

# Seton



# MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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Every day at Seton, gathered before the altar at our noon 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.





# The Sacred Heart of Jesus

## *Quotes to Inspire Your Devotion*

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

On June 16, 1675, in an appearance to Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque, Jesus declared that she was to establish in the Church a special day of devotion to His Sacred Heart. It was to be the first Friday after the octave of the Blessed Sacrament, which falls in June. With the help of her confessor, Father de la Colombiere, the Sacred Heart devotion was officially proclaimed by the Church some years later. This year, the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is on Friday, June 12.

The story of the life of St. Margaret Mary is told in the Seton 7th grade *Reading Thinking Skills* workbook. Jesus had appeared before to Margaret Mary but on June 16, 1675, He revealed that He wanted her to promote a special devotion to His Sacred Heart.

Two other saints who were inspired to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart are St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, who started the Sacred Heart order of teaching nuns, and Sister Josefa Menendez (not officially declared a saint, but whose book, *The Way of Divine Love*, was approved by Pope Pius XII). Our Lord appeared to Sister Josefa numerous times, revealing His thoughts during the events of His sufferings leading up to His crucifixion.

The words of Our Lord to St. Margaret Mary, the words which preceded the request for a special feast day, are words Jesus repeated again and again to Sister Josefa.

“Behold this Heart, which has so loved men that It has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming Itself, in order to testify Its love. In return, I receive from the greater part [of humanity] only ingratitude, by their irreverence and sacrilege, and by the coldness and contempt they have for Me in this Sacrament of Love” [Holy Communion]. It is for this reason I ask thee that the first Friday after the octave of the Blessed Sacrament, be appropriated to a special feast to honor My Heart by receiving



Communion on that day, and making reparation for the indignity that It [My Heart] has received. And I promise that My Heart shall dilate to pour out abundantly the influences of My Love on all who will render It this honor or will obtain My Heart being given this honor.”

“And you, dear souls, why this coldness and indifference... Do I not know that family cares... household concerns... and the requirements of your position in life... make continual calls upon you?... But cannot you spare a few minutes in which to come and prove your affection and your gratitude?...spare a few moments to visit and receive [in Communion] this Prisoner of Love! Were you weak or ill in body, surely you would find time to see a doctor who would cure you? Come, then, to One Who is able to give both strength and health to your soul, and [One Who] watches for you, calls for you, and longs to see you at His side.”

“The Blessed Sacrament is the Invention of Love. It [the Blessed Sacrament] is life and fortitude for souls, a remedy for every

fault, and viaticum for the last passage from time to eternity. In it, sinners recover life for their souls; tepid souls true warmth, fervent souls tranquility...saintly souls wings to fly toward perfection...pure souls sweet honey...”

“Dearly loved souls, come and learn from your Model that the one thing necessary is surrender to God’s will in humble submission and by a supreme act of the will to accomplish the will of God whatever the circumstances may be. Learn from Him that all important action should be preceded and vivified by prayer, for only in prayer can a soul obtain the strength needed in life’s difficulties. In prayer, God will communicate, will counsel and will inspire.”

“O souls that I love, I [suffered] to teach you not to faint under your burdens. Never count them as useless, even if you are unable to reckon the result. Submit your judgment and leave the divine will free to do with you whatsoever it wills...remain in My peace. I am always with you even when you do not see Me.”

How many times Jesus told His disciples and the mothers: “Let the little children come to Me, for of such is the Kingdom of God.”

Ultimately, this is what Catholic homeschooling is about: leading the children to Jesus and eternal happiness with Him in Heaven. Catholic homeschooling is not as much about reading, writing, and arithmetic as it is about religion, responsibility, reparation, reverence, and righteousness.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Have Mercy on 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

## **My son in 7th grade cannot understand why we are homeschooling, or why we need to be different from other families.**

Explain that the type of teaching on a one-to-one basis has always been and always will be the best kind of education because it is the best way for anyone to learn. Learning in a group in a classroom means each student must move at the rate determined best by the state department of education, not by the needs of the students in the classroom.

Your son should understand that with homeschooling, when he needs help with a math problem or writing a book report, you and your husband are available to answer his questions when he needs the answer. He can take two or three days if needed to review any difficult concepts. At the same time, if your son can advance more quickly in spelling and vocabulary, he can do those more quickly on his own, which cannot be done in a classroom. In reality, it shouldn't be homeschoolers who need to explain why they teach in the best way for each student; it should be schools which need to explain why they don't.

Hopefully, you are able to take your son to Mass often. The graces from frequent reception of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, frequent confession, and an active Catholic family lifestyle will help your son to recognize that Catholic textbooks have lessons that are valuable to him. Through the lives of the saints and through daily practices of the Faith at home, your son can be strengthened against the difficulties that Catholics must endure in our secular society.

In high school, you should consider educating your son about the problems that students have in the schools of America. We

receive calls and emails from parents about either the lack of, or the attacks against, any teaching of Christianity. We hear about the pressure from other students for early sexual experiences, even pressure from teachers to accept same-sex "marriage" and other anti-Christian lifestyles. Students are pressured to accept legalizing drugs and abortion. In many high schools, students must endure bullying, gender-neutral bathrooms, and conversations most Christian adults would not want to endure.

*The graces from frequent reception of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, frequent confession, and an active Catholic family lifestyle will help your son to recognize that Catholic textbooks have lessons that are valuable to him.*

## **I have two students in high school. One gets his work done, but the other does not seem to care at all about his schooling.**

Teens need to learn to accept personal responsibility. Most young men eventually will become either priests or fathers, both positions for which there is tremendous responsibility. We parents need to be responsible ourselves by giving our high school students good examples of responsibility.

