

Seton MAGAZINE



Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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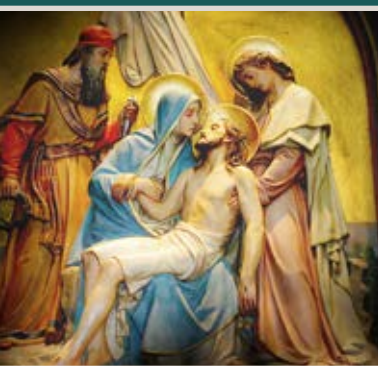


Keeping GOD at the Center

8 Questions
with the
Rocco
Family

by Susan
Rocco

PAGE 6



5 Ways We Bring Lent Home

by Mary Ellen Barrett

PAGE 11

4 Ways to Make Homeschooling Easier than Ever

PAGE 8

How Marshmallows can Change Your Life

by John Clark

PAGE 10

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Photo from the Rocco Family



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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.



Lourdes & Lent

Offering Sacrifice & Penance

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

On February 11th, we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Our Blessed Mother appeared to St. Bernadette, a fourteen-year-old girl, in Lourdes, France, in 1858.

Our Lady appeared in a small grotto where Bernadette was searching for wood. Bernadette described the vision to her pastor: "I saw a lady dressed in white. She wore a white dress, an equally white veil, a blue belt, and a yellow rose on each foot."

The Blessed Mother eventually appeared eighteen times to Bernadette. Each time, the Blessed Mother held a rosary and indicated for Bernadette to say the prayers of the Rosary. As others started following Bernadette to the grotto, they joined Bernadette in saying the Rosary.

Bernadette, on the request of her pastor, asked the Lady her name. The Lady replied, "I am the Immaculate Conception."

Though the Church had recently declared the Blessed Mother as the Immaculate Conception as an article of Faith, most Catholics were not aware of it, and it had never been taught to Bernadette in her catechism class. The pastor immediately recognized the truth of the apparitions.

When Bernadette was asked "What did the Lady say?" Bernadette replied: "Penance, Penance, Penance. Pray for sinners!"

As we begin our Lenten devotions and sacrifices, let's think about the words of Our Lady. Several times the Blessed Mother has appeared to give the message to all of us to pray and do penance for sinners. In many of her appearances, she has carried a rosary or worn a rosary.

The words of the Blessed Mother to Bernadette were to offer sacrifices and do penance for the sins of the world. The Blessed Mother teaches us that offering up our sacrifices and daily sufferings carries much weight to help provide graces for the salvation of souls.



"I do not promise to make you happy in this world, but in the other." These words of the Blessed Mother to Bernadette reassure us that our sacrifices and sufferings in this world are for an important reason, to help others in their struggles to find Jesus and His generous love for all of us.

On July 2, 1957, His Holiness Pope Pius XII wrote an encyclical letter to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes. The following is a quote from the encyclical:

"Our thoughts turn also to Christian families, to ask them to remain faithful to their vital mission in society. May they consecrate themselves in this jubilee year to the Immaculate Heart of Mary! For married couples, this act of piety will be a valuable aid in performing their conjugal duties of chastity and faithfulness. It will keep pure the atmosphere in which their children grow up. Even more, it will make the family, inspired by its devotion to Mary, a living center of social rebirth and apostolic influence."

"Beyond the family circle, professional and civic affairs offer a vast field of action for Christians who desire to work for the renewal of society. Gathered about the Virgin's feet, docile to her exhortations, they will first take a searching look at themselves and will try to uproot from their consciences any false judgments and selfish impulses, fearing the falsehood of a love for God which does not translate itself into effective love for their brothers."

"Christians of every class and every nation will try to be of one mind in truth and charity, and to banish misunderstanding and suspicion. Without doubt, social structures and economic pressures of enormous weight burden the good will of men and often paralyze it. But if it is true, as Our predecessors and We Ourselves have insistently stressed, that the quest for social and political peace among men is, above all, a moral problem, then no reform can bear fruit, no agreement can be lasting without a conversion and cleansing of heart."

