

Seton MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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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
Charles Asper

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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:

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Peter Asper's marriage to Clare. They met at Thomas Aquinas, CA.



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

Elizabeth Wagner
540-622-5555

High School History

Bruce Clark
540-636-1199

Nick Marmalejo
540-622-5571

High School Math

Tom Herlihy
540-636-1846

High School Math/Science

Don Valaike
540-636-1396

Seton Educational Media

540-636-9996

Transcripts, Records, and Extensions

Betty Valaike
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

Kathleen Hunt
540-622-5542

Standardized Testing

Patty Graham
540-636-1250

Elementary Counseling

Sharon Hassett
540-636-1429

Carin Delancey
540-636-2342

General Counseling

Cecilia Sauer
540-622-5526

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.



Saint Monica

Patron Saint of Mothers

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, is considered by the Church to be a patron saint for mothers, and is honored by the Church with her feast day on May 4th.

Monica was born in 332—only 300 years after the crucifixion of Jesus—in Tagaste, currently Algeria, in North Africa. She had an excellent Catholic upbringing by her parents, and practiced her faith with great devotion. An elderly Christian servant lady also dedicated her life to teaching Monica and her sister to practice the Faith with great devotion.

For some unexplainable reason, when Monica was twenty-two, her Catholic parents married her to a pagan man, Patricius, who was much older than Monica. He had a violent personality and was unfaithful to Monica. Monica never spoke unkindly to her husband, but prayed for him continually. She was known to attend daily Mass, and gave generously to the poor.

Following in the practice of her mother, Monica devoted her days to teaching the Catholic Faith to her three children. Two of them eventually joined religious orders, but her son, Augustine, left home when fairly young to attend schools elsewhere. Likely his father wanted his son to follow in his immoral footsteps. By seventeen, Augustine had rejected the Catholic Faith and was living an immoral life.

Monica continued her devotions and prayer life, and by good example, converted her mother-in-law. After twenty years of marriage, her husband began to take her Christian message more seriously and began attending classes about the Faith. He finally changed his life and converted, then died only one year later.

Monica then decided to dedicate her life

to her son, Augustine. She would ask priests and even bishops to talk to her son about the Church; however, his pride and his immoral lifestyle kept him from accepting the truth of the Catholic Faith.

Nevertheless, Monica continued to attend daily Mass and to pray for him. She would follow him whenever she could, talking to him continually about the Faith. One time, he took a boat to Rome, tricking her and leaving her standing on the shore. But she persisted, and followed him to Rome, and then to Milan.

It was in Milan that Augustine heard the sermons of the local bishop, St. Ambrose. Augustine went only to hear the speaker that was being raved about by the local citizens. Once he heard the powerful sermons of St. Ambrose, he began to listen to the message and to think seriously about the Christian religion. His mind struggled because he did not want to change his way of life.

Eventually, Augustine accepted that he could not continue to live apart from God. He began to attend catechism classes, and was baptized on Easter Sunday, 387. Monica thanked God for finally answering her prayers for Augustine's conversion. While she and her two sons were making arrangements to sail back to Africa, Monica suddenly fell ill and died five days later. Before she died, she

asked her sons to pray for her at Mass.

Augustine later wrote his famous book, *The City of God*, and wrote "If I am your child, O my God, it is because you gave me such a mother!"

We homeschooling mothers and fathers need to remind ourselves that Jesus is always ready to answer our prayers, but we must not become impatient if our



prayers are not answered as quickly as we would like. Jesus just wants us to be faithful, to try to do our duty to teach our children the Catholic Faith, to say our Rosary, and to attend Mass. We need to trust in Him as to how and when he answers our prayers. It can become extremely discouraging when our children do not accept all the teachings of Jesus and of His Church, but we must try to overcome our discouragement with trust in Him and His Blessed Mother Mary.

St. Monica, pray for us homeschooling mothers to trust in Jesus and to dedicate ourselves to teaching our children the Faith, and also to live the Faith. St. Monica, pray for us by asking Jesus to help us to persevere for all our lives with Faith and Prayer and attendance at Mass as often as possible. Intercede for us with Jesus, that He grant us the fortitude and patience and trust that our spouses and our children and we will attain happiness in Heaven with Jesus and His Blessed Mother.

"If I am your child, O my God, it is because you gave me such a mother!"
St Augustine

your Questions ANSWERED

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

My 6th grade son's study skills are very lacking. What can I do?

Imagine if you decided to mow the lawn, but instead of mowing in nice straight rows, you just mowed aimlessly through the yard. By the time you finished mowing the lawn, you would have spent much longer than if you had been organized and mowed the right way. Students who have proper study skills can do more in less time and get better grades with less work.

The majority of students who do not accomplish their work have not developed proper study skills, and so they fall behind, get depressed, and don't even want to stay on schedule. Depending on how bad the situation is, you might put other subjects aside and focus on teaching study skills. You might spend a week or two on study skills but then show your son how to use them in one or two specific subjects. After that, work with him and have him show you how he is applying the study skills to his other subjects.

Seton has produced a Study Skills mini-course online. If you go to our Home Page, and click on Parent Resources, the drop-down menu lists a Free Study Skills Course. These ideas should help dramatically if they are applied to his lessons.

We also sell a workbook, "Study Strategies Made Easy," which you can read about by going to our Seton Educational Media website (www.setonbooks.com). If you search "study skills" or "study strategies" on the internet, you will find many suggestions.

My high school students are having trouble concentrating with the noise and activities of the younger children.

Consider asking your older children to start their schoolwork earlier in the day, for instance, at 7:30 a.m., so they can get at least one or two subjects done before the noise begins from the younger children. Since older children usually stay up later than younger ones, they might try doing some of

their schoolwork after the little ones are in bed. (Be careful, though, as some kids are too tired for school in the late evening.)

Some families have the high school students go to a library for two hours a day to focus on subjects when they need quiet. The public libraries are used to the homeschool students, and college libraries welcome them.