Perhaps your husband can take your sons to see him at his daily job. Sometimes sons can help their fathers in their jobs, so

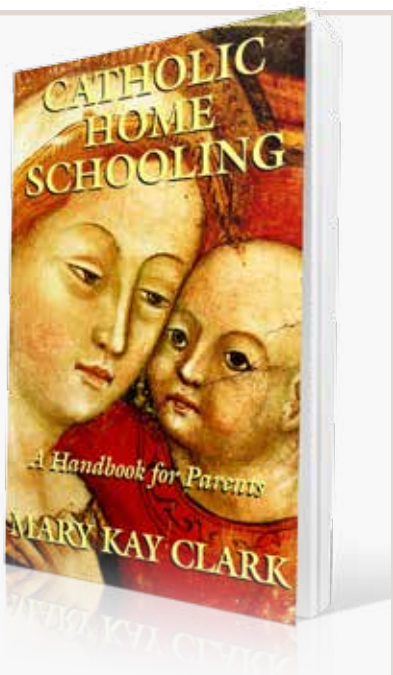
if that is possible, have them do that. Some fathers have the kind of job where their sons can not only help with their father's work, but also time can be scheduled during their "work" day to do some schoolwork! Your husband can emphasize how their schoolwork will help them in their own future work, whatever that may be. Dad can emphasize that their schoolwork can give them more choices for a job in the future.

Tell your sons stories about the hard work and responsibility of their grandparents or others in the past. My husband started working in his father's butcher shop before he was a teenager, taking a bus in the dark early morning, and returning home in the dark at night. He saw the daily hard work, the lifting of heavy meat, the carrying of the meat down the stairs to the huge refrigerator in the cellar. He learned how to talk with the customers, how to please them, how to make "city chicken" and how to trade with those low on money! At his mother's insistence, he learned to play the piano, and at sixteen, was paid for playing in a restaurant lounge. By 19, he saved enough money to purchase the first car ever owned by anyone in the family.

Every family has a teachable story to tell!

## **I see the list of the Seton Catholic college partners, but we really cannot afford to send our daughter to college. Is there a Catholic homeschooling college?**

Some Catholic colleges are offering online courses, but they are "supervised" by the college professors. I suspect Catholic college students will need to attend classes in person for at least the senior year. For now, you should investigate all possibilities for financial aid. Contact the local and state



## Catholic Home Schooling

**M-HSBK-01 \$10.00**

In this revised edition, Dr Mary Kay Clark examines virtually every area of homeschooling. A text which Catholic homeschooling parents will refer to often! Over 360 pages of advice from a mother of 7 sons who has been engaged in Catholic education for over 30 years, and now directs the largest Catholic home study school in the world.

[www.setonbooks.com](http://www.setonbooks.com)

Knights of Columbus to see what they will do to help Catholic students. Don't take no for the final answer! Keep asking.

If your student has excellent grades, many Catholic colleges will do everything they can to help. They want excellent students!

Contact your family members who might be able to help, but also contact close friends or even businesses in your town, or someone in your town or area who has given donations to schools or other educational enterprises. There are people with money who want to help good students go to college. Do some serious investigating, and keep praying!

Many people don't like to take loans, but bear in mind that the federal government gives extensive (some might say profligate) college loans. These loans are either subsidized (lower interest rate) or unsubsidized (higher interest

rate), but they are widely available. Although some may rightly question the wisdom of a student graduating from college with loans in excess of \$50,000, it is an option that is available to most students.

**My daughter is starting high school this summer. She wants to know more about the graduation at Seton.**

Seton holds a high school graduation every year in Front Royal, Virginia. This has proved to be very popular, and approximately 100 graduating students attend each year. Students have come from as far away as Hawaii, Dubai, and the Philippines in order to attend.

In addition to the actual graduation ceremony, we have a Mass for graduates, a Friday afternoon pizza party with moon bounces and pony rides (yes, pony rides), a reception with the staff of nearby Christendom College, and a family dance. It's quite an event, and we believe it helps our families to understand that Seton Home Study School is a real community of families striving toward the same goal of giving their children a great Catholic education.

If you'd like to see more about the graduation, including lots of pictures, go to [SetonMagazine.com](http://SetonMagazine.com) and search for "graduation". We also have a very nice video of the 2014 graduation which you can find on YouTube by searching for "Seton Home Study School".

**My children's grandfather would like to make a donation to Seton. He wonders what in particular Seton might need.**

Seton has many expenses, as you might imagine. One current extra expense we have is that we are developing online high school courses as well as online tutorial videos for courses. That is in addition to our everyday expenses of maintaining equipment, buying books, and paying salaries.

Many people like to donate to our scholarship fund, which allows us to give financial aid to families who might not otherwise be able to afford our program. This is a way to give very direct help to those in need.

Seton is a 501c3 charitable organization, so donations are tax-deductible.



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Seton College Partners is a way to encourage our students to continue their Catholic education by attending a solidly Catholic College after high school.



AVE MARIA  
UNIVERSITY



CHRISTENDOM  
COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY  
OF DALLAS



JOHN PAUL THE GREAT  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



NORTHEAST  
CATHOLIC COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY  
ST. THOMAS  
HOUSTON



THOMAS AQUINAS  
COLLEGE



THOMAS MORE COLLEGE  
OF LIBERAL ARTS



Wyoming  
Catholic College  
*Wisdom in God's Country*

[setonhome.org/colleges](http://setonhome.org/colleges)





# All the Way to Eternity

by Howard & Susan Hendershott

I tossed the dish towel over my shoulder and sat down slowly on the bench in the kitchen. The radio announcer was talking about an upcoming interview with a home educator. I had never heard of this before and found it fascinating. My thoughts drifted to the happy sounds of my husband bathing our three-year-old daughter and one-year-old son upstairs. How much fun it would be to educate our children at home, I mused. We began to research the field of homeschooling materials and searched through Mary Pride's books on home learning to discern which curriculum to use.

In the end, we found Seton Home Study School. It was the highest-rated, most complete, Catholic curriculum available in the country, with regional accreditation. Seton helps equip our children with good

study habits and discipline which prepares them for success in college and for life in the world. As our years of homeschooling progressed, we periodically reevaluated our decision to continue homeschooling. We methodically discussed the pros and cons, and, without hesitation, we always continued with Seton.