In this jubilee year, the Virgin of Lourdes reminds all men of this truth!"



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

I feel sort of overwhelmed. My children neglect their studies and their household responsibilities. What do you suggest?

There is something in the air, or should I say in the culture, which encourages an attitude which promotes self at the expense of others. It is an attitude that demands attention and self-satisfaction. Children innocently breathe this cultural air.

The answer lies in constant prayer and constantly practicing Christian virtues, not only for yourself but also by insisting that the children practice Christian virtues toward each other. Try to keep the pagan culture out of your home by controlling the television and computer sites. Be careful about allowing them to carry around smart phones which are mostly hand-held computers. Purchase or borrow good family movies or Catholic saint DVDs. Be sure their outside activities are with children you know have good Christian values from families you know.

Look on our website for our catalog, and see what we offer for raising Catholic children and keeping discipline. Dr. Ray Guarendi is a child psychologist and is raising a large home-schooling family. He has a regular show on EWTN. Five of his books are in our sales catalog, which you can find online on our website.

Keep your family together with the daily rosary, frequent family prayer and daily Mass, if at all possible. Practicing

the virtuous life with your children will eventually have results for their home schooling and family responsibilities.

Can Seton write Study Guides for the history and science courses?

While Seton could write study guides for history and science courses, we believe that study guides should be written by the student, because the process makes the student examine the ideas in the chapter and see how they relate to each other. One

of the best ways to study is to write a study guide. Of course, the second step is to study the study guide!

We are trying to do what we can to help without taking the process out of the hands of the students. We are working on including more chapter outlines, with more subheadings, in both the Table of Contents and at the beginning of each chapter. We are adding within the text the headings and numbering for each

section. We have included outlines for the chapters in the English books.

If you work with your students in grades 4 through 8 by teaching them how to do an outline and teaching them to outline each section of each chapter, they will soon learn how to identify, label, and remember important ideas. They should learn to distinguish major and minor topics or concepts.

Students should make an outline before beginning to write a paragraph or a book report. Unless the student is working from an outline, the paragraphs will likely

not be in a logical sequence. Outlining is a skill that is necessary for being a successful student.

Another necessary item is for your children to pray as they begin each assignment. When I went to Catholic school years ago, students were to put a "J.M.J." at the top of the page as they said the silent prayer, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph."

My husband is not involved with home schooling our children. Have you any suggestions for me to help him become involved?

Many fathers do not realize what they are missing by not teaching their children. Many fathers think that teaching is the mom's job. However, the Bible emphasizes the importance of fathers teaching their children. Remind him about that and look at my book, *Catholic Home Schooling*, for the many quotes from the Church documents about parental responsibility. Ask your husband to help with a subject that is of particular interest to him, and ask him if he would try teaching that subject.

Start out by asking your husband to help some Saturday or Sunday afternoon with a particular assignment. Don't make a "schedule," but just encourage him to help at a time when he does not have something else planned. Once dads become involved with their children, once they learn their child's way of thinking or even their attitude or understanding (or misunderstanding) about something, dads will want to be more involved, hopefully on a regular basis, even if only an hour a week. Dads who take time with their children find great satisfaction in contrast with the daily problems of the secular society.

In the surveys Seton has conducted over the years, we have found that the father's involvement and support are immensely

Students should make an outline before beginning to write a paragraph or a book report. Unless the student is working from an outline, the paragraphs will likely not be in a logical sequence. Outlining is a skill that is necessary for being a successful student.



important toward homeschooling success. Children need to know that their father strongly believes in what they are doing.

How can I find out about colleges which accept home schooling students?

As far as we know, every college in the United States accepts home schooled students. In fact, most colleges are happy to accept home schoolers because they are excellent students. Colleges are happy to have home schooled students who are independent workers, which is what the colleges are looking for.

We recommend that Seton high school students should start in the 9th or 10th grade to request information from Catholic colleges and to investigate possible colleges. We encourage you to contact Seton's College Partners, which all offer great academics and are faithful to the Church. Parents should emphasize the necessity for a Catholic college, where students' Faith can be strengthened, where their education is not slanted toward a secular agenda, and where many students meet their future spouse.

