lives Groundhog Day over and over now, he does more good each day. Whereas the world was once a place filled with people he scorned and ridiculed, he begins to look at the world as a place filled with lovable friends worthy of his attention and charity. Connors realizes that he can accomplish great good. He goes from caring about no one to caring about everyone. He learns that loving and caring for others is the best way to spend the day. And he discovers that maybe he is worthy of being loved, too.

I think it's fair to say that homeschooling can be a bit like Groundhog Day, insofar as each today can seem so eerily similar to each yesterday. But maybe that's what is so great about it. Psalms tells us, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Rejoice and be glad. That doesn't sound like such a terrible mission. If all you see is monotony, ask God to help you see how you are called to rejoice today, how you are called to be glad today, the good you are called to do today.

One last point. Two of our children have grown and moved out and a third is about to graduate college soon. Everything is happening so fast. I long for the days when I have what I once had every day: all my children under one roof. What I can tell you after twenty-five years of homeschooling is this: there will come a time when you will miss these groundhog days. You will miss the days of home and hearth when you pour hot chocolate for yourself and your daughter and teach her to sound out consonant blends. You'll miss helping your little son with the times tables. You will miss conversations with little children. Strange as it may seem now, you will long to return to your 'groundhog day.'



John Clark is a homeschooling father, a speech writer, 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."



Mark | Mark took two blue ribbons at Hunterdon County and New Jersey 4-H Public Presentation contests for his presentation on the P-51 Mustang, a World War Two fighter plane.



Alexandra and Richard | Alexandra and Richard both won First Place in the Raritan Valley Chinese School Speaking contest in their respective age categories.

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A SETON FEATURE SPOTLIGHT
BY NICK MARMALEJO

Discerning a career path can be difficult and even daunting. It is a challenge for every guidance department to provide tools to help students identify an occupation for which they are suited.

With this in mind, Seton has partnered with Jobzology, a software company which has developed a talent analytics program to assist people to find jobs in which they will be happy. Please read on for information on how Seton is implementing this tool to help our high school students.



A Seton education is designed to provide students with a totally solid knowledge foundation, not only to be able to function well in the world, but also (and more importantly) to live a good life and become a saint. In the words of Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Seton's founder, "The purpose of a Seton education is for students to keep their Catholic Faith!" As you may know, this focus permeates all of Seton's courses and materials. It is our point of departure and our intended destination. It is what sets Seton apart from all other schools or curriculums.

Because of this, one of the most exciting aspects of being a guidance counselor is speaking with students about their hopes and potential career paths. These are typically students who are already well-formed and

ready to live for Christ. While some people seem to have it all figured out, others still need time and life experience to make wise decisions regarding their vocational future. Put another way, it is not always clear to them what will be a good fit and make them happy. Sometimes multiple occupations are appealing and no clear path is apparent.

To aid in this process, Seton has contracted with Jobzology. The company and its software use the sciences of psychology and analytics to provide students, after they have answered an easy personality questionnaire, with career choices that are likely to suit them. I took the test and was impressed—it nailed me pretty well, with guidance counselor and teacher being among several top career choices. It also noted several of

my previous occupations, such as Facilities Director and Furniture Maker, and others that I have at one time considered, like EMT or Police Officer.

However, as with any personality assessment of this sort, your mileage may vary. This tool is not an oracle. It is only a tool—we think a very helpful one—but it does not necessarily tell you what the perfect path in life for you will be. (It would be great if it did, though!) Outcomes from the test largely depend on the quality of the input of the student's answers. For example, if a student does not yet know whether he or she prefers working alone or in groups, there could be discrepancies in the feedback in the analytics and in consequent job suggestions.



The software is appealing for several reasons. First, it is easy to use. Second, the questionnaires are fun. Third, when it gives you your personal career results, the job descriptions are linked and aligned with the information found on the federal government's Bureau of Labor and Statistics website. This instantaneously provides the test-taker with extremely valuable data about the working conditions and job prospects, now and in the years ahead. Finally, Jobzology also links to current classified ads for the positions in your results. If you want to know how to qualify for being a project manager for a specific company, see the wanted ads and find out!

