

Seton MAGAZINE



Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

OCTOBER 2013



*For Love
of Them*

Page 6

YOUR QUESTIONS

How can I learn more about how to homeschool?

page 4

BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

Seton's education provides a bridge to future success.

page 8

GIVE GOD A CHANCE

John Clark offers some advice on proper parenting perspective.

page 12

SETON DIRECTORY

Executive Editor
Dr. Mary Kay Clark

Editors
Kevin Clark
Christine Smitha

Marketing Director
Jim Shanley

Design & Layout
Dominic de Souza
Joe Sparks

Copy Editor
Sarah Rose

Contributing Writers
John Clark
Bob Wiesner
Abbie Bracy



Customer Service
custserv@setonhome.org

Counselors
counselors@setonhome.org

Admissions
admissions@setonhome.org

Grading
grading@setonhome.org

General Information
info@setonhome.org

My Seton
myseton@setonhome.org

Shipping
shipping@setonhome.org

Standardized Testing
testing@setonhome.org

Special Services
SSDept@setonhome.org



Seton Home Study School
540-636-9990

Admissions
540-636-2039

High School Grading
Rhonda Way
540-622-5525

Elementary Grading
Bruce Hacker
540-622-5524

High School Course Approval
Gene McGuirk
540-635-4728

High School English
Walker Solis
540-636-1755

Christine Smitha
540-636-1633

High School History
Bruce Clark
540-636-1199

High School Math
Tom Herlihy
540-636-1846

High School Math/Science
Don Valaika
540-636-1396

Seton Educational Media
540-636-9996

Transcripts, Records, and Extensions
Betty Valaika
540-635-1937

Senior Guidance/ Enrollment/ Independent Studies
Christopher Smith
540-636-2238

Religion/Sacraments
Fr. Constantine
540-636-1527

Special Services
Stephen Costanzo
540-622-5546

Sharon Hines
540-622-5542

Standardized Testing
Patty Graham
540-636-1250

Elementary Counseling
Sharon Hassett
540-636-1429

Carin Delancey
540-636-2342

Cecilia Sauer
General Counseling
540-622-5526

The next issue of the Magazine will be a special **November-December Christmas Edition**

Vol. 2 No. 10, October 2013

Seton Home Study School
1350 Progress Dr.
Front Royal, VA 22630
Phone: (540) 636-9990
Fax: (540) 636-1602
Internet: www.setonhome.org
E-Mail: info@setonhome.org

Subscription Information:

Subscription is included with your enrollment.
Subscription price for non-enrolled families is \$15 per year or \$25 for two years.

Photograph Information & Credits:

Cover: The Bracy Family posing by a statue of a crusader at the Higgins Armory Museum in Worcester, Massachusetts

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.





Our Lady of Good Remedy

The Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Good Remedy, is honored by the Church on October 8.

Over 800 years ago, thousands of Christian men, women, and children were being captured by the Muslims and sold into slavery. St. John of Matha was concerned about the sufferings of these captives. In the year 1198, having obtained his degree in theology, he established the Trinitarian Order. The Order built hospitals for the slaves, but also collected money to purchase the Christian slaves in order to set them free.

The Trinitarians prayed to the Blessed Mother to help them collect the money. They were very successful and, with the support of the French king, were able to free thousands of captives. St. John of Matha, in thanksgiving to the Blessed Mother, obtained Church approval to establish the title “Our Lady of Good Remedy.”

While Christians in America are not “slaves” in the traditional sense, many are becoming slaves to powerful non-Christian forces. Many non-Christians in our American society desire not only their freedom to believe as they wish, but also insist

that everyone else must conform to new anti-Christian laws and regulations. For the Pledge of Allegiance, non-Christians want a new law forbidding everyone to say the words “under God.” Non-Christians are not satisfied with their freedom to not say prayers in the military; they want a law to forbid military chaplains for everyone.

Many of the non-Christians want same-sex “marriage” so these couples can obtain all the legal benefits of a true marriage, including health insurance and social security. The non-Christians want thousands of exemptions for liberal organizations from the new government health care program, but for any Christian organization asking for a religious exemption, their very existence must be destroyed with daily million-dollar fines.

With state-recognized same sex “marriage” comes all legal rights of married couples, not just insurance and social security benefits for the same-sex spouse. Children can legally be adopted by any legally-married couple. The Catholic adoption agency in Boston was forced to close when it refused to allow adoptions of the children by same-sex state-recognized “married” couples.

State and soon federal government regulations concerning schools having neutral-gender or transgender bathrooms have been implemented in schools in four states. If a boy thinks he is a girl, he can use the girls’ bathroom, and vice versa. Transgender bathrooms in schools are likely to

be implemented in all states because of the federal funds given to state schools and all schools that take state funding.

The secular school textbooks are already promoting a new definition of the family and a new definition of marriage. (A knife, fork, and spoon is a preschool example for a new definition of a family.) Parents who have children in these schools will find their children accepting and living, in other words, becoming enslaved by, the new lifestyle of the anti-Christian culture.

“On my part, O loving Mother, Our Lady of Good Remedy, I pledge myself to a more intensely Christian lifestyle, to a more careful observance of the laws of God, to be more conscientious in fulfilling the obligations of my state in life, and to strive to be a source of healing in this broken world of ours.

“Our Lady of Good Remedy, touch the hearts of sinners, that they may seek reconciliation and forgiveness. Bring comfort to the afflicted and the lonely; help the poor and the hopeless; aid the sick and the suffering. May they be healed in body and strengthened in spirit to endure their sufferings with patient resignation and Christian fortitude.”



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



your Questions ANSWERED

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

This is my first year homeschooling. Where can I learn more about how to homeschool?

Please read my book *Catholic Home Schooling*. It is filled with ideas. Secondly, you might phone a Seton counselor in the subject area of concern. Thirdly, you might join a local Catholic homeschooling support group. The parents may have many different ideas and tips that you might find helpful.

Don't overlook family members who can help, such as uncles and aunts and grandparents. They can help with the studies, babysitting, fixing dinner, shopping, driving someone to a dance class or baseball practice. Make a list of all your responsibilities and see who would be willing to help you in some way.