When we reached the threshold of high school, we spent a lot of time discerning our options. In the end, we continued using Seton through high school. Now, twenty-seven years later, six of our eight children have graduated from Seton Home Study High School, and our last two children are well on their way. Over all these years, we opted for Seton because it offers a comprehensive curriculum with high standards of academic excellence, one that fully embraces and teaches the Catholic

Faith, and one that is user-friendly.

Seton Home Study School is a comprehensive and challenging curriculum with national credibility. We work through the lessons diligently because we want to give our children the best education we can, expecting them to master every subject. Seton helps us equip our children with good study habits and discipline that prepare them for success in post-secondary education and life in the secular world.

To round out the education and formation of our children, we provide extracurricular activities such as sports, music, and social events because we recognize the need to engage our children with other adults and peers. Rather than turn away from the world, we enter into the world with activities such as scouting, soccer, basketball, swimming, volunteering in the community, and developing special interests and hobbies such as language, music, and art, to develop the whole person, mind, body, and soul.

## Solid Catholicity

Another aspect of the Seton Home Study School program that we value is the solid Catholicity. It fully embraces and integrates our Catholic Faith throughout all the courses. With the help of Seton's teaching, our home has become centered in prayer. Over the years, Seton introduced us to Catholic prayers and practices of the Faith



that we then incorporated into our day. We learned to begin each day with morning prayers, Mass, and a family Rosary. As time went on, we started to weave in the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Angelus or Regina Caeli, grace before and after meals, bedtime prayers, and a blessing from Dad before turning out the lights (Numbers 6:24 – 26). In addition to our home prayers, we adore Our Lord for one hour per week, thanks to perpetual adoration offered by our home parish.

We attended the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass more often, even daily, and provided the opportunity for our family members to go to Confession every week. Our sons faithfully serve the altar for both the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms of the Mass, and the children are in the church choirs, singing and/or playing the organ.

The catechesis of the Seton program is stellar. The exemplary practice of memorizing the Baltimore Catechism has been a jewel for our family. It has formed our children by laying down a solid foundation of the Faith on which to build. The exposure to the lives of the Saints cannot be underestimated as well. It is an integral part of the Seton program. The textbooks, book reports and analyses, and lesson plans are laden with model Christian

lives to be emulated by the reader. With the help of the Holy Spirit, each of our children has embraced a saint when they were young and continues to hold that relationship dear as they grow older. Catholic world history rounds out the catechesis of the Seton program for us. It provides a Catholic worldview for the students and gives us a skyline perspective of the events and the people who have made a difference in the world, knowing Our Lord is the major influence in the lives of all.

Another advantage to the Seton Home Study School program is its ease of use. This curriculum has facilitated the administration of our children's education in so many ways.

First, the daily lesson plans are super. They are very well planned and organized, making them easy to follow, and they improve each year to our amazement. The comprehensive lesson plans are especially important when teaching as many as five, sometimes even seven students at one time, from first graders to seniors in high school. This structure allows the more advanced students to progress at their own pace.

Next, the faculty and staff at Seton offer academic counseling when selecting coursework and dealing with performance



and developmental issues.

Thirdly, Seton offers timely and consistent feedback, maintaining high standards of achievement. Assignments are graded promptly, keeping the students engaged and motivated.

Over the years, we have always found Seton Home Study to be an excellent, complete program that embraces and proclaims the Catholic Faith while being easy to use. The curriculum has the ingredients we needed for learning and living an authentic Catholic Faith. It gave us the tools we needed to create a Catholic culture in our home, equips our children to live an authentic Catholic life, and continues to be an important means to reaching our goal: eternal life with God.

...continued on page 13



## How Seton Helped My Vocation

by Rev. Mr. Michael A. Hendershott. He will be ordained in June 17, 2015

*For me, the Seton curriculum facilitated a way to not only know, but also to live the Catholic Faith. It made Catholic doctrine pertinent to everyday life, especially in terms of seeing reality with the supernatural eyes of faith. From (attempting to) reconcile an argument in the sandbox to completing chores on a Saturday morning, my holistic Catholic formation helped me try to reform my life, always turning towards the Divine Assistance. I would not return the Catholic culture that the Seton curriculum—with the help of my parents and priests—brought to my childhood-teenage years for anything!*

*The religious aspect of the Seton program is not merely a subject, and much less a book, but—permeating every aspect of the Seton program—the religious education is cultural beyond compare. It helps not only the individual, but also the family to develop a Catholic culture in their home and a Catholic way of thinking. Realizing that both the family and the individual*

*will encounter the ordinary and perhaps the extraordinary challenges in life—moral, emotional, financial, etc. just like every other family—the Seton curriculum cultivates the Catholic way of dealing with these challenges. Thus with Christian hope, family members cultivate an atmosphere of Christian charity, beginning in the home and extending to friends, neighbors, other Christians, and fellow citizens. Indeed, the Seton curriculum helps parents, families, and individuals to cultivate a Catholic life of faith, hope, and charity.*

*The Seton curriculum proposed the various Catholic vocations all in a positive light and each as a good and acceptable way of living the Catholic life and attaining salvation. I chose to pursue the priesthood not only for my own salvation, but more importantly to bring salvation to souls, indeed to bring God to souls in the sacraments and thus to bring as many souls as possible to God.*





# Vocations at Seton



When Seton Home Study School was established in 1980, its first objective was to provide a Catholic and academically excellent education to families who had neither proximity to nor means of paying for a good Catholic school education. Its second objective was to influence the American bishops to resist the secularization of diocesan schools. Along with small parent-operated schools and other homeschooling programs, Seton established an alternative to the increasingly troubled educational scene, providing a firm footing for quality academic training in general, and Catholic formation in particular.

Though the educational establishment in America only increases in hostility to our mission, Seton Home Study School maintains greater hope than ever for the future of Catholicism in America because Seton graduates are going out into the world with rock solid faith, strong family values, and an excellent education, bearing witness to the Truth in an otherwise relativistic and materialist society. In a very special and particular way, the many Seton alumni who have gone on to a religious vocation are working to keep the Church alive from the inside out.