Perhaps the older students may go for an hour or two daily to Grandma or Grandpa's house, if nearby, where they may be able to get tutoring help in a subject area as well as quiet.

You might like to try setting up a room with sound dampening. You can hang "movers blankets" or other soundproofing equipment on the wall, and perhaps use sound absorbing tiles on the ceiling. Tapestries, with large religious depictions, are great for absorbing sound. Add a carpet and drapes to a study area for the younger children to keep the noise contained away from the rest of the house.

Using logical thinking skills in reading and in writing is vital for our society to pull out of the current lack of critical thinking skills, which results in poor decision making for many young people.

If you have an area in your home apart from the normal flow of people, that can be a good place for older students to study. One homeschooling family converted an attached garage, while another family turned a detached garage into their homeschool. These provided a quiet area for the older students.

My daughter will be graduating next year. What does she need to do to attend the Seton graduation?

The main requirement is that the student be finished, or almost finished, with the work for the courses. She might want to start on her courses, or perhaps a single course, over this summer, to get "ahead" so she is not rushed in May. The graduation is always the Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend, which is May 23 in 2015.

Over the years, the graduation has turned into quite an event. Besides the graduation ceremony itself, there is a pizza lunch reception for families Friday afternoon, a Seton Visit Day at Christendom College in the afternoon, and an evening family reception at Christendom College. For the last couple of years, Seton students put on a dance after the graduation, and for the first time this year a family dance will be officially sponsored by Seton.

My daughter in high school has been having trouble understanding some of the books she needs to read for a book analysis.

We have three options to help high school students in understanding the book analysis books.

Look on our Seton website under Course Resources for the specific course helps: chapter notes for every chapter, audio recordings to cover main points, and videos for motivational commentary. Though not every book has an accompanying video yet, videos for all books should be completed in the next year.

Why do you have students take grammar in every grade level? I never had grammar in school.

Grammar is essentially logical thinking. It teaches analytical skills. In a society in which feelings and emotions are dominant rather than clear thinking, grammar is essential for future leaders. Catholic English Grammar courses have been famous for teaching logical



relationships between words, phrases, sentences, and ideas. Using logical thinking skills in reading and in writing is vital for our society to pull out of the current lack of critical thinking skills, which results in poor decision making for many young people.

We have many diagramming lessons online which might help you and your children. Look on our website under Course Resources. If you need extra help, please phone a counselor.

My daughter is taking Spanish, which I am happy about, but I don't know Spanish. Should I hire a tutor?

Hiring a tutor is one idea. You may find someone in your parish looking for a little income who might be willing to tutor your daughter, along with maybe one or two other homeschoolers. They can speak Spanish together for a little fun, and get experience practicing at the same time.

If your daughter is an older teen, there might be a class at the local community college for high school students, or even a group which meets at the local community college to practice their Spanish. Ask at your local library what opportunities might be available.

Remember that we have on our website all kinds of help for the foreign languages, such as audio tutorials for Spanish and Latin, and video tutorials for Spanish. Online Spanish and French courses are being prepared, and hopefully will be available in a year. We still have some CDs available for the Spanish course.

My son is struggling with the high school science book. Do you have any tips?

Science for the high school years has become much more involved and complex than in the past. Perhaps because American students were falling behind compared to other advanced countries, the textbooks writers have become determined to add plenty of information. We try to emphasize the most important facts on the tests.

While we don't believe in "teaching to the test," at the same time, you should take a look at each chapter test as your student starts studying the chapter. You might highlight or underline those facts which your son should memorize. Of course, there may be other facts which you believe your son should know, so certainly underline those as well.

Keep in mind that the schedule we set up for each chapter, usually two weeks, may not be enough for your student. Consider having your son review the chapter sections on the weekend, just to give your son a little extra time for studying or thinking through the concepts.

Some of the science concepts may be difficult for your son to understand completely. You may need to accept that. (There are plenty of concepts even scientists don't understand completely.) It is sufficient for your son to memorize definitions or science concepts, even if they are not totally understood.



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*.



Have your students taken the 2014 AdvancED Student Survey for Accreditation?

If they haven't, log into MySeton and have your student click on the correct survey button for his or her grade level.

These surveys are essential to the process of retaining an accredited status. The participation rate we need to achieve is 40 percent. Help us get there and let your voice be heard!

No personal identification is required, and all answers are anonymous.

Seton Home Study School will review all responses and student feedback will be taken into account as we look at ways to improve our services.

Thank you for letting your students take the survey!

God bless your family.

Dr. Mary Kay Clark



One Family's Homeschooling Saga

by Charles Asper

Prologue

Why equate homeschooling to a saga? One definition of saga (from dictionary.com) is "a ... Norse prose of achievements and events in the history of a personage, family, etc." Given our family's Norwegian background and a time period of over 50 years, it seems to fit! Of course, you are only seeing the "Readers' Digest Condensed" version. This saga is being told from the perspective of the father of this family, so it is only fitting to begin with his story:

All 19 years of my classroom education took place in public institutions. My father (a son of a Lutheran missionary and minister) was a public school teacher. I even had him as my Algebra, Trigonometry and Geometry teacher in High School (not quite homeschooling, but I really enjoyed him as a teacher). In my Junior and Senior years, he was the principal (needless to say, I had perfect attendance). My mother also did

some work in the public school, helping with special needs children.

I met the Love of my Life (Rose) when I was in college. She had a much different background. Rose was a cradle Catholic in a very religious family and attended Catholic schools during most of her school days. She would eventually graduate as a nurse from The Catholic University of America. As we approached our engagement, there were lengthy discussions about how our children would be raised. It became clear to me that Rose could never leave her beloved Catholic faith. I also came to greatly admire the Catholic Church's stance on issues such as abortion and birth control. Thus, one week before we were married, I was confirmed in the Catholic Church.