You have chosen to give your children the best in Catholic education and the best of Catholic family life. Many admire you for your efforts, and are willing to help you and your children.

Should I look over the children's tests before sending them to Seton?

We definitely want parents to look over the work on their student's tests. A parent can tell if the child has not followed directions, or has not completed all the answers, or has not given complete individual answers, or has skipped a question on purpose, or has written the math problem wrong, or has misspelled a person's name, or has written so poorly a grader could not read it, or has misunderstood the question, or has forgotten to put his name and family number on the paper, etc.

We are happy when students send in a perfect paper or near perfect paper. It is much easier to grade! And we don't need to send it back because something is wrong or something is missing. We don't want parents to do the student's test, but we do appreciate parents reviewing it before sending it.

If the problem is a minor technical issue, such as the student writing the wrong

student number on a test, parents can correct it themselves. If the problem is not following directions or not understanding the question, the parent should direct the student to redo whatever is wrong. If the problem is simply a wrong answer, a parent should send the test as is, because a wrong answer can help a grader to determine what the student does not understand.

The ultimate goal is for the student to learn the material. Whatever parents can do to help the student learn the material and pass the test will help the student in the long run to obtain a good Catholic education.

My boys are in 6th and 8th grades. How can I help them answer literature questions?

Encourage your boys to read thoughtfully, engaging their minds in the meanings of the ideas being presented. If they read the words or sentences just to "get through it," the ideas will not be comprehended.

Help them to read having "second thoughts." Second thoughts means raising questions, such as, "Why did that character react that way? Was there a clue that could have helped me to predict his reaction?" Guide them to think about seeing differences among the characters; many authors want to "compare and contrast" characters. Aid them to consider the character's activities in comparison with their own perspective in a similar situation; how would they have reacted if they had been in the character's situation?

Discuss selections with your children, especially when they seem to struggle with understanding concepts, but make sure the student tells you first what the story is about and what he is thinking. Don't offer your own views, but rather encourage him with "pointed" questions to think about it himself.

Tell your children not to start writing a report or paragraph without making an outline of the key ideas for the composition. Creating an outline makes the student

think through the organization and the orderly presentation of ideas and events. More than just a list of ideas, the outline helps the student recognize the cause and effects of the events.

Gently persuade your boys to read each question thoughtfully, understanding the key words to pinpoint exactly what the question is asking. Is the student supposed to explain reasons, to write a character sketch, to give the theme or the significance?

Nothing should be submitted for grading without being carefully checked over by the student and the parent.

What advice can you give us for finishing the book reports?

The best way to handle this is to take time off for several days, maybe even a week, for your child to read the whole book while keeping in mind the questions to be answered. Your student should underline or check in the margins of the book anything which looks like it would be important when answering the questions. Then he should write the report within the same week or on the following weekend. Don't let your student spend a week or more not writing the report; it should be done in a few days immediately after he finishes reading the book.

We are homeschooling an only child. I am concerned that she have some interaction with other children.

There are numerous Catholic homeschooling support groups which usually have regular monthly meetings for parents as well as monthly or weekly social activities for their children. Usually you can find a support group by finding other homeschooling families in your parish. If not, ask your friends if they know any homeschooling families in other parishes. Often, homeschooling groups will sponsor a Book Fair or Homeschooling Day at the Park, so look for those in your parish bulletin. You can phone Cecilia at extension 119

at Seton, and she can give your name and phone number to someone we have on our program who lives in your area.

Besides homeschooling groups, you might look at groups available in your parish, such as choir or the local youth group. If your child is interested in sports, most areas have local children's sports teams available—in active homeschooling areas, there are usually teams specifically for homeschooled students. You might also look for club-type groups that meet at your local library. Of course, you as the parent need to be watchful and carefully monitor these activities.

My daughter is a perfectionist. She is terribly upset when she gets even one problem wrong and won't continue her work. I am even reluctant to tell her if anything is wrong because of her reaction.

A desire to have perfect papers is admirable, but getting upset, refusing to do any more work because it isn't perfect, or having an emotional breakdown are signals that problems are developing. If your daughter is young, under 14, you need to constantly work on having her understand that when a problem or answer is wrong, it is an opportunity to discuss the problem or issue. Tell her it is an opportunity to learn more or to see an aspect of the situation that was not noticed before.

Once a student reaches high school age, it can become more serious if this "attitude" affects everything he or she does. Teens need to understand that God made each of us to do the best we can. While wanting to do better is always admirable, being emotionally upset and even unwilling to try new things because of a dramatic fear of imperfection can lead to an emotional disorder. It would be good to see a priest and/or other counselor who has had either courses or some experience with this and see what they would recommend. No one should go through life with this burden.

Do you advise joining the state homeschooling organization though it is not Catholic?

Yes, but first join the Catholic state homeschooling organization, if one exists. You need to know what is happening among the other Catholic homeschooling



families in your state, and they may be sponsoring events for the children or parent conferences. However, the Christian state organization is usually well-funded and has paid lobbyists at the state capital to keep an eye on any relevant or potentially threatening legislation. They usually publish a newsletter, so be sure to subscribe to that to keep updated.

As for a local group, if you are looking for a group for yourself for teaching ideas or for your children for friends, stick with Catholic support groups. Father John Hardon, now deceased, was a powerful friend of Catholic homeschooling families. He spoke at several Seton homeschooling conferences. He encouraged families to gather with other Catholic homeschooling families. In a corrupt society, it is difficult for children to remain faithful to Church teachings if friends are pulling them in another direction.

Where can I find solid information about the Common Core standards?

Two excellent organizations that have done thorough research are The Heritage Foundation and The Heartland Institute, which you can find on the Internet. Check the Internet for videos of conferences where speakers discuss the issues. Also,

there is a discussion going on by Catholic homeschooling parents at www.setonmagazine.com. Search under Common Core.

Do you think I should join the Home School Legal Defense Association?