Seton's high school program is structured so as to give you the credits which colleges normally want to see on a transcript. However, if you have a specific college in mind, you should contact that college as early as possible to ask about their entrance requirements.

Should I help my son "correct" his test before he sends it to Seton?

Yes and no. If your student will benefit by a review, then go ahead and review the test with him. In the process, you may find that he misunderstood a question, in which case, please have him redo the answer.

Sometimes students answer too quickly and are careless in their answer. Sometimes students answer incompletely, answering only part of the question. In these cases, point out the mistakes or lack of information, and have your student go back and correct or answer the question completely. Tests are not for the purpose of tricking a student, but rather for the purpose of being sure he has understood the lessons.

You don't want reviewing the test to become a crutch for a student, though. The fact is, by high school a student should understand and be able to do most tests pretty well. If a student does his or her work carelessly, simply expecting that a parent review will fix the problem later, the parent isn't really helping the student. Remember, once the student is in college, a parent will not be there to help. The idea is to review with an eye toward helping the student identify and correct weaknesses.

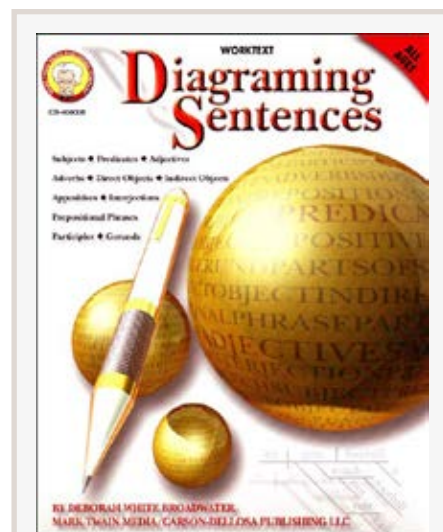
We are trying to get our schoolwork finished by June. I feel like we're not doing as well as we could toward meeting our goals. Do you have any suggestions for working more efficiently?

First, you want to have a family meeting, with your husband and your children and work out where things are not going as well as you would like. Are you having a lot of distractions that are preventing working on the schooling? Are there problems logistically with how the work is done, perhaps due to space considerations? Once you identify the areas that need to be improved, you can come up with a plan to address the problems. For example, could you work out a better schedule, perhaps

with your husband or an older child helping with some of the schooling?

Whatever the issues are, organization and scheduling are usually the best answers. If you can set up a reasonable schedule and you can stick to it, you will likely be successful. Including everyone in the planning is a key element to this, because everyone will be more inclined to stick to a schedule if everyone has had input in creating the schedule.

Organization, as well as daily prayer, is the key for success.



Diagramming Sentences

\$8.95 Grade: 6 S-EN06-05

Helpful for visual learners, this book dissects sentences when something does not sound or look right so students are better able to grasp the writing concepts behind it. This workbook covers sentence diagramming from easy to challenging, one step at a time.

www.setonbooks.com

Keeping God at the Center

8 Questions with the Rocco Family

Susan and Pasquale Rocco are homeschooling their family in Pittsburgh, PA



Why is homeschooling important to your family?

Homeschooling is a blessing and the perfect choice for our entire family because it gives us the opportunity to be together. Having our children live and learn with one another adds a dimension to their education and development that would be missing in any other educational format. That time together is so important. There is no better way to strengthen the family bond. Furthermore, homeschooling gives our children greater room to develop artistically and creatively alongside one another, as when they worked together to write and act out a short play about Our Lady of Guadalupe or when they danced together in a local Slovak dance troupe.

What made you choose Seton Home Study School?

Three years ago, and one year after the birth of our fifth child, we began our homeschooling journey. Although our fifth had been predicted to have Down Syndrome by the doctors, his arrival as a healthy 10 ½ pound wonder seemed to us a shout of encouragement from the Holy Spirit to get started with our homeschooling, as I had been wanting to do for some time. As a first-time homeschool mother, I had many questions and a certain degree of nervousness. I was very uncomfortable about just jumping in with no curriculum, so Seton seemed like the perfect answer. Seton provided all the structure we could need. When the books arrived and we realized how the Catholic faith is brought out on practically every page, we knew it was the perfect fit.