Education Situation

A few years later, we had two children and the oldest was approaching first grade. Given Rose's upbringing, we decided to enroll our eldest in the local Catholic school. What we found surprised us—things had changed over twenty years, and not for the better. Bad language and loss-of-innocence concepts came home courtesy of the other students. But even more surprising was the morals of the teachers—they openly lived with their "partners," were militant about birth control ("two are enough") and knew

less about their faith than I (as a convert) did. They were not the nuns of old; in fact, there were no nuns. A five month job took us to another city and allowed us to change schools. In that case, there were a number of teaching nuns who faithfully followed the teachings of the Catholic Church. But, incidents like neighborhood kids shooting BB's at the students led us to ask the question: "Is this the best way to educate our children?"

Shortly after that, I suggested that we homeschool our children. That kind of suggestion from a man was rare. Rose thought that I was "losing it" (AKA crazy) and told me such in no uncertain words (my parents agreed with her)! Some studies suggest that there were only about 15,000 homeschooled students in the United States in 1984. A few years later, the numbers were greater, but they still weren't very large. However, I had done some research. The Homeschool Legal Defense Association had started in 1983. For a small membership fee, they would help to keep you out of harm's way and would provide legal help if situations escalated to that level (and they are still doing a great job). I'd also heard about Seton Home Study School. A business trip to the Washington DC area allowed us to take a few hours to travel out to Front Royal, cut down an alley, go up a flight of stairs and see the two rooms that Seton occupied. We met with Dr. Mary Kay Clark and reviewed



the course materials. Seeing what Dr. Clark was accomplishing (and homeschooling her boys at the same time) helped to give us some confidence that we could do the same. We signed up shortly thereafter (our Seton Family number is less than 50).

First, and foremost, I must give credit to my wife Rose. In regards to homeschooling, she has been both the Angel and the Taskmaster. As I was writing this article, I went back through our boxes of photographs and digital photographs. I was struck by all of the “good times” (e.g., climbing trees, playing games, doing projects) where the children were obviously having a great time. From the beginning, Rose followed the Lesson Plans very religiously. The day almost always started with daily Mass (a side benefit was that the boys were often able to be altar servers). Schoolwork and daily chores usually had to be completed before the children got “free time”. On the other hand, the flexibility of homeschooling allowed Rose to adjust for field trips, weather forecasts, my work schedule and other family priorities.

An important family tradition that developed was reading / discussing at least one chapter from the Bible at the end of our supper meal. We alternate regularly between the Old Testament, the Gospels and the Epistles. Much of that reading is sequential, so we complete the entire Bible every three or four years. Almost nothing teaches the kids phonics better than having them read a chapter of Old Testament places and names! Sundays are “Religion Day” and that is where we focus on the Seton religion assignments.



Socialization

In the beginning, the most asked question we received was “What about socialization?” We already knew the negatives of peer socialization, but we didn’t really have the full answer. Looking back over 25 years of homeschooling (and counting), we now realize that the vertical integration of the homeschool environment was one of its most important benefits. We were eventually blessed with seven children. They were all interfacing with adults and children in other age groups much more than children in a traditional school environment. That resulted in better socialization skills than we had ever imagined. Confirmation of that has come from the many adults who were surprised at how easily and fluently our children could talk and work with them.

Well-Rounded Education

We have always believed that education does not just come from books. The flexibility of homeschooling allowed us to explore a large variety of extracurricular activities. Music lessons (voice, violin, piano, trumpet) could be scheduled with ease during the day. The children participated in church choirs, plays, block rosaries and recitals. Vacations could be scheduled during off-peak periods when there were no crowds and the costs were lower. We would do “unit studies” on

places that we were planning to visit. Over one year and a half period we studied and visited most of the Civil War battle fields in the eastern United States. Many of the trips that we made had a religious focus / connection (e.g., Rome, Lourdes, Fatima, Turin, Assisi, Emmitsburg for the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton). Overall, our children have been in all 50 states and in over 25 countries. Finding Mass while traveling was both a requirement and an experience. Even though the children may not have always understood the words, one benefit of their Seton education was that they knew what was being said. Physical Education was composed of activities such as dancing (Irish Step, Square, Swing, Contra), family bike rides, skiing, hiking, swimming, horseback riding and “working in the garden”. Team sports were more difficult in the beginning, but the advent of organizations such as the Homeschooling Sports Network and other local homeschooling organizations eventually allowed participation in team sports such as basketball and soccer. Our family businesses also provided our children a chance to learn computer, accounting, scheduling, farm, construction and other life skills.

...Story continues on pg. 13





A STORY OF SHRINES

As the snows of winter melt away and turn into the warm breezes of spring and summer, the thoughts of children (and parents) turn to the outdoors. Having been ensconced in comfortable chairs and warm slippers for the cold months, it's now time to venture forth and rejoin the world of the outdoors.

Parks, pools, prairies, and peaks no doubt have their claim on our affections, but some of the best adventures for family field trips are the Catholic shrines located all around the country. These shrines are sometimes tucked into the smallest slivers of land in the middle of cities, surrounded on all sides by soaring skyscrapers. Sometimes they are just off the main highway and millions pass by unknowing each day. And sometimes they are so far down abandoned and forgotten roads that having but a quarter tank of gas seems a potential hazard.

Wherever they are, these shrines speak of the need for God's people to bring Him with them wherever they go—and of His own desire to be with His people. Though all the shrines speak the same message, they also all bear a unique witness. Each of them has its own story and its own history. Each of them tells us something about the Catholic experience in this world, while pointing our way to the next.

NATIONAL SHRINE OF ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON

We could not write an article on shrines without giving pride of place to the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The shrine is actually an entire complex developed around the land where Mother Seton established the mother house of the Sisters of Charity in 1809. The site includes a breathtakingly beautiful Basilica, which offers Mass and Confession most days. You may also tour the "Stone House" where Mother Seton lived with 15 others in four rooms, and the White House, into which the sisters moved as their numbers grew.