We do recommend that everyone join HSLDA (www.hsllda.org). In the past, the prepaid legal services were most important to homeschooling families. But even now that legal trouble is rare for homeschoolers, HSLDA still works to protect the rights of parents. HSLDA works with homeschooling state lobbyists who serve as watchdogs regarding any relevant pending legislation. Having a group as well-respected and effective as HSLDA on its side is important to the future of homeschooling in the United States and around the world.

You will probably never need HSLDA's legal services, but the yearly cost of membership is a small price to pay toward safeguarding the rights of parents to direct their children's education.



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



For Love of Them by Abbie Bracy

Like most Catholic-Christian parents, we are dedicated to the care of our children. The Philippine culture is notable for the utmost importance it places on the family. In fact, in the Filipino communities, it is normal to find a modestly-sized house occupied by several extended family members. In the well-to-do communities, several houses may be erected on the same land, or a multi-level residential building may be built with the goal of keeping everyone in the family together, all the way up to the third generation. Having visited several countries, I can also say with certainty that, with some exceptions, Filipinos are remarkable in their piety and their devotion to Mother Mary and to the Holy Infant Jesus. It is common for Filipinos to adorn their vehicles with a miniature statue of the Santo Nino set on their dashboard. In addition, most Filipinos are also accustomed to hanging a rosary on the rearview mirrors of their cars. The Catholic Faith is the foundation of the country's morals and values, including its emphasis on the family. Hence, it was not unthinkable for me to leave the corporate world--and my

nice paycheck--behind, in order to focus on my own family.

Our homeschooling journey began six years ago in the Philippines, when I was pregnant with our third son and preparing my eldest son for Kindergarten. I had heard about homeschooling but did not know anyone who had actually engaged in it. As we looked at the different options for education, we came across Dr. Mary Kay Clark's book entitled *Catholic Home Schooling*. After reading it through, my husband and I were convinced that it was best to homeschool our son, at least for Kindergarten, especially since this coincided with our plans to move back to my husband's homeland of North America.

Nearly three-quarters through our son's Kindergarten school year, we began our migration. We bade good-bye to family, friends, and our dear housekeepers. Leaving home and belongings behind, we looked to the Lord for guidance. Admittedly, this whole experience was quite unsettling for me, as it was the first time I was boarding an aircraft without a re-



Being enrolled in Seton Home Study School has been of utmost value to us. Seton is deeply rooted in the Faith. Their curriculum is complete, and they are accredited. Their school books are pre-selected and readily available. Their lesson plans and quarterly exams are pre-made.

All I have to do is teach. This is the most important activity I can do, and because of Seton I can do it without worry, lavishing my undivided energy and attention on my children.

turn ticket. Five flight stops and more than twenty-four hours later, we got off our last airplane and introduced ourselves to our new environment and a series of unfamiliar faces. Everything seemed different from our past visits. As I entered the territory that I was to call my new home, I placed my faith in God.

If you were to visit our home today,

...this is how the day would go. The door would stand ajar as my two eldest sons would have just returned from serving morning Mass. Dad would rush out for a long day at work accompanied by our chorus of farewells. The children and I would then breakfast together with school starting promptly thereafter. Each of my children would have his own set of books and his own scheduled daily lesson plan. Everyone would be working cooperatively on schoolwork for that particular day, with some short breaks to keep the energy high. At clean-up time, each of my students would help out to the extent of his ability, and then the school day would end.

On certain days, we attend a Cub Scout den meeting or join a 4-H youth activity. Other days, we take part in a community program, join a homeschool co-op, or take part in a celebration. Sometimes, the children help their dad with yard work. When necessary, they also help their mom with house work.

Most weekends, we do music and sports. When it's sunny, we ride bicycles, play ball or frisbee, take walks in the park, rake leaves, build a snowman, or simply have fun sledding down the hill. Whenever it rains, we gather around, singing and dancing

to the tune of mom's favorite music. On gloomy days, we play games, watch wholesome movies on DVD, build different creations with legos or trios, read interesting books, immerse ourselves in art projects, conduct curious experiments, print a newsletter, add to our scrapbooks, dress up in costumes and imagine that we're all from a different era, or take videos of each other and have fun watching our movie creations. There is no end to the joy and fun we have as a family when we use our creativity and ingenuity!

During vacations, we do field trips. We visit different states, tour different museums, and have fun on rides at the amusement parks. We pick fruits and wild berries, enter corn mazes, and go hay-riding at a farm. We bask under the warmth of the sun with our shades, experience how it feels to ride on a horse's back, feel the thrill of rolling down the hill in go carts, build forts and sandcastles on the beach, snorkel and splash in the water waves. We go hiking, ride row boats, camp by the fire, try our hand at fishing, visit islands by speed boat, go water tubing, and even get out on a jet ski.

I believe it was prayer that guided us through the bewildering process of our global migration. As a matter of habit, our family recited the Rosary every evening. Each day, my husband and I would also offer up our personal prayers. By the grace of God, we were able to keep our minds focused and were able to finish our eldest son's last quarter of homeschooling during that first year of

relocation. Four more house-moves, one more baby, and a strongly bonded family later, I am happy to share that my children are now in 5th grade, 3rd grade, 1st grade, and nursery, respectively. We are pleased with our children's progress in school.

As I think about my family, I am reminded that one of the greatest gifts in life is to love and to be loved by one's children. It has been such a joy for us to experience the wealth of God's gifts together as a family. In particular, we know it is such a privilege to be able to homeschool our children and to give them a quality education. We know that education is a priceless legacy we leave our children. The kind of education we provide our little ones today will certainly affect all of their tomorrows.