BY  
FATHER  
JAMES  
GOULD

## 4 Ways to Encourage Vocations

Thirty years ago, when I was a “child priest”, new to the Vocations Office for the great Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, an interviewer asked my expectations concerning the future candidates for the diocese. My response was quite simple: “We want men of prayer who can preach with courage, teach with clarity, and serve with charity.” It was nothing new and just that simple. Our future was wrapped in the historic and heroic example of our parish priests.

Vocations, by their nature, involve a call from God to serve, in a ministerial way, in His name and person (in priesthood). Religious vocations offered to young men and women can be found in every corner of the world. God calls all that He wills. For those who respond in the positive, much credit should go to the Lord, His Blessed Mother, angels and saints, priests and religious, parents and siblings... and not the least, members of the Legion of Mary. Those who opt away from the call may do so because

of the world, the flesh, and the devil. These along with anger, distraction, indifference, or disappointment close minds and hearts to the call of God. After all, even religious are not blind to the things of the world.

The question is, practically speaking, what can you do to foster vocations?

**1) Kids.** Most religious vocations are considered for the first time when the young ones are between the second and fourth grades. At this point, they need to see love for the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist (received at Mass and revered in Adoration) in their families. They need to learn the stories of the Blessed Mother and the saints. My own dear mother is always promoting St. Tarcisus for the young because of his love for the Blessed Sacrament, a love that cost him his very life.

Children need to hear about what priests and religious do. To introduce the notion of religious life someone should suggest missions abroad or missions at home; sisters in hospitals and nursing homes; sisters in

schools or monasteries. More often than not, children are starving for knowledge of what God’s loyal servants do for a living. Note a little trivia for your stories... Roughly ten percent of the religious communities in America are garbed in religious habits and yet they get ninety percent of the vocations.

For the boys someone needs to talk about priests who serve in the military or prisons, priests in the foreign missions or immigrant communities at home; those who teach in the high schools and universities, priests who serve in retreat houses and monasteries. And don’t forget the parish priests. I used to ask kids what their parish priests did for a living in the parish. Their answers: Say Mass, hear confessions, play golf, and go places. Go figure.

**2) Parents.** Be good parents. Love your wife; love your husband. If you really want to see what your future pastor or religious is going to be like go look at his father or her mother. Trust me, if your second grader announces an interest in



It's only recently that Seton has begun to keep track of alumni and student achievements, but since 2000, we know that at least 6 alumni have been ordained to the priesthood, 9 more have joined the seminary, 5 young women have become professed nuns, and at least 4 other alumni have entered the novitiate at a monastery or convent.

## A Reason for Hope

Asked to describe her reaction to the latest religious vocations from Seton Home Study School, Dr. Mary Kay Clark noted that while Seton can't take credit for God's work, she does believe that Seton provides a culture and an environment that makes it easier to hear the call. By helping parents teach their children at home, Dr. Clark says that Seton is helping "provide an environment that is safe and that protects a prayer life, encourages attendance at Mass, and fosters

Catholic life in the family home," without which it is very difficult to hear God's call to a religious vocation.

When Seton staff hear about alumni going on to religious vocations, there is rejoicing. The reason Seton is here is because "we believe we can help families raise their children in the faith." Our work is "missionary work," as Dr. Clark puts it, and religious vocations provide a taste of the fruits of our labors. It is a gift to be able to partner with families and with parents in the journey to Heaven, and a religious vocation provides unique reassurance that our work has not been in vain.

Of course, it is important to recognize the marriages that have been built between Seton alumni, of which there are many, and the even greater numbers of marriages that involve at least one Seton graduate. The crisis of family in today's world can only be

overcome by the witness of strong, faithful, Christian marriage. It is our firm belief that the paradigm of homeschooling, in which children have the opportunity to witness the graces and blessings of the marriage sacrament on a continual basis, provides the firmest possible foundation upon which to build future flourishing relationships. Children in these circumstances observe and participate in the relationships of their parents through every part of every day, and they see the example of commitment, prayer-based problem solving, charity, and hard work that leads to happiness and success in the marriage vocation.

Thank you to the parents whose courage in homeschooling has blessed America's future with reason for hope. May God be praised for His continual blessings, and the graces He gives to new generations!

priesthood or the religious life, then your life has to change for the better. You need to dial up your prayer life (night prayers for the whole family), devotions with visits to the Blessed Sacrament, attention to sacraments (confessions monthly and frequent attendance at Mass), hard work, generosity, and sacrifice, and . . . sobriety.

Please commit this to memory. Those who go to Confession frequently develop four qualities: humility (It is hard to manipulate a humble person); forgiveness for the fools of the world; hard work; and last... when the first three are there, the person will be more creative (they can think outside the proverbial box).

**3) Siblings.** Please understand that it is easier for priests and religious to live their life in service of the Lord if their siblings are also invested in Him. Don't make a life of broken promises in your faith and morals. Live faithfully, and offer prayer, sacrifice, and support for your sibling's vocation. That will do much to promote the image of Christ among the faithful. Teach younger siblings how to play team sports and develop a good sense of humor. We can use a couple of good type A personalities but they don't develop without supportive siblings. Lastly, don't

spoil them... I may have to live with them.