In sum, the software from Jobzology is a self-assessment tool to help you sort out your vocation as you decide on a college, trade program, or other life path. We believe that it will provide you with valuable information regarding how your personality may be suited to differing career choices. Please let us know if you have found this tool helpful, so we can continue to provide this service to you and your family.

Who Can Take the Jobzology Questionnaire?

The Jobzology questionnaire is currently available to all enrolled students in grade 8 or above. Simply log in to your MySeton page and click the icon on your homepage. This will take you to the test questionnaire. The test can be taken multiple times and at your convenience.

Even if you think you have your future in the bag and all figured out, I encourage you to take the test anyway. It may provide you with some job ideas or aspects of jobs that you never considered, or it may give you further information on the career path you have already chosen.



Nick 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 four children.



SETON STAFF SERIES



A chat with those who serve you!

Deacon Gene McGuirk Director of Counseling

M.B.A., Adelphi University
M.A., University of California
B.A., Queens College



“Before joining Seton in 2002,” says Deacon Gene McGuirk, Head of Academic Counseling, “I spent eight years with Doll Medical Research, then almost twenty years with Avis, and finally with Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy right before coming to Seton. I was never unhappy in any of these positions, but I truly love what I do at Seton.”

Deacon McGuirk began by serving students and their families in admissions, but after two years moved to the counseling department. In addition to his previous work experiences, he brought other gifts to Seton: two master's degrees—he is working on a third in theology—and a familiarity with the program, as he and his wife used Seton for their four children since 1995.

Deacon McGuirk specializes in counseling students in chemistry, logic, accounting, and religion. He and other members of the staff also keep close tabs on Seton's high school students and their credits, making certain that when graduation rolls around, they have the required hours and courses to receive their degrees. He frequently reminds students intent on college to become familiar with the admissions requirements of the schools they wish to attend.

Like others on the staff, he is proud of Seton's reputation. When Deacon McGuirk first began working in admissions, an Air Force captain, an attorney, called and explained why he was interested in Seton for his children. He had taught law at the US Air Force Academy and found two cadets who stood head and shoulders above their peers, all of whom, as the captain explained, were the “cream of the cream of the crop.” He investigated the backgrounds of these two young people. “Not only were they both homeschoolers,” he told Deacon McGuirk, “but they were also both graduates of Seton.”

“Here at Seton,” Deacon McGuirk says, “we take seriously the idea that the purpose of life is to get to heaven, and the purpose of education is to educate students to get to heaven. We educate for heaven, not for Harvard.”

He pauses, then smiles. “But Seton can help you get into both.”