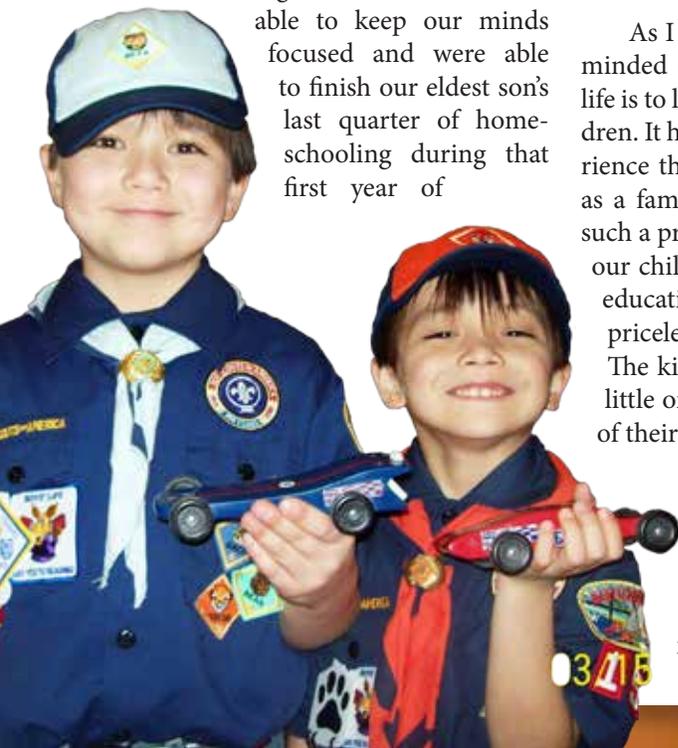
I am grateful, first, to the good Lord, and next, to our patron saints, for never having let us down. My family and I have always felt supported in our decision to homeschool,

despite the occasional company of raised eyebrows and upturned noses. Of course, I am thankful for my dear husband, who supports me unconditionally. Lastly, I am thankful for my four precious boys, for teaching me many important lessons about life, and for bearing with my shortcomings as I undergo the journey of being the best me that I can be, one step at a time, for love of them, who are my everything.

P.S. To connect with Abbie Bracy, email happy.garden@live.com

The Gift of Love

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8



High School at Seton Home Study

Your BRIDGE to the FUTURE

Let's face it. Once you start high school, you are not a child anymore. But you're not quite an adult either. You are journeying to adulthood, but are not there yet. There are still narrows to ford, rivers to cross, and possibly some whitewater to traverse. For those of you looking across the canyon to college on the other side, getting there might seem a bit daunting. **Fortunately, Seton is here as a bridge between you and college.**



Benefits of Homeschooling

Because you are homeschooling, you start your journey to college with some real advantages. The most important advantage is self-discipline. As a homeschool student, you are becoming more and more used to working on your own, and setting and achieving your own goals. You are learning self-motivation, and that will be an incredible asset once you enter college. You can complete tasks without having someone constantly remind you, and you'll tend to put out the extra effort required for special notice, award, and outstanding achievement.

Another major asset is your study skills. Throughout high school, Seton constantly stresses the importance of good study skills and good study techniques. The lessons you learn about how to study more efficiently will be especially important in college, where there is often much to do in little time. One graduate told us she is "grateful for the experience in time management received while home

schooled. Freshmen who enter college with the ability to organize their study time to meet the requirements of their various courses truly have an advantage from the beginning of their college education." Another graduate told us that his studies as a homeschool student "gave me a conscientiousness and seriousness about study which gained the respect of the professors."

Benefits of Seton

Many benefits will accrue to you simply from homeschooling, but specifically homeschooling with Seton Home Study School adds extra benefits. The most important added benefit is Seton's curriculum, which is thoroughly Catholic. Too many young Catholics go away to college and find that their faith is challenged on every front. That's not necessarily a bad thing. Challenges can be good, but only when you are properly prepared. A Seton student who has spent years studying Catholic theology, philosophy, and history has tools to defend the Faith.

Beyond the Catholicism, Seton's curriculum is rigorous and is an excellent preparation for college. We often hear from graduates who say that Seton was the best preparation they could have had for success in college. One graduate said, "Seton Home Study provided me invaluable college preparation. The books I read in middle school and high school empowered me to understand the great ideas written in both text books and primary sources." Sometimes, students in the middle of the program wonder why Seton requires so much writing. Once they get to college, they know exactly why. As a parent wrote recently, "After all the essays and papers written for Seton, my daughter just breezes through writing assignments in college!" Another parent told us that "Junior year English is the reason for my daughter's (a sophomore pursuing her masters of accountancy) success in college, where she is an honor student, on the dean's list, and the tutor for all writing at the university (including graduate level courses)." Seton's writing assignments seem difficult at the time, but each and every one of them is a preparation for the writing you will need to do in college. As one college valedictorian recently said, "Seton gives students a rigorous and diverse education in writing research reports, essays, paragraphs, literature analysis, short answer and essay exams; this trained me for any kind of writing assignment in any college class." The writing assignments are really an opportunity for the development of necessary and valuable skills.



Your Educational Team

Of course, while Seton's program is rigorous, it is also true that you're not alone. High school students at Seton do not take the journey by themselves. First and foremost, you have your parents and other family members to help. No one is more keen to see you succeed than your parents. Your Seton family is here for you as well, with a full range of academic counselors to support you. When you get caught in the rapids of Algebra, French, or Computer Programming, Seton offers qualified counselors to pull you out. Are you getting lost in English or History? There are counselors to guide you back to the path in these areas and more. All together, you, your parents, and the Seton staff constitute your educational team, and we are all working toward the goal of your academic success.

Not only can counselors help you with difficult technical issues, they are often able to assist you in the small things, helping you to work more efficiently. For example, one parent told us, "Algebra I was taking more than an hour each morning. After a couple of questions, the counselor told me to have my son use grid paper for math. That small switch had an amazing effect on his school day and ultimately his entire high school career."

Graders are an important part of your team as well. When you receive a grade on an assignment, that's just as much a learning opportunity as reading a book. Seton graders not only tell you

what you got right or wrong, but also often tell you why you got something wrong, and what you can do to improve.

An important feature of the Seton bridge to college is Seton's accreditation. Accreditation means that an outside entity has examined Seton's program--regarding both its academic and business aspects--and has determined that Seton offers a quality program that delivers what it promises. Seton's accreditation is through an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Seton is accredited by the same accrediting group that accredits public and private schools and colleges throughout the United States. Accreditation is important for high school students because it means that Seton credits are widely accepted, both by other high schools and also by colleges.