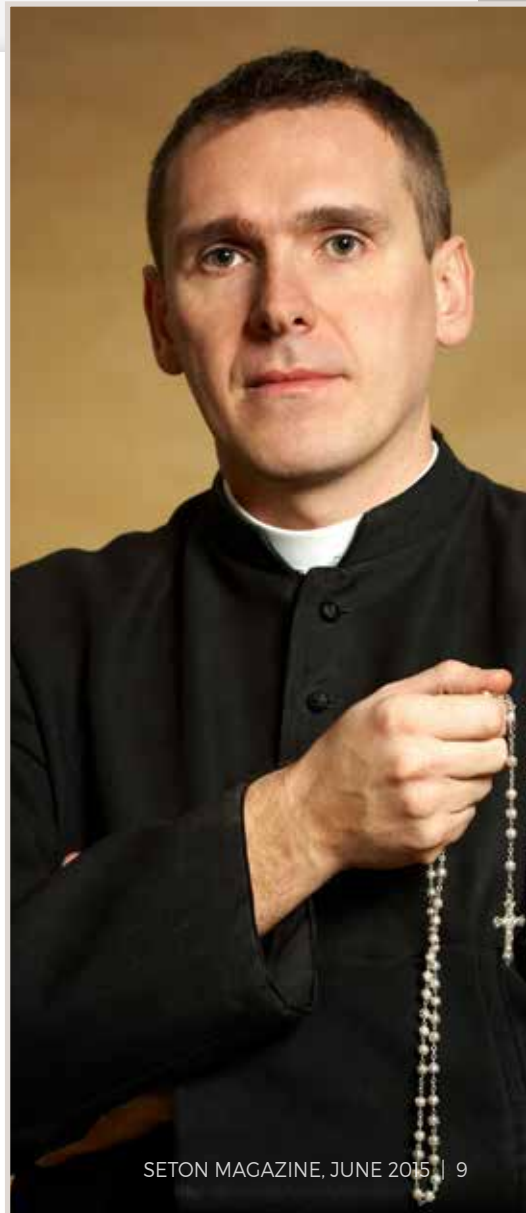
## 4) Religious & Teachers.

Be happy in your life. Carry the examples of a parent, listed above, and add humility to the list. Nothing breeds contempt for the clergy like arrogance and laziness. Please speak well of the Holy Father, your bishops, and religious leaders. As in all ages, children today need heroic figures. The fraternity of priesthood and sorority of religious life is called to be the greatest fraternity the world has ever known. Within its ranks are found martyrs, saints, and "sinners." Foster respect among young people for the religious life and clerical office.

We all need improvement and if we set our sights on living our faith well, we will inevitably set the stage for God to speak to our youth. Love daily Mass, recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours, frequent Confession, daily rosary, and visitations before the Blessed Sacrament. Let us pray for one another. God bless and keep you.



**Father James R. Gould** originates from Memphis, Tennessee, and is one of 9 children. He was ordained in 1981 for the Diocese of Arlington. As diocesan director of vocations from 1985-2000, he was one of the most successful vocations directors in the USA. Currently he is pastor to St. John the Evangelist Church in Warrenton, VA.



# FATHERHOOD

## a vocation of love

BY JOHN CLARK



*Louis & Zélie Martin*

Almost two centuries ago in France, a little boy named Louis Martin felt drawn to the religious life as he grew up. He was a happy child who benefitted from witnessing his father's deep love for the Catholic Faith. Though he apprenticed as a watchmaker in his late teens, Louis did not forget his dream to devote his life to God through the religious life. Over the years however, for various reasons including illness, his efforts to pursue a vocation failed.

Though for much of his life he did not consider marrying, in his mid-30's Louis went for a walk, and encountered Zélie, a woman who would soon become his wife. His wife would later comment that when she saw Louis, she heard a voice inside her that said: "This is the husband I have destined for you."

Coincidentally, Zélie also had wished to pursue a religious vocation but had been unable to do so. However, the couple decided that they would serve God through their love for each other, and their love for their children. They would take on a new vocation together.

The couple would go on to have nine children, but tragically, four of them died in infancy or childhood. However, five of their children—all girls—survived into adulthood. Louis proved to be a warm and gentle father who not only provided a wonderfully happy home for his family, but made an impression on his daughters of the idea of a loving and compassionate God. Both Louis and his wife were hard workers who ran businesses together yet always devoted time to adore God, go to daily Mass, and care for the poor. Louis always found time for his daughters, not the least of which was his youngest, who seemed like a delicate "little queen."

Sadly, Zélie contracted cancer and died when her youngest daughter was only four

years old, leaving him with the task of raising the girls. Though he missed his wife terribly, he succeeded admirably as a loving father, guiding his daughters by the hand through the Christian life.

Ironically, although Louis was unable to pursue his own religious vocation, he witnessed all five of his daughters pursue theirs, as one by one, they became religious sisters. After four of his daughters, including his youngest, had already entered the religious life, the remaining daughter came to him and announced her intention to become a religious sister as well. Louis knew that this would leave him, in many ways, alone in the world. But he also knew that his children were merely loaned to him from God, and he had the humble confidence in God to know that the final destination of his whole family was one they would share together forever. After his daughter announced her desire to become a sister, Louis responded to her: "Come, let us go together to the Blessed Sacrament to thank the Lord who has given me the honor of taking all of my children."

After a series of health problems, Louis died several years later. Louis had done a wonderful job as a husband and father. He had sacrificed and suffered for his wife and children, been overjoyed with them, and had shared a deep love of God with them. Few men in history have lived the vocation of husband and father as well as Louis, which is perhaps even more amazing considering that he first desired a different vocation.

Though Louis' story is known in some corners of Christendom, it will be proclaimed to the world this October, when he and Zélie will be canonized together by Pope Francis. And it will not be the first time that their family name will be raised to the altar. As it turns out, Louis' youngest daughter was

named Therese Martin, whom the world now knows better as Saint Therese of Lisieux.

Saint Therese—Doctor of the Church, answerer of countless intercessions, the "Little Flower" who promised to spend Heaven doing good on Earth, the little saint who answered a prayer for this writer's wife about whether to marry him—was the daughter of a wonderful father. In the Providence of God, Therese's vocation was made possible by her father's vocation.

As Louis Martin taught us, fatherhood is not an easy vocation, even if you have the most wonderful children. Fatherhood takes mental toughness, physical perseverance, emotional stability, and spiritual passion. It demands sacrifice, humility, hard work, and dedication. It requires courage, patience, wisdom, and understanding. But far above these, it requires love. As Pope John Paul II wrote years ago: "Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being." And the life of a good father personifies that love. What a beautiful reminder for us on father's day. For us fathers, as Blessed Louis illustrated, love is our vocation.



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**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.



# The Holy Spirit & the Balloon

DENNIS P. MCGEEHAN

My wife and I are the parents of eight wonderful children, currently ages 17 to 28. The four youngest are all diagnosed as Special Needs, although in many ways, they are the same as their older siblings, each a unique adventure in parenting.

My wife and I take our faith seriously and it is vital for us to pass it on to our children. Growing in the Faith can be measured in different ways and, for us, the reception of the Sacraments is high on the list.