How has Seton Home Study School benefited your family?

Seton has allowed us to have that stable base on which to land, no matter where we might wander. Last August, we took all the kids to a shrine in Slovakia to celebrate our tenth wedding anniversary. (I have family in Slovakia and they took me to the shrine on a trip just after our wedding. It was at that shrine that I prayed to the Blessed Mother to help me conceive a child. We decided to return ten years later with our five children!) Having the lesson plans and texts allowed me to plan ahead for our trip, work in schooling along the way, and have an amazing family experience. Seton allows us to take school along wherever we roam.

Additionally, Seton has a well-established, easy-to-follow, age-appropriate curriculum that often intersects enough to provide time for group learning. Even when they aren't learning together, the older kids have learned from the same books and, as such, can help with the younger kids who are working with those texts now.

What do you like most about Seton Home Study School?

The texts are truly Catholic. Each chapter of the math book (MATH!) has beautiful pictures to look at and talk about, often leading to further exploration of the faith. Seton is Catholic education...exactly what we were looking for when we decided to homeschool.



What role does your Catholic faith play in your schooling and family life?

Faith is first in our life. When I brought up my call to homeschool, my husband's only comment was "teach them religion first, then math and reading." Our decision to educate our children in the home was made, first and foremost, to steep them in the truth and beauty of the Catholic faith and steel them for the time when they must go out and defend it in society. Seton texts make this so much easier; placing the faith front-and-center in every subject.

In keeping with this centrality of our faith, our trip to Europe was a pilgrimage in every sense of the word. We went specifically to thank the sisters who tend the Basilica in Levoca for praying for our desire to conceive, prayers we believe led to the five children with whom we have been blessed. While we were there, I miscarried our 6th child who was then buried in the cemetery of my ancestors. The entire trip was led and blessed by the Holy Spirit and it was such a teaching moment for our children...to trust God in all things and He will be faithful. This type of education is what led us to homeschool, and the desire to keep God at the center of all of our endeavors continues to fuel that decision.

What is one piece of advice you could give to other homeschooling families?

You are unique! Don't spend any of your precious time comparing your family to other families. Develop close friendships with other devout friends so that you may build up one another. It is difficult to live as a faithful, practicing Catholic in today's society, and choosing to homeschool can add another layer of "different" to your life. So seek out support systems (both friends and programs such as Seton) that will help you on your journey. As a homeschooling mother, never hesitate to run to the Blessed Mother for strength. Keep the Holy Family close in prayer as well.

How does a home-schooling day go in your family?

I have to chuckle, "Do homeschoolers have typical days?!" With so many little ones, it can be very different each day. I would say a "perfect" day (which happens more often than I would have believed) begins with family breakfast (during which we often listen to the Saint of the Day) followed by our morning prayer, Scripture shout, and letter of the week (for the little people). Then dad leaves for work and we spend some time all together at the table with art, math or reading. The bigger kids can often help with the little ones. Then I busy the two smallest with some crafty project and work with the kindergartener while the older two get to work on their day. I check in and help/teach when they have subjects that require more attention. The best part of Seton is that the children are able to follow the plans when they have to work on their own because my attention is elsewhere.

Lunch happens next, followed by naps for little ones and another hour or two with the older ones. This time with the older children could be directed lessons, independent reading/projects, or anything else that needs to be covered that day. We are usually finished with everything by early afternoon, and the kids play together until their father arrives and we sit down to dinner. Intertwined in our day are out-of-the-house learning opportunities, such as music lessons, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, or trips to the Science Center.



4 Ways to MAKE HOMESCHOOLING EASIER THAN EVER

with **Seton's Online Tools**

1 Upload Student Grades

Seton has made the process for recording grades and turning in required assignments easy and intuitive. You can submit your students' grades instantly on MySeton and receive your feedback more quickly. Here's how:

1. Log on to MySeton, select the "Courses" Tab, and select a student.
2. Click the "View" link for the course and quarter.
3. Select the "Enter Parent Grades" on the right-hand side of the page.
4. Enter grades into available boxes on parent-graded items. Seton will enter grades for materials graded by Seton staff.
5. When finished, click "Submit Parent Grades."
6. Either upload the Seton-graded assignments or take the online test (not available for all assignments).