Besides accreditation, Seton's reputation as a solid academic institution is helpful to graduates moving on to college. Seton is one of the largest Catholic high schools in the United States, which means that whatever college you want to attend, the likelihood is that other Seton graduates have gone there before. This is a significant advantage because Seton students stand out amongst their peers as willing and able to learn. One university science professor wrote to us, "It was edifying to have taught students who had used the Seton program prior to entering university life. These students were a genuine joy to have in the classroom. Their eagerness to learn had a positive magnetic effect upon their peers." College admissions offices know Seton, and it means something to them that you are a Seton graduate. As one college's Admissions Director put it, "We trust Seton's curriculum as a serious curriculum, and if applicants are ... using Seton, we trust their grades really reflect their preparedness and achievement." When your

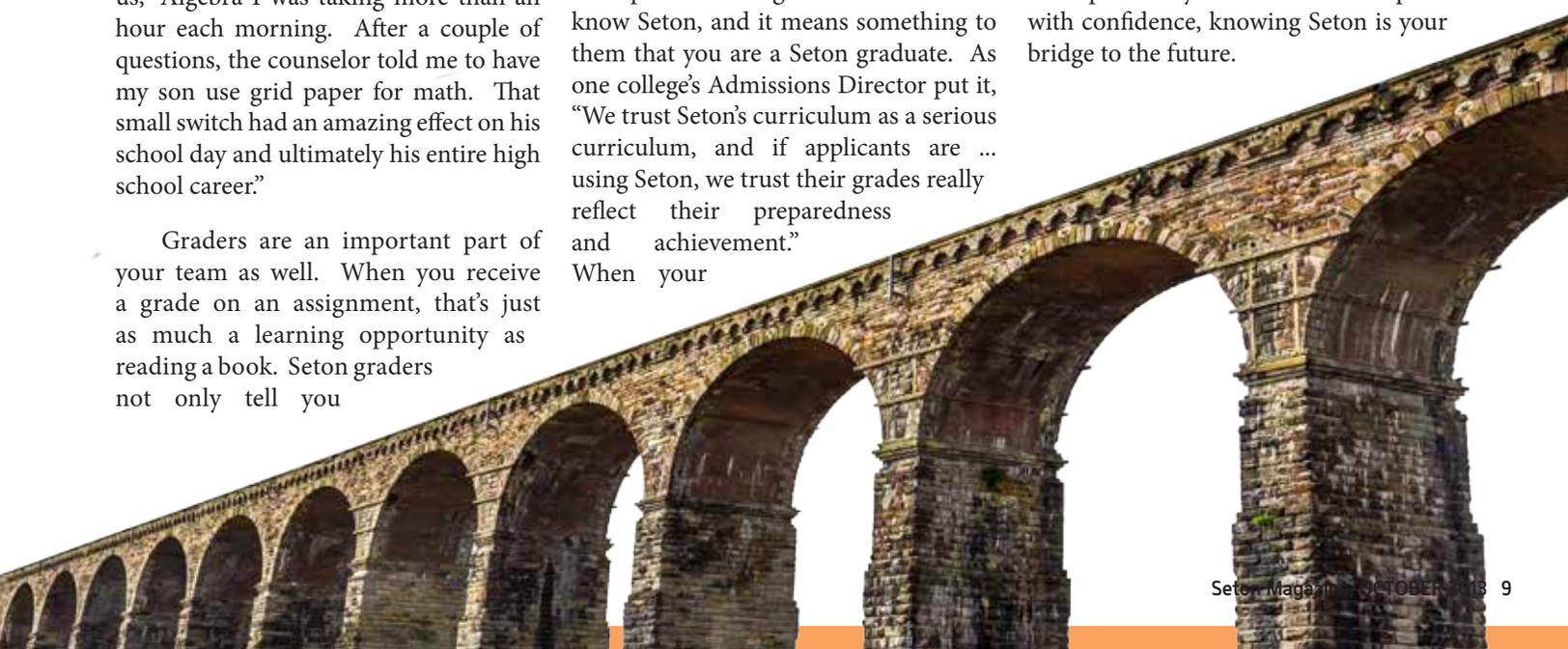
application arrives at an admissions office, you have the full backing of Seton Home Study School on your side.

We at Seton are very excited about a new initiative called the Seton College Partnership Program. We expect this program, which started only last year, will grow to be a major feature of our high school guidance and support, allowing for a much easier transition into college for Seton graduates. There are many



future possibilities for this program, such as automatic acceptance of Seton credits at partner colleges, special scholarship funds, dual-credit enrollments, etc.

High school is a great time of preparation. It's really a gift of time given to you between childhood and the coming responsibilities of adult life. Don't be afraid of high school; instead, use the time to develop your potential. High school is the chance of a lifetime. Decide to be great now, making the most of the hard work and opportunities Seton provides, and you will assuredly end up where you wish to be. Step out with confidence, knowing Seton is your bridge to the future.



Giving God a Chance

BY JOHN CLARK

You don't get to be my age without talking to some Catholic parents whose children have left the Faith. Though they have tried very hard to transmit the Faith to their children, homeschooling parents are not immune to children falling away. These parents have experienced a pain that is almost unimaginable to others, and one of the worst parts of this pain is that these parents tend to blame themselves for their children's mistake. If you are one such parent, let me make a few suggestions.

First, stop blaming yourself.

I don't know exactly how Jesus felt when He was betrayed by Judas. But I do know this: Jesus did not wonder where He went wrong with Judas. Jesus didn't "go wrong."

There's a pretty good chance that you didn't "go wrong" either.

That doesn't stop many good parents from blaming themselves. Thoughts that begin with "If only..." pervade their imagination and haunt their conscience. They imagine, "If only I had read to my child more," or "If only I hadn't let my child use Facebook..." But these thoughts aren't helpful.

We tend to do this to ourselves in a number of areas of human endeavor. As a longtime Cleveland Browns fan, I often wonder: "If only Brian Sipe hadn't thrown that pass against the Raiders in 1980..." or "If only Earnest Byner hadn't fumbled against the Broncos..." It's bad enough to have these thoughts about sports, but when

you are doing this regarding your children, these thoughts can cause you to vicariously despair about your kids when you should have hope. Still worse is when you blame your spouse. Begin to treat those negative thoughts like you would treat lustful thoughts. Block them out, and fill them with thoughts of hope instead. And give yourself a break.