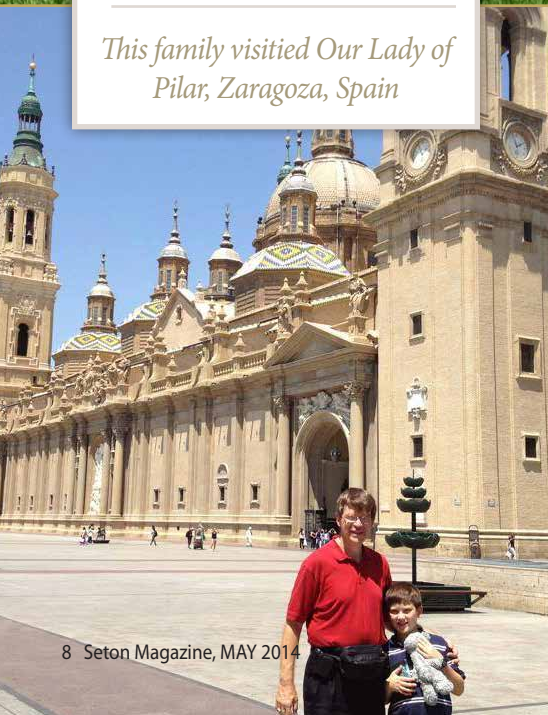
The Mother Seton shrine tells the story of the beginnings of Catholic education in the United States, but since it is only a few miles removed from the Gettysburg Battlefield, it also tells the wider

history of the nation. In the midst of the carnage, nuns of Mother Seton's order ministered to the sick and wounded of both sides.

With all the beauty and history at the shrine, it is perhaps the cemetery which is the most moving place. Mother Seton is buried there, along with several of her children. In row upon row, on all sides of Mother Seton's resting place, are headstones of the holy women who followed her over the years as Sisters of Charity. If you should arrive at the shrine and find a newly-dug grave, it is not a cause for sadness but for joy, because it means that women are still giving their energy and their lives to fulfill the mission which Mother Seton began. The cemetery is a silent testimony to the truth that Mother Seton did not arrive empty-handed in Heaven, but brought with her scores of others who heard her call and walked the path she had blazed.

See where some of our Seton Families have been!

This family visited Our Lady of Pilar, Zaragoza, Spain



If you find yourself in Emmitsburg, you may also wish to stop by the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, which is located at Mount St. Mary's University, and is "the oldest known replica of the revered French shrine."

OUR LADY OF GOOD HOPE

One of the most intriguing shrines in the United States is Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wisconsin. In 2010, Bishop David Ricken of the Diocese of Green Bay gave official approval to the Marian apparitions at the site of that shrine. These are the only Church-approved apparitions in the United States.

In 1859, the year after the Marian apparitions in Lourdes, Adele Brise of Champion, Wisconsin, had a similar experience: "[Adele] was going to the grist mill about four miles from here [Champion] with a sack of wheat on her head. ... As Adele came near the place, she saw a lady all in white standing between two trees, one a maple, the other a hemlock. Adele was frightened and stood still.



The Diedrichs visiting Our Lady of Good Help Shrine, WI, March 2013

The vision slowly disappeared, leaving a white cloud after it. Adele continued on her errand and returned home without seeing anything more. She told her parents what had happened, and they wondered what it could be — maybe a poor soul who needed prayers?" Passing by the same place, Adele saw the vision several more times. She finally asked the lady her name, and the lady responded, "I am the Queen of Heaven, who prays for the conversion of sinners, and I wish you to do the same." The Lady went on to ask Adele to devote herself to teaching the Faith to the children in the wilderness.

As news of the vision and message spread, the local Belgian settlers soon built a chapel on the site. In 1880, a larger church was built and in 1885 a convent and school were added. The current, even larger, chapel was built in 1942.

Today the shrine grounds include the main church, the school from 1885, and the cemetery in which Sr. Adele is buried. For a good stretch of the legs, in the back of the grounds is a Rosary walk, which includes a Lourdes Grotto and Stations of the Cross.

MOTHER CABRINI SHRINE

High on Lookout Mountain west of Denver, Colorado, stands a lovely shrine that honors the first canonized American citizen, Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, and points the way to our Lord, Who was beloved of Mother Cabrini under his title of the Sacred Heart. The shrine is built on land first purchased by Mother Cabrini as a summer camp for the girls in her care at the Queen of Heaven Orphanage in Denver. The story goes that after two years of hauling water from the stream at the bottom of the canyon to the camp at the top of the mountain, the sisters complained of the burden to Mother Cabrini. In a miraculous moment, she bade them dig beneath a rock near the camp, and to this day, the spring they discovered continues to run, providing sufficient water for the needs of the shrine.

Today, the Mother Cabrini shrine is home to a chapel, a convent for the resident sisters, a retreat center in the original stone house built by Mother Cabrini with her nuns and orphan girls, a replica grotto of Lourdes, France, and what is known as the Stairway of Prayer. This Stairway of Prayer consists of nearly 400 stairs that climb from the center of the shrine's property on Lookout Mountain to the summit of the highest hill nearby, called the Mount of the Sacred Heart by Mother Cabrini. The Stations of the Cross take pilgrims up the stairway, followed by the mysteries of the Rosary. If one has undertaken the journey in a spirit of prayer, the arrival at the top provides not only a welcome rest from the rigors of the climb, but also a welcoming peace that seems to emanate from the waiting arms of the Sacred Heart statue.

NATIONAL SHRINE OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

The National Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi can be found very aptly, in San Francisco, California. While other shrines are located out in the countryside, this shrine is located in the heart of San Francisco, just blocks away from Fisherman's Wharf and the iconic pyramid of the Transamerica Building. The shrine started out as a parish church, which was begun in 1859 and completed in 1860. The church is actually the oldest Catholic church in California other than the Spanish missions. No longer a parish church, the shrine is run by the Capuchin Franciscans of the West American Province.