Having eight kids, my wife and I are very familiar with the preparations for Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation. However, our familiarity with the process became a source of trepidation for us as our fifth child, Kenneth, prepared for his Confirmation.

## Different Eyes

Kenneth has Asperger's Syndrome. He sees the world through different eyes and he has struggled in social situations. In a group setting, Ken has struggled with the give and take of conversation, sometimes changing the topic with apparent randomness. When he was younger, he would take words literally, which often led to huge misunderstandings. When he first heard the expression, "It's raining cats and dogs," he looked outside with horror for fear of the felines and canines crashing to earth.

Ken has made incredible progress, mostly thanks to his mother, who homeschooled him for 10 years. At home, he had the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them while being taught by a person who loved him more than she loved herself. That didn't mean it was easy, however; in fact it never was easy, just always interesting! You see, Ken doesn't like to ask for help, especially from Mom or Dad.

Ken entered C.C.D. in fifth grade and I

ended up being his teacher. I stayed with Ken through 6th, 7th and 8th grades, moving up with him. It was as much for my comfort as his, I admit. In ninth grade, the preparation for Confirmation begins with classes and retreats. For the first time in his life, Ken had a teacher who was not his parent. This made me a bit nervous but I also recognized it as an opportunity for Ken's development in independence.

Eleventh grade arrived and Ken helped with the diocesan service project for his upcoming Confirmation. Again, I was with him, but I mostly worked on tasks away from him. Eventually the time arrived when Ken would attend his eleventh grade retreat, this time with his sponsor. Leading up to the day of the retreat, I and my wife did our fair share of worrying but for some reason when the day itself arrived, I was not nervous at all. I drove Ken to the retreat and told him I would be back that evening to pick him up.

## I Drew A Balloon

The Confirmation retreat always follows the same schedule; an ice breaker, prayer, a talk, a video, and an art project. For the art project, the students are broken into groups, and they are told to draw something that illustrates the effect of Confirmation on their lives.

About seven hours after I dropped Ken off, I returned to the school to pick him up. As I pulled up, he hopped in. I waited for him to fasten his seat belt and then pulled away. We had the usual Father- Teenage Son discussion.

"How was your day?" *Fine.* "Did you have fun?" *I guess.* "What did you learn?" *I don't know.*

I bit my tongue. His teachers from ninth and tenth grade had commented to us how well Ken knew his faith. Way to go,



Mom! She did Religion with him five days a week. Ken's eleventh grade teacher also had reported that he was doing well in class, but this conversation wasn't giving me much confidence.. I asked a question I knew the answer to. "Did you make a poster?"

He replied, "Oh yeah, it was kind of cool. We worked together as a team to draw a poster... We had to show how the Holy Spirit helps our faith."

Feeling reassured, I asked, "So, what did you draw for the Holy Spirit?"

"I drew a balloon!"

My reassurance disappeared. For a moment, my mind played a deluge of Cats and Dogs. I asked in as calm a voice as I could muster, "How does a balloon represent the Holy Spirit?"

Ken replied, "Well, you see, the more you learn about God and the Church, the more faith you have. It's kind of like blowing up a balloon. The more air in the balloon, the bigger it gets. The more you pray and learn, the more faith you have."

I admit his answer surprised me, "That's neat Ken; I never thought of it that way before."

"But there's more. You see, the bigger your balloon gets, the more Satan wants to pop your balloon. The Holy Spirit helps keep him from popping your balloon."

I was stunned and all I could say was, "I think you really got it, Ken, I really do."

I couldn't stop smiling all the way home.



**Dennis P. McGeehan** is a husband, homeschooling father of eight, Martial Artist, Freelance Writer and Author. His latest book is titled *The Diaries of Joseph and Mary*. He blogs at [www.warriorworlddad.com](http://www.warriorworlddad.com)

## Mrs. March: The Example of Motherhood from 'Little Women'

Editor's note: For our vocations issue, we could not forget motherhood. One of the most beloved mothers in literature is Mrs. March, from Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*.

A mother of four daughters (Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy) raising a family in nineteenth century America in the background of the Civil War, Mrs. March educates her children in manners and morals, forms them into intelligent, gracious, loving women, and transmits to her daughters the perennial wisdom of human experience and Christian living.

Mrs. March knows that the mother sets the tone for the family, and if the mother is happy and joyful, then the home will be happy and joyful also. As she tells Meg at one point, "... keep cheerful as well as busy, for you are the sunshine maker of the family, and if you are dismal there is no fair weather."

### The Riches of Family Life

Enjoying a humble life in modest circumstances without luxury, Mrs. March teaches her children the riches of family life that wealth does not purchase. The oldest daughter Meg envies girls who can afford gowns for balls and attendance at concerts, Beth feels deprived without the benefit of music lessons, and Amy feels at a social disadvantage with other girls her age who enjoy affluence.

The sisters soon learn, however, that their wealthy neighbor Teddy feels poor compared to the March sisters. Living alone with his grandfather, he feels he is missing the joys of family life when he observes all the fun the March sisters experience. He remarks, "I can't help looking at your house, you always seem to be having such good times."

Every evening he notices the domestic joy of the entire March family gathered in one room: "it's like looking at a picture to see the fire, and you all round the table with your mother."

While the March sisters love fashion, style, finery, and elegance and think of marrying into wealth, Mrs. March instills in them higher ideals. Although she wishes them "to be beautiful, accomplished, and good; to be admired, loved, and respected . . . to be well and wisely married, and to lead useful lives," she explains that happiness in love and marriage do not depend upon riches.

### Nurture Forgiveness

Mrs. March consistently teaches her daughters to apologize, repent, and forgive.

When Jo and Amy argue and lose their tempers because Jo does not want to take her younger sister to the theater and Amy retaliates by burning manuscripts of Jo's stories, the sisters harbor bitter resentment and refuse to talk to each other. Amy taunts Jo with recriminating words: "I told you I'd make you pay for being so cross yesterday," and Jo also vows revenge: "I never can write it again, and I'll never forgive you as long as you live."