Second, stop thinking that you may have made some mistakes in parenting.

If you think that parental mistakes make you unique, you need to get out more. St. Hilary's parents were pagans. St. Thomas Aquinas' parents had him imprisoned, in an attempt to prevent him from joining the Dominican order. St. Augustine's father was probably worse than either of the two. Despite lacking the benefits of proper Christian parenting, all three of these men became not only saints, but Doctors of the Church!

On the other hand, think about saints like St. Therese, St. Robert Bellarmine, and St. John of Avila. By most accounts, they had awesome parents. But you know what? The parents of these saints made mistakes, too!

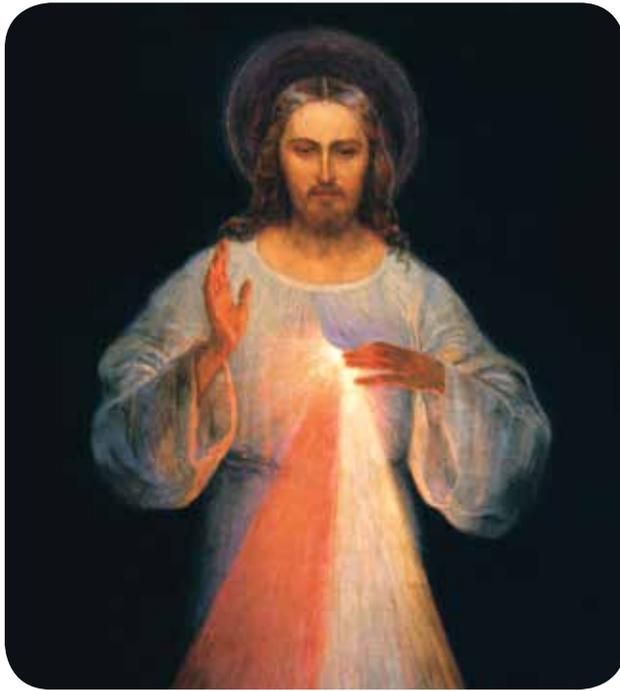
Remember this: regardless of parents, all of these men and women were granted free will—the same free will as your sons and daughters. Your children used their free will to abandon what you taught them, but you must hope that they will use this same free will to return to the Church!

Third, remember that God understands your sorrow.

I think it was Father George Rutler who told the story of a man who spent an afternoon in a famous museum. The man walked around and observed the paintings of Raphael and the sculptures of Michelangelo. After spending four hours in the museum—unimpressed by anything—he decided he had seen enough. On his way out, he told the museum curator, "I'm leaving. I haven't seen anything good here today."

Donning a facial expression of sadness, pathos, and a tinge of anger, the curator responded: "My good man, this art was not on trial. You were!"

You have given your children the Catholic Faith, the most precious jewel ever and always, and in various ways, they have responded like the man to the curator. Their attraction is not to the things of God, but rather to the things apart from God. But Jesus has experienced this "rejection," too. Jesus chose twelve Apostles. One betrayed Him for small change, one denied Him three times out of fear and to gain street credibility, and ten ran and hid when He was crucified. Jesus understands sorrow and loss and rejection by those whom you love! Spend an hour with Him in front of the Blessed Sacrament and cry. And most importantly, let Him know that you trust in Him.



In *The Way of Divine Love*, in an appearance to Sister Josefa, the Blessed Mother said “Trust Him, for He loves you and will never forsake you.”

Fourth, give God a chance.

Long-suffering Catholic parents might feel like they had a chance to raise their kids properly, and they blew it. Let me just tell you—you’re special.

But, no offense, you’re not that special.

When did you start to believe that the salvation of your children ultimately lay in your hands? If you believe that, it’s no wonder that you’ve been hurting. Take a sip of coffee and consider something: the salvation of your children ultimately lies not in you, but in God! By the way, that’s not just the John Clark Graduate Level Parenting Class speaking; that’s a doctrine of the Faith.

When it comes to salvation—and keep in mind that this statement is coming from someone who has made a career of writing and speaking about fatherhood—good parenting is only the gravy. The entrée is grace. God gives everyone sufficient grace for salvation. Good parenting may be the normal and natural channel for that grace, but for those who lack good par-

enting or resist it, God will choose another way. In many cases of canonized saints that we know about (and presumably countless others that we don’t know about), God did choose another way. The Good Shepherd never gives up.

As we pray for each other, let’s remember to say a prayer for those children who have veered off course. Let’s ask God to overwhelm their hearts with so much grace and so powerful a love that they can no longer resist Him. In *The Way of Divine Love*, in an appearance to Sister Josefa, the Blessed Mother said, “Trust Him, for He loves you and will never forsake you.”

And for those parents who are suffering, please know that you are in our prayers.



John Clark, a Christendom College graduate, holds a degree in Political Science and Economics. He is a popular writer and speaker at family and homeschooling conferences.

COLLEGE PREP

GOING INTO HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

By Bob Wiesner

During the past several months, Pope Francis has insisted that priests and religious should go into the streets and do some heavy lifting in evangelization. Workers in the Lord’s vineyard cannot allow themselves to become complacent, but should seek out difficult tasks in the real world. The words were addressed to consecrated religious, but Catholic lay people must not exempt themselves from the pope’s call to duty!

Seton teens (and their families!) should actively look for ways they can help “get out the Word.” There are certainly many apostolic works in need of volunteers, such as visiting people in a hospice, nursing home, or hospital; working at a soup kitchen or food bank; aiding the elderly or homebound with groceries, yard work, or housecleaning; or evangelizing the unchurched, perhaps through an organization like the Legion of Mary. In my teen years, I was close to a priest who ran a drug rehabilitation program. My mother wasn’t entirely happy about the company I kept with Fr. Joe, but I learned (and grew) a great deal from visiting people who were struggling with serious addiction problems. Whatever the work may be, a young Catholic should seek out some unfamiliar area of endeavor that is a little bit scary; fear is a great motivator for placing reliance upon God and the workings of the Holy Spirit! Such work is ALWAYS accompanied by some amazing manifestation of grace; expect to receive far more than what is given in such cases!