In the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906, the interior of the church was consumed by the fires, but the stone exterior remained intact.

The shrine grounds also include a 3/4 scale replica of the Porziuncola, which is the small church just outside of Assisi that St. Francis worked to restore after his call from God. Much of the artwork and stonework of the replica Porziuncola was done by artists from Assisi and surrounding areas.

These are just a tiny representative of the many wonderful and beautiful shrines available to us. There are shrines and basilicas and places of pilgrimage all over the world, and probably there are some near you. You can read about their architecture and the history on the Internet, but wouldn't you rather go there and experience them for yourself?

Visit this article online for an extra shrine, and a gallery of photos submitted by Seton pilgrims.



cc Andy Guan | Wikimedia Commons



Organization

KEY FOR SUCCESS!

Don't Give Up!

When we talk about organization as a key for successful homeschooling, many moms become upset or despair or throw up their hands! With a growing young family, organization seems impossible. Being organized has proved to be impossible in the past, so some moms ask “Why try again?”

Many working moms in our neighborhoods who have young children are forced to be organized, and manage their home and family in spite of the difficulties. We homeschooling parents need to realize that our goals are more important and more valuable to our children than any job outside the home! If we are convinced of the eternal rewards of our apostolate of homeschooling for our children, we need to be determined to be successful, and thus organized in our home and in our homeschooling.

In daily prayer, let's remind ourselves of the importance of homeschooling to our children so that they may have the eternal happiness that comes from living the Catholic Faith. We need only to look around to see the despair of so many young people who live without the faith! To accomplish our goal, however, we must consider a long-term program of teaching our children how to be organized in their daily lives and daily studies. We must help our children come to recognize that an organized life style will bring success to everything important that we must accomplish in our earthly lives to attain eternal happiness.

Here is an important first step if this is the umpteenth time you have tried to get organized: Find someone in your homeschooling group who is organized and offer to pay \$50 (or whatever it takes) if she, or he, would come and spend a day to help you get organized. You want to be a professional organized homeschooling mom, so like other professionals, you want to have help and advice from someone who is already successful in the job of being an organized homeschooling parent.

Moms, keep an open mind about your organizational coach: some of the best organized homeschooling parents are dads!

Try to follow the advice you are given and, if later, you need to make some adjustments for your particular situation, that is fine, but try to discover what ideas can work for you and your family.

Have a Plan

You can purchase a plan book from Seton, like the ones sent for the children's lessons. This can help you to record daily and weekly what you want to do at what time each day. This can help you to record what home or schooling responsibilities you want your children to accomplish each day.

Purchase a monthly calendar to keep on the refrigerator or some other easy to see location so you can record appointments and outside activities. This would include trips, vacations, visits from relatives, and anything which affects the family.

Design your own Chore Chart, although some free sample ones are available on the internet. Take a look at a few and print out the ones you like. You might want a master copy on your bedroom door, but put a copy for each child on his own bedroom door or on a kitchen cork board. You should include the time of day for each chore. This should include baby-sitting time if you need older children to help out at certain times of the day while you are teaching younger children.

Try to get up before the rest of the family, at least a half-hour or even an hour earlier. Start with a prayer or a reading from the New Testament or from a spiritual direction book. You are more in control of your day if you start earlier than the rest of the family. Getting up when children are already involved in things—sometimes things that you don't want them to do, such as cooking up an oatmeal or pancake mess in the kitchen—can disrupt your entire schedule.

Have a weekly meeting with your spouse, perhaps on Sunday evening before the week begins, or perhaps on Friday evening so you can plan on what needs to be done on the weekend to “catch up” because of unexpected events.

The Bare Necessities

Eat regularly and eat nutritious food. We always talk about the importance for our children to eat properly, but often parents

THE FAMILY AS A NATURAL SOCIETY & DOMESTIC CHURCH

In the teaching of the Church, there are only three original societies or communities on Earth: the family, the Church, and the state. ... According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“The family is the *original cell of social life*. It is the **natural society** in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love, and in the gift of life (CCC 2207; also in *Dignitatis Humanae* 5).

Nevertheless, the Church does not stop with recognizing the family as a natural society. The Church also recognizes the Catholic family as a “supernatural society” in a certain sense. The Church calls the family a “domestic Church”:

“The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason, it can and should be called a *domestic church*” (CCC 2204).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church gives a second reason for the aptness of the family as a domestic church:

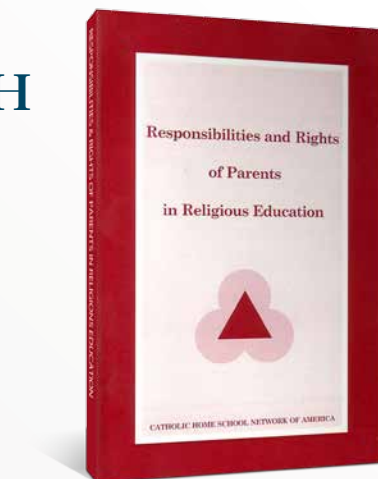
“In our time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living

radiant faith. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council calls the family the *Ecclesia domestica* [the domestic church]” (CCC 1656), italics in the original.

And the Catechism of the Catholic Church continues:

“It is here [in the family, the domestic church] that the father of the family, the mother, children, and all members of the family exercise the *priesthood of the baptized* in a privileged way “by reception of the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, and self-denial and active charity. Thus the home is the first school of Christian life and “a school for human enrichment” (CCC 1657; emphasis in the original).