in the **Schoolroom** m

Getting Organized

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

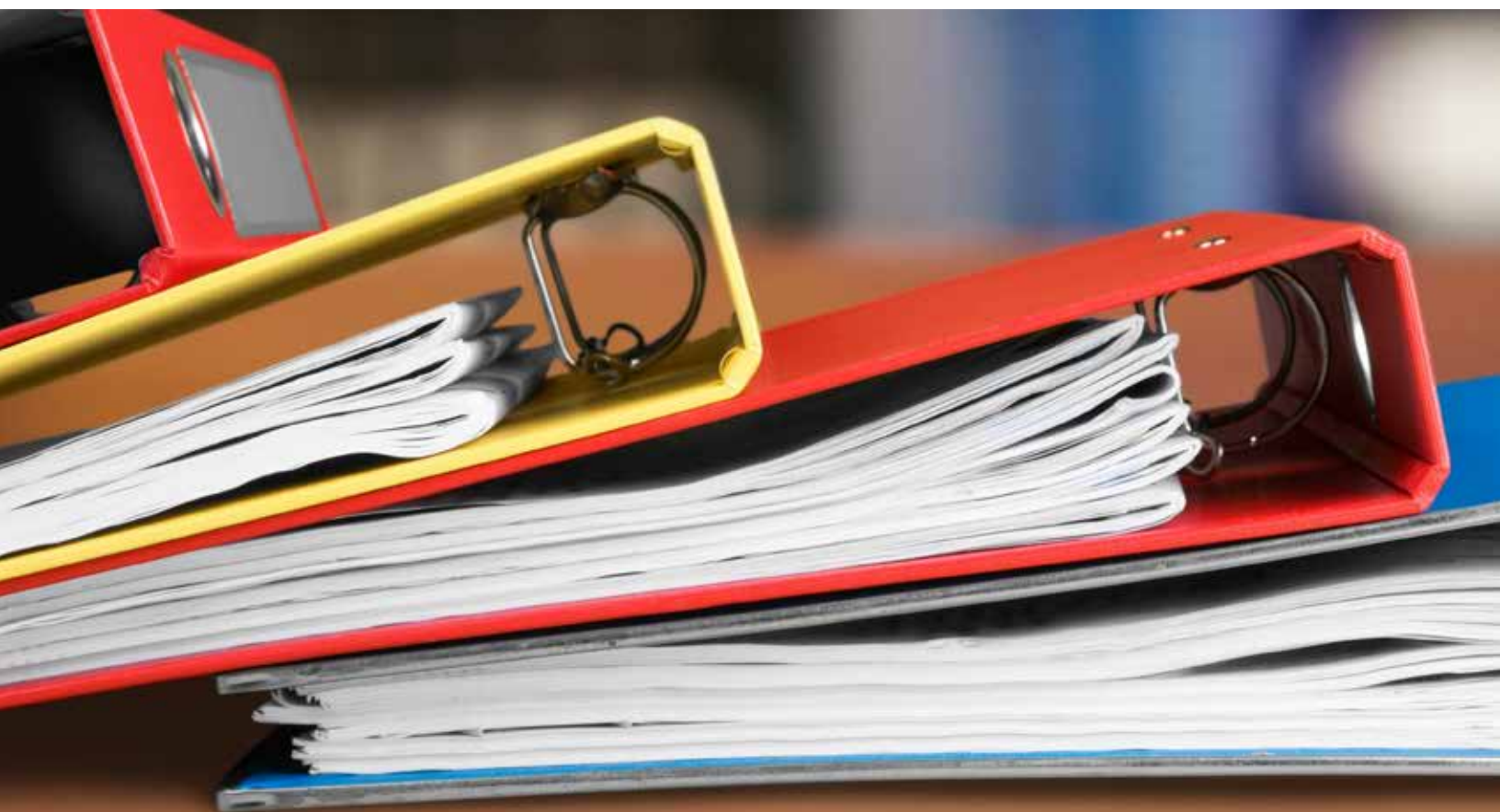
January often brings a deep desire to organize and freshen up the school spaces in our homes. We resolve to be better at keeping order, we recommit to being more joyful moms, and we try to bring a fresh eye to our spaces. Something about a new year brings the promise of clean spaces, pristine notebooks, folders, and well-planned lessons. The feeling is similar to that September state of mind, but now we have a few months under our belt, and we can approach the new year with a better sense of how the days flow and how better to serve the current needs of our family.

Is your homeschool feeling a little stale? Too many workbooks and not enough living? Spend some time planning a few field trips for the late winter and spring. Those of us who have been at this a while tend to forget the younger crowd hasn't done some of the things the older kids were able to do, so I will plan a maple sugaring trip to a local farm and a trip into the city to visit a museum or two.

I'll also look up our upcoming history and science chapters and plan some extra resources. I'll gather some materials for a lapbook, check a movie or documentary

out of the library, or compile a booklist to enhance our studies. Maybe we'll do a diorama or cool experiment. This will ease the pain of beginning again after a longish break and keep all of us engaged in learning through the long dark days of winter.