Catholicism truly does demand more than Mass and the Rosary. As Saint James tells us, faith without works is a dead, sterile thing.

Homeschool Success through a Flexible Schedule

As most parents start their second month of homeschooling in October, they may be wondering whether to stay on the Seton lesson plan schedule or adjust the schedule to better suit the needs of their children.

Lesson Plans are a Guide

We send lesson plans to help parents with their homeschooling scheduling. Having day-to-day lesson plans is a main reason why many parents choose Seton. Parents and students want to know how they can stay on schedule and be finished with the school year by June.

As parents and students start along the homeschool road, they discover that, like the road to their vacation spot, there are various pot holes, traffic back-ups, and detours. Inevitably, Dad and Mom need to make adjustments.

Our lesson plans are a suggestion, a recommendation. They are not like the Ten Commandments! They should be adjusted to the needs and abilities of the child. Sometimes they need to be adjusted because of new babies, or health problems, or other family situations.

Your concern and our concern is that the children learn the concepts and the skills. However, each child should advance at the child's own rate, subject by subject. Some children will advance more quickly in math and slower in English; another child will do the opposite. The beauty of homeschooling is that each course can be adjusted for each child's abilities.

Teach the Basics First

At all grade levels, the most important subject is religion. The content is vital for our children, and we parents don't want to hold back or skip over anything. We want to give the message that the teachings of Jesus must be learned every day. There cannot be a "vacation" from Jesus, Who loves us so much that He came to this world to teach us how to live and what to believe.

In the primary grades, the subjects of phonics, reading, spelling, and math need to be taught each school day. These should not be skipped. English is important, but could be delayed when necessary, though writing sentences whenever possible is important for thinking skills. History and science should be taught at least once a week, but can be done more informally, perhaps on a weekend.

While the basic order of importance should be the same in grades four and five, spelling and handwriting become more important. Handwriting has been relegated to the dust bin of history, as they say, by many schools, but it does come in handy at very important times in our lives. Even writing memos in offices can either speed up production or slow it down based on legibility.

In grades six to eight, all the subjects need to be covered as in earlier grades, but reading and reading interpretation skills, as well as writing and composition become of great importance. Vocabulary development, based on the workbooks as well as the readers and biographies, is especially important.

Science and history could be done on weekends or in the evenings with Dad or grandparents if more time is needed during the week for the other subjects. However, it is not just the subject matter that should be learned, but also reading-thinking skills should be applied in



these subjects as well. Students and parents should discuss the topics, providing students with an opportunity to use their skills such as outlining, classifying, proving statements, and developing vocabulary. In these later junior-high grades, composition skills are especially vital to prepare for high school and later college classes. Composition assignments can be given in history and science, even if the assignment is only an explanatory paragraph assigned once a week.

Once a student is in high school, there is not as much flexibility with courses because the student must take courses expected by the states and the colleges. However, the schedule can still be flexible. Some students take every subject every day, some students take only two subjects at a time for two months. In high school, students often have other activities, such as sports or jobs, and schoolwork can be scheduled to accommodate these things.

Homeschooling offers flexibility as well as the opportunity to learn more than the basics, to adjust the schedule to achieve not only higher grades but also to achieve an excellent Catholic education.

In our current fast-paced society, there is less appreciation for learning and for excellence. Perhaps our Seton students can change that.

Lesson plans should be adjusted to the needs and abilities of the child.

The beauty of homeschooling is that each course can be adjusted for each child's abilities.

Marriage, the Family, and Home Education

The following are excerpts from a speech given by the late Father John Hardon at a home schooling conference.

BY FATHER JOHN HARDON

Home education means the teaching by the parents at home, by both parents. A father's contribution to the home education of his children is indispensable.

Though the education of children does not exclude all other forms of education, nevertheless, the home is primary, so that education by both parents is secondary to nothing.... Every other means of training or educating the child is dependent on the home.

Both the body and the soul need to be educated ... therefore, home education constantly educates the one while being fully conscious that the other is also being educated.

I am not saying that home education is necessary merely in the modern world ... as though the necessity did not exist in the 18th or 19th centuries. It is not just because the modern world has become so widely and deeply secularized that home education has become a necessity. No. In fact, one of the main factors contributing to the secularization of once strongly Christian cultures has been the neglect of sound, orthodox, authentic, courageous, magisterial, historic Catholic teaching in faith and morals by parents.

It is the history of two thousand years of Christianity: unless this Catholic education is provided by parents from infancy, then the inevitable happens: the society in which that parental education is neglected secularizes the society.

Either Catholic parents provide their offspring with the education children need to obtain Heaven, or the inevitable consequence follows, as is happening in the world today.

Why are parents so necessary for the proper education of their children

and for the corresponding survival of the Catholic family? The answer is a cluster of reasons, derived from what is a matter of human nature and in the mystery of divine grace. The reason is that we are what we receive. We might call it the mysterious law of interdependence. It applies first to our physical nature.

Only human beings can reproduce human beings. This reproduction, however, is not only bodily, it is also mental and volitional. What do we know that someone else has not taught us? And what do we love, except what others have helped us to choose and appreciate?

There are two kinds of reproduction: in body and in spirit. Under God, the primary importance for parents is to reproduce themselves with their minds and their wills. Parents are to recognize that the children they have brought into this world are not meant for this world. They are meant for eternity.

The second reason parents are necessary for educating children is that parents are the primary source of grace. No one reaches Heaven without divine grace. No one receives this grace except through another human being, and parents are the primary channels of grace for their children. There is no Heaven without grace, no grace without people being channels of grace; and on Earth, the principal channels of grace for children are their parents.

This primacy of parents as channels of grace for the children comes through the Sacrament of Matrimony. The Sacrament of Matrimony confers two graces. First is the grace for husband and wife

to love one another faithfully. Second is the corresponding grace as parents to be channels of grace for their children.