Graded by	%	Grade	Resources
Parent	8.33%	85	
Parent	8.33%	90	
Parent	8.34%	90	
Seton	18.75%		

[Submit Parent Grades](#)



2 Download Student Grade Reports

Sometimes parents need copies of a grade report or official transcript for student records. MySeton automates this process for you. Here's how to access transcripts:

To View a Grade Report:

1. Select the "Courses" Tab, and select a student.
2. Click on the Printer icon.



To View a Cumulative High School Grade Report (unofficial transcript):

1. Select the "Courses" Tab, and select a student.
2. Click on the Report Card icon.



To Request an Official Transcript:

1. Select the "Resources" Tab, and select a student.
2. Click the "Transcripts" link. Then, click the "Online Transcript Request Form" Button.





To login, visit setonhome.org/myseton

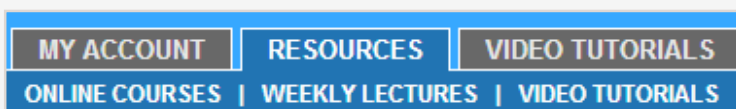
3

Access Helpful Course Resources

Seton is continually adding new resources to high school courses. With video tutorials and audio lectures, students can gain greater insight into their various academic studies. To see what resources are available for your student, follow these steps:

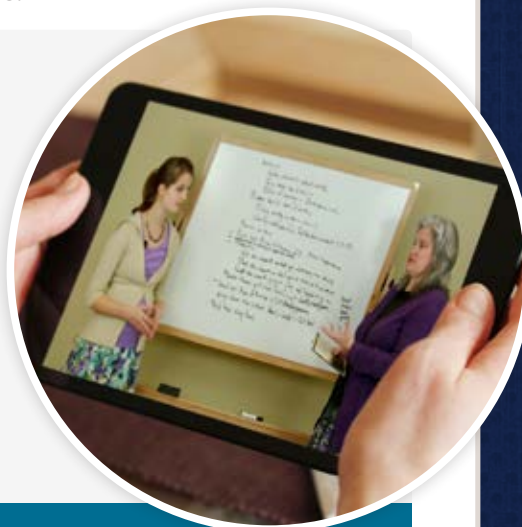
To Access Audio Lectures:

1. Login to MySeton, select the "Resources" Tab.
2. Click the "Weekly Lectures" link on the sub-menu.



To Access Video Lectures:

1. Login to MySeton, select the "Resources" Tab.
2. Click the "Weekly Lectures" link on the sub-menu.



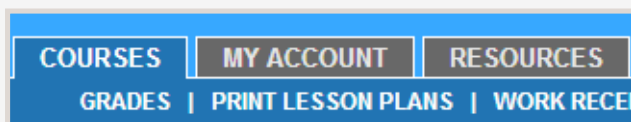
» Video tutorials for the Latin 1 Course now available to all Latin students!

4

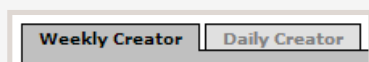
Print Custom Lesson Plans

Every family and every student moves at a different pace and according to a unique schedule. With Seton's online Lesson Plan generator, you can customize daily instructions based on your schedule. This service is now available for a number of our courses.

1. Login to MySeton, select the "Courses" Tab.
2. Click the "Print Lesson Plans" link on the sub-menu.



3. To print a week's worth of Lesson Plans for a single subject, select the "Weekly Creator" tab.
4. To print a customized day-by-day Lesson Plan, select the "Daily Creator" tab.



5. Follow the instructions to complete the Lesson Plans.

Please note that we do not have every lesson plan currently online. If some of your courses aren't showing up, [click here](#).

Courses	Print Day
Advanced Math II	<input type="checkbox"/> Print blank (no lesson plans available.)