Each family is also “a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. In the procreation and education of children, it [the family] reflects the Father’s work of creation. It [the family] is called to partake of the prayer and sacrifice of Christ. Daily prayer and reading of the Word of God strengthen it [the family] in charity. The Christian family has an evangelizing and missionary task [which is to be done in



This article was taken from pages 8 to 11 of the 54-page pamphlet *Responsibilities and Rights of Parents in Religious Education*, written by a Canon Lawyer for the Catholic Homeschool Network of America, now available from Seton Educational Media for \$2.00.

the power of the Spirit]” (CCC 2205).

In other words, the family is a sign and image of the supernatural Society of God Himself, the Holy Trinity. Like the Church herself, each Catholic family is in a certain sense, a chosen people of God the Father, a body of Christ, and a temple of the Holy Spirit. No other society or community, except the Church herself, could claim such a status.

neglect their own health by not eating at a regular time, on a regular schedule. Food is expensive, no doubt about it. Read articles on nutrition tips and buy foods on sale. If you are not healthy, your days will not go well as you become tired or weary or quickly frustrated or lose your patience.

Get enough sleep. Set a schedule and do your very best to stick with it. With young and growing children, or babies, this is difficult, but keep trying. You cannot keep going if you are sick.

Get rid of anything that causes clutter and needs frequent cleaning. As a mom with a large family, my children heard me repeat and repeat: If in doubt, throw it out! Too many people are keeping too much. It

is charitable to give things away to a local second-hand store, or to your local church to help others in need. Consider giving away not only toys and clothes, but even furniture. Most of us have too much furniture.

Use those big plastic bins or book shelves for each child to keep the books and other items needed for the homeschooling. Before dinner, toys and supplies should be back in their place. A neat home after dinner sets a tone of everything being under control. One book can be pulled out after dinner for reading or a last minute assignment or working out a math problem with Dad.

Schedule only one trip a week to the grocery store. If you run out of something, everyone needs to learn to do without it. It

is a waste of time and money to shop more than once a week. Also, it is a good practice for children to learn to do without some food item. Too many children do not eat what is on their plate at mealtime, but eat what they like after a meal. Not only is that unhealthy, and not only does that mean a child is disobedient, but it is also training a child to have his own way in other more important matters. Such situations predict trouble for spoiled children and their parents.

These are just a few ideas that we hope can be helpful for you to be successful in your homeschooling. If at first you don’t succeed, try and try again.

Remember St. Monica!

A Day at the Spa for Homeschooling Moms



BY JOHN CLARK

Alright, homeschool Dads. Your wife is reaching the end of another academic year. She has endured arguments from the teenagers about book reports for *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*. She has sharpened dozens of number 2 pencils. She has scrubbed 64 different colors of crayons off the kitchen walls. She has corrected so much Math 54 that she feels like she personally knows John Saxon. She has helped your children diagram so many sentences that she now mentally diagrams sentences as people speak them to her.

Time for a spa day.

I don't mean this figuratively. This isn't some hidden sports analogy for which this column has come to be known. I mean it literally. Book your wife a spa day. Right now. Although I may have never met your wife, I know this: there is no one on earth who deserves a day at the spa more than homeschooling wives and moms.

Don't just book an appointment and tell her about it. Keep it a secret. Arrange a babysitter for the kids one Saturday and announce to her that morning that she has a special day ahead. And drive her to the spa yourself.

When you get there, it's perfectly acceptable to walk into the spa with your wife. When you stroll through the door, you will experience things foreign to you: you will see clear pitchers of water with cucumbers floating in them, you will notice that they have 145 shades of red lipstick

at the counter, and you will hear music that makes you sleepy. None of this will make any sense to you. That's OK. It will make total sense to your wife; it's basically fantasyland for Moms.

It's hard to envision a male equivalent of this experience. It's a little bit like when you walk into a baseball stadium (OK! I used a sports analogy!) for the first time of the year. The sight of the manicured grass, the waft of fresh nachos, and the roar of the crowd as your favorite player jacks one out of the park; you can't exactly explain to someone why this is so great—it just is. That's how it feels for your wife.

You might feel odd as you go into the spa to pay the bill, but here's a little secret: you are the guy who booked a spa day for your wife—this elevates you to celebrity status among the spa staff. They may even offer you a glass of cucumber water. (It's OK—and *fashionable*—to politely decline. You're still a man, and you can only look so masculine while drinking cucumber water. A few of us can pull it off, but we're few and far between.)

"But there aren't any spas nearby," you object. Ask around. Ask the husband who looks like he's got his act together. He'll know. This is America, after all. Unless you live in Walnut Grove, there is a spa within an hour's drive of your home. (Maybe that's one of the reasons that *Little House on the Prairie* was so depressing. After a hard day of watching her crops fail, seeing her dog get run over by a wagon, and getting the news

that her husband was just swindled out of his cattle, Caroline Ingalls couldn't just pick up the phone and call Elizabeth Arden to book a pedicure and a massage.)

Don't look at spa time as a luxury. Homeschooling Moms deserve special attention. For my part, I have said it before and I will say it again: you homeschooling Moms are my heroes. We husbands so often fail at expressing this properly to our wives. I offer the idea of spa day as a somewhat pathetic attempt to express my gratitude. Spa day is my sadly imperfect way of doing for my wife what the rest of the world doesn't often do—show her that her life as homeschooling mother is incredibly meaningful. It's just a simple observation that if the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world, that hand deserves painted nails.

The idea is probably the continuation of some wise advice I received many years ago. The priest who did our pre-Cana classes advised me to take Lisa out once a week. "Every once in a while, a woman likes to carry a purse instead of a diaper bag," he advised me. Pretty good advice, considering it came from a man who wasn't married. In short, I think his message was simple—one that we can all adopt.

Appreciate your wife.



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.

2014 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).

For additional conferences, venues, vendors, and contact information, visit:
www.setonhome.org/conferences

MD, Mt. Airy

May 16-17, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Maryland Homeschool & Parent Conference

NC, Charlotte

May 23-24, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Carolina Homeschool & Parent Conference

NJ, Berlin - May 24, 2014 (Sat.)