Amy's hostility and Jo's hardheartedness nearly result in tragedy as Jo, thinking "let her take care of herself," neglects to warn her sister of the thin ice when skating. After Amy falls in the cold water and narrowly escapes drowning, Jo suffers remorse and guilt at the thought of losing her sister, crying "Mother, if she should die, it would be my fault."

The sisters learn from their mother the Biblical teaching she cites: "My dear, don't let the sun go down upon your anger." Arguments cannot persist, divide family members, and destroy family relationships.

The mother teaches her daughters the largeness of heart and mind that initiates reconciliation and forgives and forgets rather than nurturing resentments and breeding animosity.



### A Greater Happiness

Mrs. March teaches her children gratitude for the simple blessings of family life that surpass in riches the luxuries enjoyed by the affluent.

She instills the need to apologize, repent, and forgive as a virtue always in demand for friendships and family bonds to grow in oneness and affection. She teaches that resentments should not fester and breed hatred, hardness of heart, or spite.

Reminding them that no man, woman, child, or marriage is perfect, she teaches the beauty of humility that apologizes first rather than waiting for the other to seek reconciliation. She offers common sense and Christian wisdom to address life's difficulties, communicating always that marriage and family life require the art of the possible rather than unrealistic ideas about perfection.

She centers the thoughts of her children always on the first things that matter rather than the distractions, fashions, and trends that divert young minds from the true and the good. While all the March sisters had great aspirations in their young fantasies they called "castles in the air"—Meg dreaming of luxuries, Jo of literary fame, and Amy of artistic acclaim—all find their greatest source of contentment in their marriages and families.

When the Marches celebrate the sixtieth birthday of their mother and see the fruitfulness of her love in the happiness of her married daughters and grandchildren, they hear one of the deepest desires of her heart that forms the center of their own lives: "Oh, my girls, however long you may live, I never can wish you a greater happiness than this!"



Dr. Mitchell Kalpakgian earned his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa, taught at Simpson College for 31 years, and at Christendom College for 2 years. He designed Seton's Shakespeare course and is instrumental in grading Shakespeare and high school English courses at Seton.



## *All the way to Eternity*

continued from page 7

Today, we are proud of the paths our children have taken. Our oldest daughter, Christine, is a nurse practitioner married to a pediatrician, and they are newly the parents of our first granddaughter.

Our oldest son, Michael, has been at the Pontifical North American College in Rome for the past several years and he will be ordained a priest for the Diocese of Knoxville on June 27, 2015.

Our daughter, Mary, completed a bachelors in interdisciplinary studies along with a paralegal certificate and is now teaching elementary students at a parochial school in Memphis.

Our daughter, Sarah, works as an RN for the NICU at Vanderbilt Children's Hospital, and will be marrying an electrical engineer in July.

Anne, a CNA, will be graduating from the University of Tennessee with a degree in Nursing next year, and has already traveled extensively with caregiver programs.

John Paul is currently an intern doing electronics research at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and will be entering his freshman year at the University of Tennessee for computer engineering this year.

Andrew is our rising junior with Seton Home Study School, who enjoys outdoors, sports, music, and Latin.

Catherine is our rising 7th grader with Seton, and is a great help to her mother in the kitchen and her father in the gardens, even as she pursues her own interests in sports and music.



## GUIDANCE

# A Summer Done Right

BY BOB WIESNER

Summer's here, students. Thank good-ness, right! Now you can sit back, relax, and recover from a long hard year of schoolwork. Or if you're not especially fond of relaxing, maybe you can get a job and make some money to put toward looming college expenses.

While neither option is necessarily an unworthy pursuit, I'd like to propose a higher road. Even as you work on recuperating from the school year or establishing some financial security, consider using this summer to work on charity. Help the old guy down the street by mowing his lawn and trimming his bushes. Offer to babysit the younger kids for a couple of nights so your parents can take a mini-vacation by themselves. Volunteer to read to the elderly at an assisted living home in your area. Galvanize your peers to do a roadside clean-up project.

Willingly seek out extra chores at home that can take the pressure off your parents. Offer to help the older lady next door with her

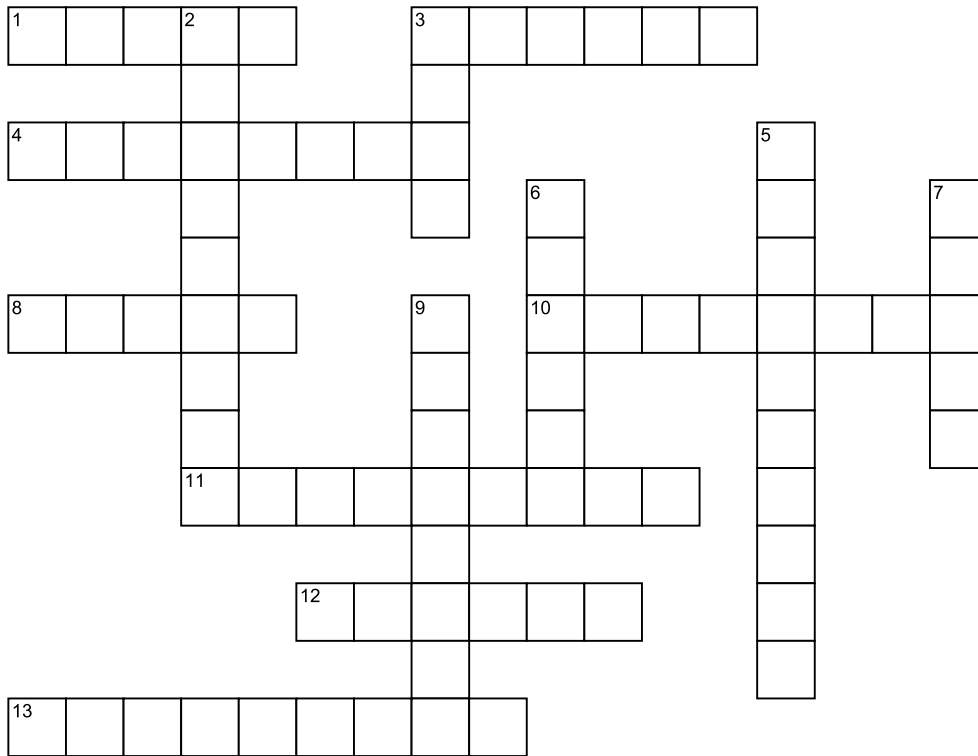
weekly grocery trip. Give your Saturday mornings to praying outside abortion clinics. Spend a few nights a week working in a soup kitchen. Volunteer landscaping help at the local monastery or convent. Remember that charity in groups demands adhering to the standards of common courtesy, so be polite and cheerful, say please and thank you, and above all, turn off your electronic devices.