☒ Order courses alphabetically
☐ Order courses as shown above
What does this mean?

Please click the 'Create Lesson Plans' button only once. It may take up to 30 seconds for a download box to appear.

Lesson Plan Creation Options

- ☒ Select heading background color: ☐ Reset to default color
What does this mean?
- ☒ Exclude download time
What does this mean?
- ☐ Display lesson plans in table format
What does this mean?
- ☒ Include automatic page breaks between days
What does this mean?
- ☐ Repeat lesson plan text for lessons that span multiple days
What does this mean?

Page Layout:
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Note: Selecting landscape orientation and changing margins may give different results than you expect. The value you specify for the top margin may actually become the right margin, etc.

How Marshmallows Can Change Your Life

BY JOHN CLARK



Of all the spiritual misconceptions of the modern age, poverty is one of the most misunderstood. Part of the difficulty with poverty is that the word itself has disparate meanings.

It can refer to the *condition* of lacking the means to provide material needs. Pope Benedict XVI referred to that sort of poverty as a “poverty to be fought.” But the word poverty can also refer to a free-will decision, sometimes being called *voluntary poverty*; as such, it is recognized as a virtue. The core of the virtue of poverty lies in detachment from material goods. And in the sense that poverty is about moving beyond our over-attachment to material goods, all Christians are called to practice poverty.

That doesn’t mean that we can’t own anything. Quite the contrary: our state in life might require us to own things. For instance, under normal conditions, parents cannot take formal vows of poverty because private property is necessary to raise their children. But even under these conditions, some poverty must be practiced. In these instances, poverty is more about *needing* less than *having* less. We often put far too much faith in material goods, and as a consequence, far too little in spiritual goods.

Poverty is an essential nutrient in the Christian spiritual diet. Without it, we can succumb to the hunger of materialism and drive a wedge between ourselves and eternal life. As far as poverty is concerned, to paraphrase a popular slogan: “You can’t get home without it.”

But how do we develop a sense of detachment? How do we get started? I propose one answer that might seem odd.

Here it is: give up marshmallows. For the rest of your life.

With apologies to marshmallow manufacturers everywhere, here is my logic. Even if it’s a comparatively unimportant thing, it’s a little scary to give something up forever. There is finality to it—at least, an Earthly finality. But it’s also a recognition that this life is not final. When we give something up, we are sacrificing a good on Earth because of the belief in a greater good in Heaven. To get there, we must not cling too strongly to anything on Earth. Giving up marshmallows is a baby step toward virtuous poverty.

Our Path to Heaven

You might think that giving up marshmallows for the rest of your life is pretty inconsequential, but I’m guessing that it’s not. Detachment from marshmallows is not about marshmallows—it’s about detachment. A disordered attachment to material goods keeps us from entering Heaven, the home that God created for us. On the contrary, poverty spells a detachment from material goods and makes our Heavenly home more attractive to us. St. Francis of Assisi makes this point very clearly, writing:

“For poverty is that heavenly virtue by which all Earthly and transitory things are trodden under foot, and by which every obstacle is removed from the soul so that it may freely enter into union with the eternal Lord God. It is also the virtue which makes the soul, while still here on earth, converse with the angels in Heaven. It is she who accompanied Christ on the Cross, was buried with Christ in the Tomb, and with Christ was raised and ascended into Heaven, for even

in this life, she gives to souls who love her the ability to fly to Heaven, and she alone guards the armor of true humility and charity.”

As Saint Francis tells us, poverty and detachment mean the proper orientation of spirit versus flesh and of mind versus matter.

Detachment has its objectors, even among Catholics. The argument is that since God gave us a wonderful world to enjoy, we should enjoy it. So they might ask: doesn’t God want us to enjoy marshmallows?

Of course He does. He also wanted us to enjoy the Garden of Eden. But man fell, and man began to believe that Earthly things were the best things. They’re not. Heavenly things are the best things. Simply put, the marshmallows in Heaven are better than the ones on Earth.

I’m not suggesting that you give up marshmallows forever—just for the rest of your Earthly life.