15th Annual CHAPLET Catholic Homeschool Conference

NY, Buffalo - May 30, 2014 (Fri.)

IHM Buffalo Homeschool & Parent Conference

MN, St. Paul

May 30-31, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

16th Annual Minnesota Catholic Home Educators Conference and Curriculum Fair

PA, Pittsburgh - June 6, 2014 (Fri.)

IHM Pittsburgh Homeschool & Parent Conference

KS, Kansas City

June 6-7, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

Kansas City Conference for Catholic Homeschoolers 2014

TX, San Antonio

June 6-7, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

2014 San Antonio Catholic Homeschool Conference

MI, Detroit

June 13-14, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Michigan Homeschool & Parent Conference

VA, Fredericksburg

June 20-21, 2014 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM National Homeschool & Parent Conference

Continued from pg. 7, the Asper Family

Today, as I look back, it is hard to imagine what life would have been like without homeschooling. After the 8th grade, our children were largely capable of doing independent study (guided by the Seton curriculum), so Rose would pass them off to me. I have had the job of motivating them to complete their high school studies, helping when needed and reviewing their assignments and tests. I have to admit that I am not nearly as good at it as my wife Rose! On the other hand, what post-Seton metrics / achievements do we have? All five of our Seton Home Study School graduates have jobs. Several of them were National Merit Scholars with multiple offers of full scholarships. There have been perfect / high scores on SAT sections (credit being given by our kids to Seton Latin, English and Math studies). One of our children graduated with straight A's from Thomas Aquinas College. All of them believe

that the Seton curriculum provided them with the tools they need to succeed on the world stage.

Epilogue

We have a few more years before our youngest will graduate from Seton Home Study School. We have several young grandchildren, with more on the way. Their parents also plan to continue with the homeschooling (may I say it?) tradition. After our long, cold winter, my grandson Patrick looked out into our garden and asked "Grandpa, how come nothing is growing?" I took him by the hand and led him out to see the newly sprouted peas and potatoes that were just pushing up through the dirt. Like the plants in spring, we have a new generation and our family's homeschooling saga is not completely written.



COLLEGE PREP

DIPLOMA NAMES

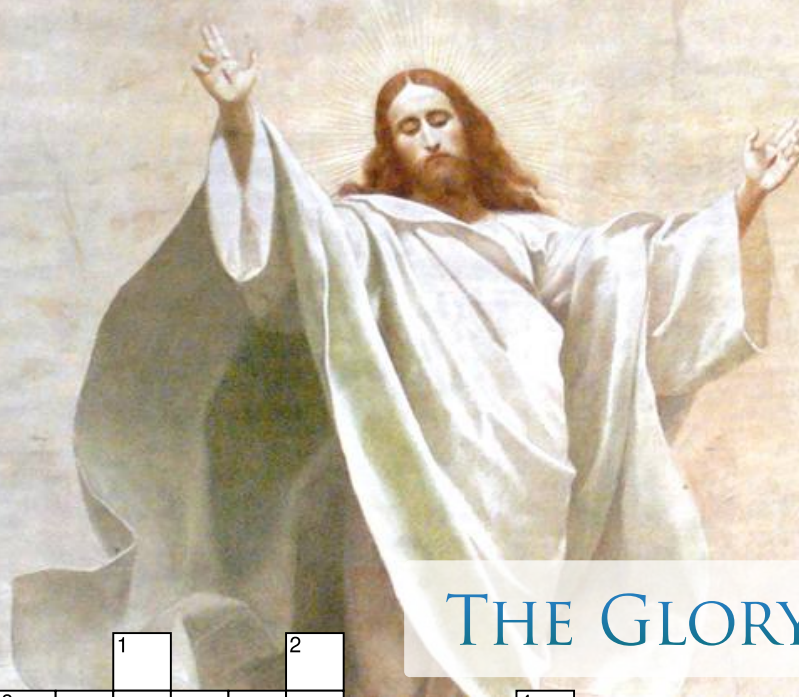
By Bob Wiesner

For some time now, Seton has been offering our graduates the option of having their Confirmation names on their diplomas as well as the given names. Although this is not standard practice in the academic world, a Confirmation name is certainly an integral part of a Catholic identity; the opportunity to recognize one's special patron is a step many of our students find valuable to them personally.

In most cases, a diploma is a sort of trophy to hang on the wall. A graduate keeps it in view as a reminder of a certain accomplishment in life, a milestone on the way to full adulthood. Only rarely do employers or colleges ask to see the actual diploma as a part of an application process; they are primarily interested in seeing the transcript of the work completed, which also bears the graduation date. Seton does not add the Confirmation name to our transcripts. However, there are a few situations when difficulties may arise if an extra name appears on a diploma.

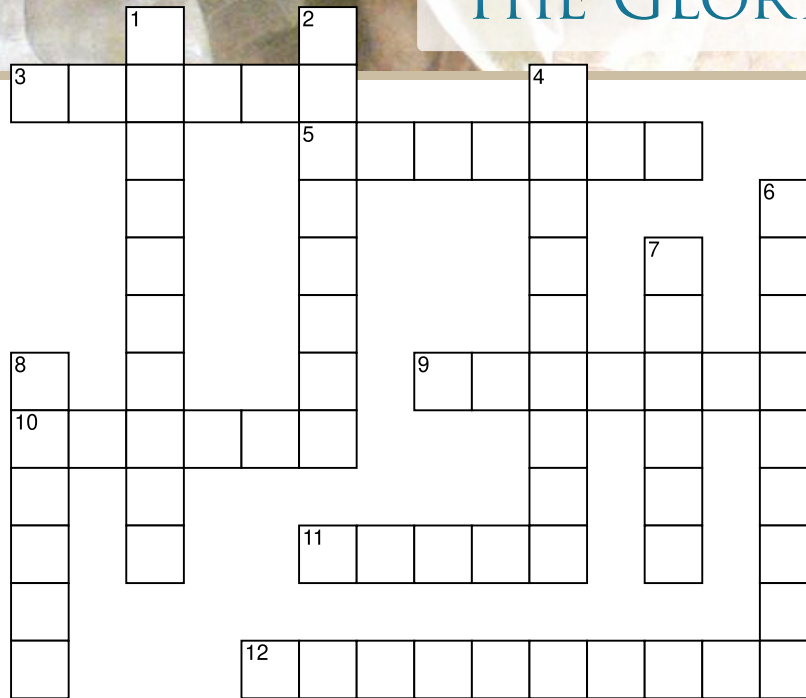
At times recruiters for military service ask to see an actual diploma as part of the induction process. Any extra name apart from the legally registered name could potentially cause difficulty. A student who anticipates attending university outside the United States might hesitate about the extra name; most overseas institutions require a notarized copy of the diploma itself along with a full transcript; an extra name would not be welcomed by them. Occasionally applicants for sensitive jobs in government or civilian defense contractors require a diploma as part of the background check for secret clearances. Any student anticipating any of these situations might well hesitate about adding the Confirmation name to the diploma.