Carving out an hour or so every week, putting it in my planner and treating it as sacrosanct to keep up with grading papers, planning out weekly lessons and keeping the shelves neat and tidy is a worthy and sanity saving resolution as well.



All of these resolutions and plans may start to fray at the edges again come March and April, but as moms, we know better than anyone that our work is never really done. There is always a load of laundry to be washed, a meal to be cooked and lessons to be planned, but the commitment to keep at it and begin each day with a prayer, some hard work and an amiable attitude will always see us through any minor discouragements about our never-ending to-do lists. It's also important to remember that Seton is here for you, so let us know how we can help you set up for success!



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*.



ALUMNI PROFILE

TRICIA WALZ

How long were you homeschooled through Seton, and what did you like about the experience?

I was homeschooled my last two years of high school. I loved the flexibility and the faith component of Seton. I started Seton at a point in my life when my faith was beginning to become my own, so learning about what the Catholic Church believes was vital!

Where did you go to college, and what is your degree?

I attended Benedictine College in Atchison, KS, and majored in both Biochemistry and Chemistry.

How did your Seton education help you navigate the college experience?

I failed my first 2 or 3 English papers when I started Seton and I remember being so upset! In the public school, I never had below an A in English. Looking back at it now, I am so grateful for Seton's "tough love" because in college I could write papers so easily whereas a lot of my peers were struggling.

What are you doing now?

During the day, I work at a medical device company called Medtronic and in the evenings, I volunteer with high school students in our diocese. I recently published a book titled "By His Mercy" which is a compilation of testimonies from young adults in the St. Cloud, MN area on how we have seen God's mercy in our lives.

What gives you passion or motivation in your current occupation?

I find my passion with helping the youth grow in their faith and build good strong Catholic friendships and connections. I find myself longing for Sunday nights when our youth group gets together.

Any advice for current Seton High-Schoolers?

Seton is hard, it really is, but I found myself leaps and bounds ahead of my classmates in my freshman year of college. It is worth all the hard work!! As far as life goes: God has big plans for each and every one of you, so trust in Him and never lose faith! He may ask you to do something crazy or that you wouldn't have expected, but trust me when I say it will be worth it!



Light & Sweet

A Look at the Light Side of Homeschooling

I was sitting with one of my sons, trying to explain the difference between Catholics and Protestants, so I said, "It's like going to McDonald's, Protestants only get half of the meal, the pop and the fries. But Catholics get the whole meal, the pop, the fries, and the burger." His reply was, "What?! Protestants don't eat meat?!"

- Kristin D.

When my son was six and a half, and preparing for his first confession, he proudly recited for me the seven Sacraments. He listed each one beautifully, and as he recited the seventh Sacrament I nearly lost my composure. "...and Annoying of the sick."

- Joy D

The other day I borrowed my Mom's sewing box and brought it up to my room because I needed some more pins for the project I was working on. A little while later, my 5 year old sister came in to watch me.

"Is that Mommy's sewing box?" she asked me.

I replied in the affirmative.

"Did you ask her if you could use it?" she asked

"Well, she was sleeping and I didn't want to wake her up."

My sister looked at me for a minute. "So you carefully stole it?"

Trying to keep a straight face, I nodded.

"You know that's a sin. You'll have to tell the priest!"

Later I told Mom and we just about laughed our heads off.

- Maria K.