By the way, it doesn’t need to be marshmallows. Make it some other small thing, like cinnamon gum, glazed donuts, or raspberry tea. Pick something to give up.

That seemingly small act might make a world of difference in your spiritual life. It’s a detachment from something little, but an attachment to something much more wonderful.

Read John Clark’s weekly blog at
setonmagazine.com/johnclark



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.



5 Ways We Bring Lent Home

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

The Lenten season is one which, with a little effort, can be extremely fruitful for the homeschool family. We get a beautiful opportunity to strengthen our spiritual muscles as we journey toward the Risen Christ.

Preparations

When preparing for Lent, I start by focusing on the destination. We are preparing for the resurrection and that is such an extraordinary, joyful thing that it requires special preparation. In the same way an athlete prepares for a championship game, we all need to take the necessary steps to be in the right state to greet Jesus on Easter morning.

Including Lent and its devotions in your homeschool will not only draw your children closer to God but also draw you closer as a family because you are making this journey together.

1. Shrove Tuesday

I begin by making a big deal about Shrove Tuesday. It's a fun evening in our home in which we have pancakes, bacon, whipped cream and fruit for dinner. There is king cake and all kinds of treats because the fasting will begin tomorrow! We also bury the Alleluia, a homemade banner, in a small purple box. It appears strung across the fireplace on Easter morning.

2. Particular Sacrifices

For a few weeks prior to the Lenten season, we have the children think about what their particular sacrifices and devotions will be. It's important as they get older that there is thought and consideration put into these decisions and dinnertime on Shrove Tuesday is when we nail down the plan.

Very often their devotion inspires and humbles me. Last year, my Kevin (11) chose to forgo his blankets for the season and Kelli (12) gave up her pillow. Some children add prayers to their daily routine while others commit to some spiritual reading, a saint biography or the like.

3. Ash Wednesday

After Mass on Ash Wednesday, I have the kids memorize the phrase "Remember thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return" and then we discuss the biblical references for the symbolic nature of the ashes, such as Job 42:6, Daniel 9:3, and Jonah 3:5-6.

4. Crown of Thorns

Another little devotion that helps the kids stay on track is our crown of thorns. Every year, I reach down deep into my non-crafty self and we make a salt dough crown of thorns. This serves as a visual reminder to my children of the sacrifices they will be making over the next forty days. I buy two boxes of the plain toothpicks and use a basic salt dough recipe and we all stick several hundred toothpicks in the braided salt dough circle to serve as thorns before baking.

The crown is displayed on the dining room table with a jar in the middle. When the children make sacrifices, they pull out a thorn and place it in the jar and on Easter morning it's filled with candy and the crown is surrounded in flowers. It's a nice reminder that their sacrifices bear fruit. It's a nice visual for small ones and is low maintenance enough not to overwhelm me during a busy time of year.

This also helps create a more peaceful homeschool atmosphere since everyone wants to be able to pull out a thorn, so there is very little complaining and bickering.

5. Stations of the Cross

One devotion that I always make time for in our Lenten observances is the Stations of the Cross. Every Friday at three we meet a few local homeschool families at my parish church and we walk the Stations praying



with the children using *The Way Of The Cross For Children*. In years past, this has just been us, but last year my parish made it a formal prayer service for children, which was just beautiful.

Lent can be challenging for children: no sweets, frequent confession, lots of church time and generally a little less fun as we all try hard to be better. By bringing Lent home, we should be quieting the atmosphere in the home and generally fostering more deliberation in the choices we make. In our home, we make efforts to keep the screens off, to play uplifting background music, to pray more often, and to bring attention to the penitential aspects of Lent. None of this is in the nature of most children, so it's important to gently encourage them in their own spiritual journey by deciding as a family how Lent is going to look in your home.

Pick a few devotions, one or two activities, and explore the rich heritage of our faith while leading the children to Easter. Secular traditions such as baskets and bunnies are all lovely, but Lent is so much more. As homeschooling moms, we have the responsibility to make Lent fruitful for the whole family, to keep them close to God, and to make them aware of the victory of the Cross. It may be the most important lesson they ever learn.