Ultimately, a vocation determines how you will serve God and others with your life, so it's never too early to start thinking about what God might be asking you to do. Use your creativity to find ways to help other people this summer so that you can exercise the virtue of charity while learning how your ability to serve intersects with people's needs and your own skill set. Doing so will position you well for seeing God's plan for your life reveal itself.



**Bob Wiesner** earned a B.A. in Philosophy from Christendom College and his M.A. in Theological Studies from the Maryknoll School of Theology. His passions are classical music, iconography, and history.

# THE SACRED HEART CELEBRATION CROSSWORD



## ACROSS

- 1 "Behold this \_\_, which has so loved men..."
- 3 Sister \_\_ Menendez: what is her first name?
- 4 "Let the little \_\_ come unto Me."
- 8 Mr. Martin's first name was \_\_
- 10 St. Margaret Mary \_\_ was visited by the Sacred Heart.
- 11 Our Lord called Holy Communion the '\_\_\_ of Love.'
- 12 The feast of the Sacred Heart is on this week day.
- 13 Saint \_ Sophie Barat: what is her first name?

## DOWN

- 2 At first, Mr. Martin was inspired to be a \_\_.
- 3 Jesus appeared to St Margaret Mary in this month.
- 5 St. Claude de la \_\_ was St. Margaret Mary's confessor.
- 6 Mr. Martin lived in \_\_.
- 7 St. Therese's father called her his 'Little \_\_'
- 9 "Love is the fundamental and innate \_\_\_ of every human being" St. John Paul II.





## 2015 Catholic Homeschooling Conferences

The following is a list of Catholic homeschooling conferences where Seton will offer materials for preview and sale, as well as a \$30-per-child enrollment discount (grades 1-12).

### LA, Lafayette June 12, 2015 (Fri.)

IHM Lafayette Homeschool Conference  
Cajundome and Convention Center  
444 Cajundome Boulevard  
Lafayette, LA 70506  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### VA, Fredericksburg June 19-20, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM National Homeschool Conference  
Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center  
2371 Carl D. Silver Parkway  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### FL, Tampa June 25-26, 2015 (Thu.-Fri.)

IHM Tampa Homeschool Conference  
St. Lawrence Church – Higgins Hall  
5225 North Himes Avenue, Tampa, FL 33614  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### OH, Cleveland July 10-11, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Cleveland Homeschool Conference  
St. Adalbert's Parish — Keller Center  
66 Adalbert Street, Berea, OH 44017  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### TX, Arlington July 10-11, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM North Texas Homeschool Conference  
Arlington Convention Center  
1200 Ballpark Way, Arlington, TX 76011  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### OH, Dayton July 17-18, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Dayton Homeschool Conference  
St. Peter's Catholic Church – Family Life Center  
6161 Chambersburg Road  
Huber Heights, OH 45424  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### IL, Chicago July 24-25, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Chicago Homeschool Conference  
North Central College – Res/Rec Building  
440 South Brainard Street, Naperville, IL 60540  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### NY, New York July 31-August 1, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM New York Homeschool Conference  
Mercy College – The Rotunda of Mercy Hall  
555 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### FL, Ft. Lauderdale August 7, 2015 (Fri.)

IHM South Florida Homeschool Conference  
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel  
13400 West Sunrise Boulevard  
Sunrise, FL 33323  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

### MA, Lowell August 14, 2015 (Fri.)

IHM New England Homeschool Conference  
UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center  
50 Warren Street, Lowell, MA 01852  
[www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org)

For additional conferences, venues, vendors, and contact information, visit [www.setonhome.org/conferences](http://www.setonhome.org/conferences)

## Student Achievements



**Rhianna** | I won 2nd Place in the All Around at the Virginia Level 7 State Meet, recognized by the United States Gymnastics Association (USGA).



**Philomena** | I was a finalist for the University of New England's College of Arts and Sciences Highschool Essay Contest, and the winner of a \$1000 scholarship!



**Elijah** | I won 1st place in the International School Taekwondo Championship — Junior Poomsae division last April 14, 2015. The tournament was promoted by Singapore Taekwondo Federation (STF).

### Share your achievement!

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# Seton Home Study School

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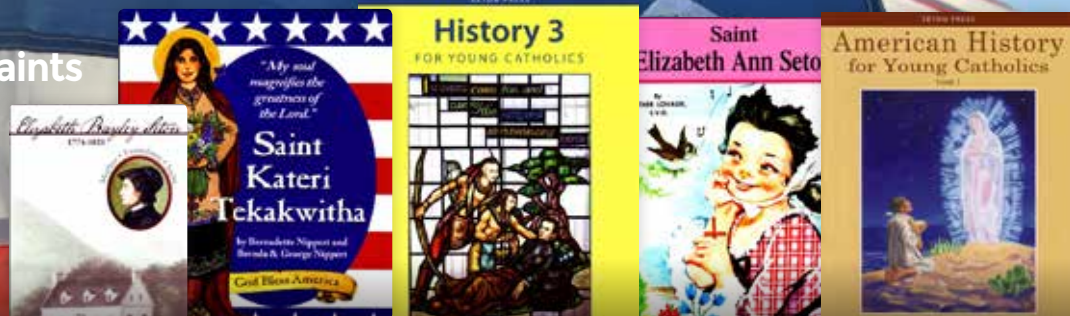
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*Audience of His Holiness Pope Francis,  
May 20, 2015*



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