Seton Student Achievements

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY

setonmagazine.com/students

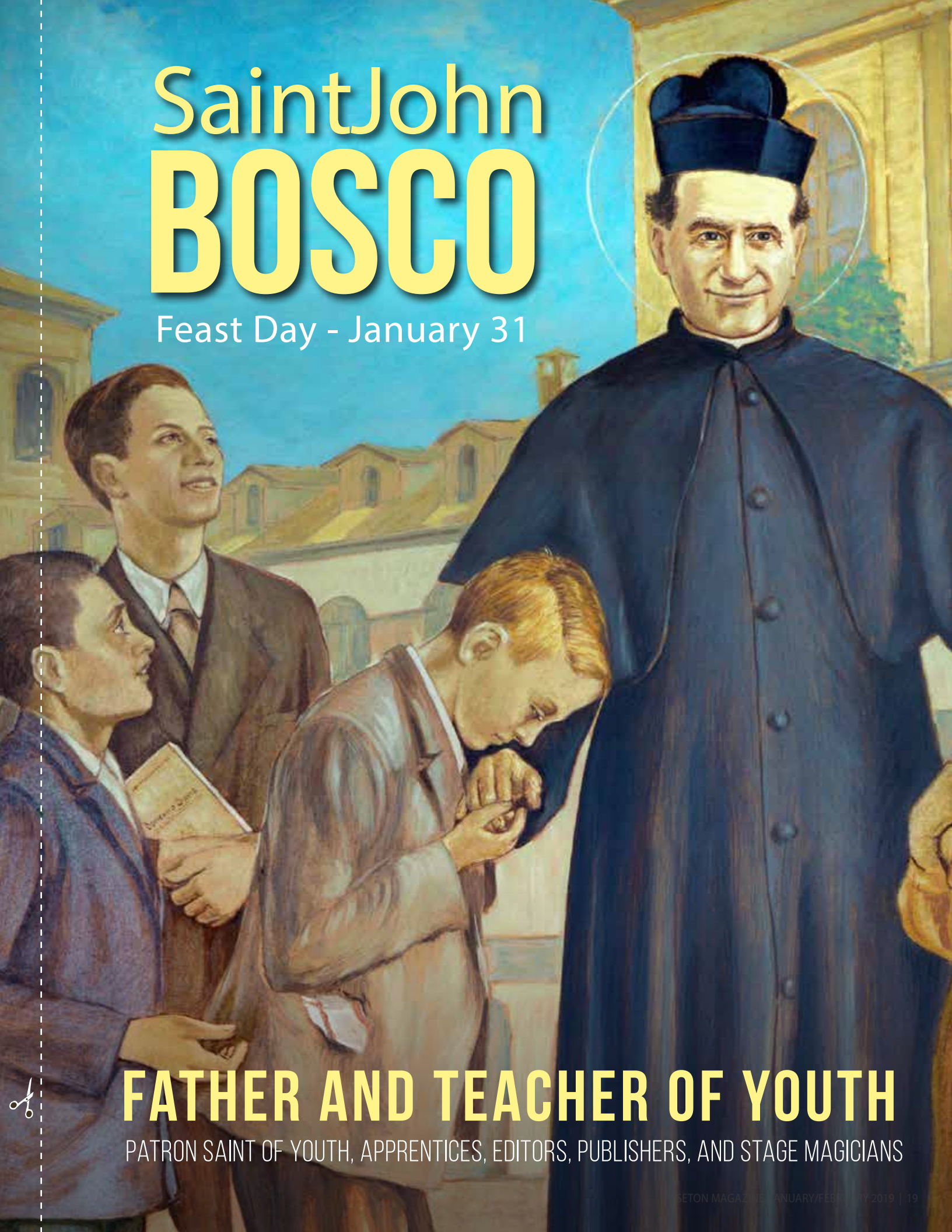


Luke and Elijah's Team Wins State Runner-Up

Homeschooling gave Luke and Elijah the flexibility to practice football during the day, a factor in their homeschool football team winning State Runner-Up.

Saint John **BOSCO**

Feast Day - January 31



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Advice for Parents

Dear Married Couples,

Watch over your children and, in a world dominated by technology, transmit to them, with serenity and trust, reasons for living, the strength of faith, pointing them towards high goals and supporting them in their fragility.

And let me add a word to the children here: be sure that you always maintain a relationship of deep affection and attentive care for your parents, and see that your relationships with your brothers and sisters are opportunities to grow in love.

**Benedict XVI
Address to World Meeting of Families
June 3, 2012**