For most students, however, honoring their particular friend among the saints will cause no difficulty in this world and will undoubtedly be very welcome in the next! Those students looking to graduate soon may contact Bob Wiesner at Seton if they wish the Confirmation name to appear on the diploma.



THE GLORY OF EASTER

CATHOLIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 3 The Feast of Our Lady of ____ is on May 13th.
- 5 ____ Sunday is celebrated the week after Pentecost.
- 9 Before Jesus ascended, He commanded His Apostles to ____ all people.
- 10 Jesus ascended into Heaven from the Mount of ____.
- 11 The Feast of the Apostle known as ____ the Less, or the Younger, is on May 3rd, shared with another Apostle.
- 12 This feast, which commemorates Mary's visit to Elizabeth, is celebrated on May 31st.

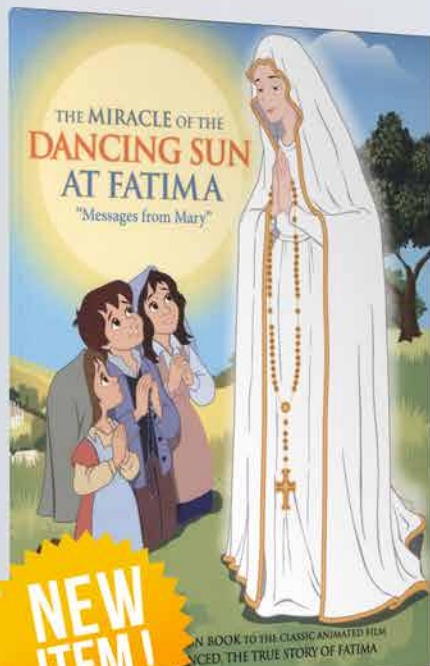
DOWN

- 1 He was bishop of Alexandria in the 4th century; his feast is May 2nd.
- 2 He was chosen to take the place of Judas; his feast is May 14th.
- 4 Jesus said, "Go, therefore, and make ____ of all nations."
- 6 This feast is celebrated 40 days after Easter.
- 7 At the Last Supper, this Apostle said, "Lord, show us the Father"; he shares a feast with another Apostle on May 3rd.
- 8 The Feast of St. Joseph the ____ is celebrated on May 1st.

SOLUTIONS: Ascension, Athanasius, baptize, disciples, Fatima, James, Matthias, olives, Philip, Trinity, Visitation, worker.

Messages of Mary

Catechesis about the Fatima Apparitions



The Miracle of the Dancing Sun at Fatima Companion Book

The Miracle of the Dancing Sun at Fatima: Messages of Mary is a children's catechesis about the Fatima apparitions. This book will help parents instill the faith-based values that build virtuous children who will mold the future of our world.

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M-RLBK-A1

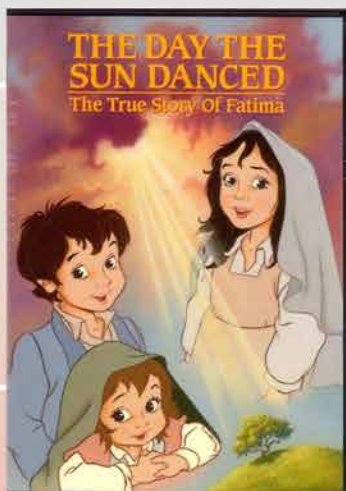
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M-RLDV-41

Available at
www.setonbooks.com

Student Achievements



Madeline | I won 1st in floor in ETC Gymnastics meet. Through homeschooling I am blessed with time to participate in extracurricular activities I enjoy.



Karenna | I recently placed 2nd in a student essay contest. I used the Seton format to write my essay and footnote it. The second place prize came with \$1,500.



Sarah | Silver-medalist winner of the 'Bishop's Bowl', a brain brawl with questions ranging from saint identification, Catholic vocabulary and Catholic Doctrine.

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PAPAL WISDOM



The transmission of the faith not only brings light to men and women in every place; it travels through time, passing from one generation to another. Because faith is born of an encounter which takes place in history and lights up our journey through time, it must be passed on in every age. It is through an unbroken chain of witnesses that we come to see the face of Jesus.... Persons always live in relationship. We come from others, we belong to others, and our lives are enlarged by our encounter with others. Even our own knowledge and self-awareness are relational; they are linked to others who have gone before us: in the first place, our parents, who gave us our life and our name....

Self-knowledge is only possible when we share in a greater memory. The same thing holds true for faith, which brings human understanding to its fullness. Faith's past, that act of Jesus' love which brought new life to the world, comes down to us through the memory of others — witnesses — and is kept alive in that one remembering subject which is the Church.

Pope Francis, *Lumen Fidei* (The Light of Faith, 38)

Pope Francis Image Credit: Catholic Church (England and Wales)