The purpose of marriage is to rear families indeed here on Earth, but also to rear families for Heaven. Nothing less.

One of the great blessings of modern home education is that it is finally waking up some parents to God's plan for them. He wants to wake up parents, and not just in our own country.

The widespread secularization of organized education in so many parts of the Western world has, I believe, been the lightning and thunder that some have needed to wake them up to their primary duty as fathers and mothers.

St. Paul teaches that we are united with God by loving Him, and we love Him if we keep His commandments. If we love Him, He will use us to accomplish His divine plans. This is one condition parents must meet: that they are united with God in loving Him.

In other words, with faith in our union in God's Will, there is no limit at all to what God will accomplish through us. Miracles are nothing to God. Expect miracles in your lives. Hear me: expect miracles.

Be united with God, and in measure of your union with His Will, He will use you. Be clear about this: it is not merely giving others, our children, a good example. We simply are unable to give to others what we do not have ourselves.

In the measure that we love God, He will use us to achieve the design that He wants to achieve, and this means especially in the lives of others. For parents, of course, there are no other lives that should be more important than those of their children.

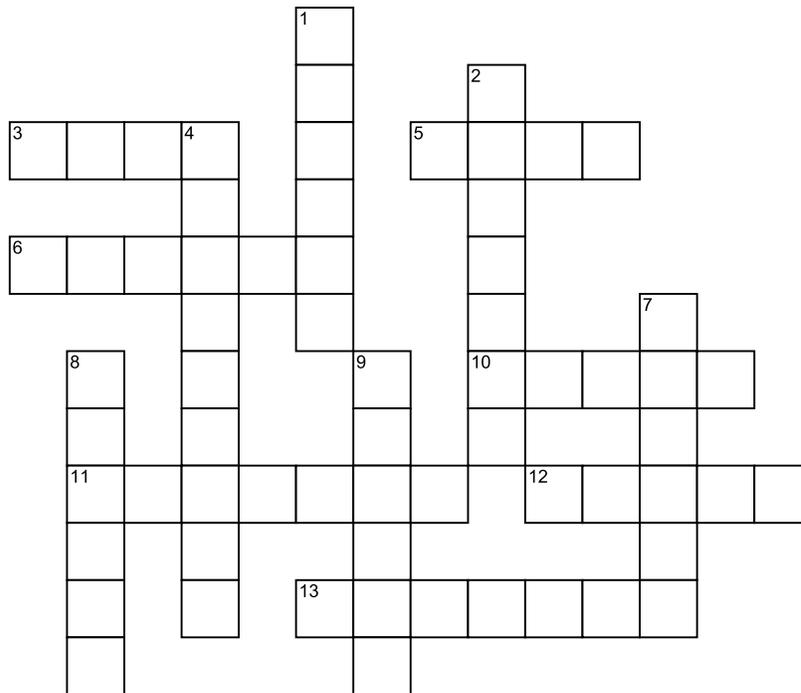
*There is no limit
to what God
will accomplish
through us.*

*Home education
is finally waking
up some parents
to God's plan for
them.*



**CATHOLIC
CROSSWORD**

Saints and Sacred



ACROSS

- 3 He wrote one of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.
- 5 ___ of Lima; the first person born in the Americas to be canonized
- 6 The miracle of the sun happened on October 13th in this town.
- 10 This saint was a prisoner of the Mohawks and was martyred by them: ___ Jogues.
- 11 The Little Flower
- 12 Early Roman martyr; her name means "lamb."
- 13 His feast day is October 4; he preached to the birds.

DOWN

- 1 The apostle who would not believe Jesus had risen until he put his finger inside the wounds of Jesus.
- 2 Our Lady gave him the Rosary.
- 4 The cousin Mary visited
- 7 Halloween is the day before All ___ Day.
- 8 ___ Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks
- 9 October is the month of this special prayer or devotion to our Blessed Mother.

SHOW YOUR SCHOOL SPIRIT WITH PRIDE

SPIRIT

SETON
HOME



STUDY
SCHOOL

WEAR

T-SHIRTS

14.99 S, M, L, XL



VISIT US ONLINE FOR FULL PRODUCT LISTING

www.SETONBOOKS.COM/SCHOOLSPIRIT

BESTSELLERS



LANYARD
\$3.99



DRAWSTRING
SPORTS PACK
\$7.99



CANVAS TOTE
\$19.99



S.H.S.S.
GROCERY BAG
\$2.99

APPAREL & ACCESSORIES



TEACHER'S ASSISTANT
\$14.99



S.H.S.S. SPIRIT LOGO
S, M, L, XL
\$14.99



FOR MOM & DAD
S, M, L, XL
\$14.99



'NEVER LATE FOR SCHOOL'
CHILD SIZES: S, M, L, XL
\$14.99



NECKLACES
\$4.99

Seton Home Study School

1350 Progress Drive

Front Royal, VA 22630

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 19
Elizabethtown, PA



THE BEST HOMESCHOOLING ARTICLES, RESOURCES, AND INSPIRATION. UPDATED DAILY!



WWW.SETONMAGAZINE.COM



the premiere online magazine for catholic homeschoolers



Catholic homeschooling voices, veterans and contributors...



PAPAL WISDOM



On Family Prayer

The concrete example and living witness of parents is fundamental and irreplaceable in educating their children to pray. Only by praying together with their children can a father and a mother, exercising their royal priesthood, penetrate the innermost depths of their children's hearts, and leave an impression that the future events in their lives will not be able to erase.

Let us again listen to the appeal made by Paul VI to parents: Mothers, do you teach your children the Christian prayers? Do you prepare them in conjunction with priests for the sacraments that they receive when they are young: Confession, Communion, and Confirmation? Do you encourage them when they are sick to invoke the aid of the Blessed Virgin and the saints? Do you say the family Rosary together?

And you, Fathers, do you pray with your children, with the whole family, the "domestic community" – at least sometimes? Your example of honesty in thought and action, joined to some common family prayer, is a lesson for life for your children, an act of worship of singular value. In this way, you bring peace to your home."

On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, 59-60