Read Mary Ellen online at
setonmagazine.com/maryellen



Mary Ellen Barrett is mother of seven children and two in heaven. Mary is wife to David and a lifelong New Yorker. She has homeschooled her children for eleven years using Seton and an enormous amount of books.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

MSGR. IGNACIO BARREIRO CARÁMBULA

The following is from a homily concerning the Immaculate Conception preached on December 8, 2014, by Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro Carámbula of Human Life International. The Blessed Mother first referred to herself as the Immaculate Conception in her appearances to St. Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes, which began on February 11, 1858.

Today we celebrate the beginning of our Redemption with the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For many centuries, Catholics believed in this dogma of faith but it was formally and solemnly defined one hundred and sixty years ago by Blessed Pius IX on December 8, 1854.

To understand the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we have to have a clear idea of the nature of original sin. The essence of original sin consists in the deprivation of sanctifying grace and of the supernatural gifts that our first parents had received at creation. Without sanctifying grace and these supernatural gifts, human nature is a wounded nature, albeit one that can be perfected through Baptism and cooperation with the graces God offers us.

Mary was preserved from all stain of original sin at the moment of the infusion of her soul into her body and sanctifying grace was given to her before sin could have taken effect in her soul. Simultaneously with the exclusion of original sin, the state of original sanctity—innocence, and justice, as opposed to original sin—was granted to her. By this gift, all evil tendencies, passions, and debilities essentially pertaining to original sin, were excluded.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God is clearly grounded in Sacred Scripture. The punishment of our first parents was accompanied by a prophecy of hope in Genesis 3:15, in which the Lord promised redemption through the cooperation of a woman who would become the mother of our Savior: “I will put enmity

between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head, while you strike at His heel.” The conqueror from the seed of the woman, who should crush the serpent’s head, is Christ; the woman at enmity with the serpent is Mary. This prophecy, therefore, contains a direct promise of the Redeemer, and in conjunction therewith, reveals the masterpiece of God’s Redemption: the perfect preservation of His virginal Mother from original sin.

At the Annunciation, the Archangel Gabriel saluted the Blessed Virgin Mary calling her, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women” (Lk. 1-28). The salutation of the Archangel Gabriel – ‘Hail, full of grace’ – indicates a unique full abundance of grace, a supernatural, godlike state of soul, which finds its explanation only in the Immaculate Conception of Mary. As Blessed Pius IX noted in *Ineffabilis Deus*, “by this singular and solemn salutation, otherwise never heard of, it is shown that the Mother of God was the abode of all Divine graces... never subjected to the one accursed.”

Blessed John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) pointed out that God had sanctified Mary at the moment of her conception in His



foreknowledge that the Blessed Virgin would consent to bear Christ. In other words, she too had been redeemed but her redemption had simply been accomplished at the moment of her conception, rather than in Baptism (as with all other Christians).

Although the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was not elevated to the status of dogma until 1854, recognition of the Immaculate Conception was officially adopted by the universal Church on February 28, 1476, almost 400 years earlier! That day, Pope Sixtus IV extended the feast of the Immaculate Conception, which had been celebrated in various churches, to the entire Western Church. In fact, in 1483, Pope Sixtus IV threatened with excommunication those who opposed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception!

In its Decree concerning Original Sin, the Council of Trent established that “it is not its

intention to include in this decree, where original sin is treated of, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the mother of God; but that the constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, of happy memory, are to be observed” (DS 1516).

Finally, on December 8, 1854, the Blessed Pius IX defined that, “The most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin.”

This solemn definition was reaffirmed in a particular way by the apparitions of Our Lady at Lourdes, as the Venerable Pius XII underlines in his Encyclical Letter *Fulgens Corona*: “For indeed four years had not yet elapsed when, in a French town at the foot of the Pyrenees, the Virgin Mother... clothed in a shining white garment... showed herself to a simple and innocent girl at the grotto of Massabielle. And to this same girl, earnestly inquiring the name of her with whose vision she was favored... she replied: ‘I am the Immaculate Conception.’”

In truth, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception is perfectly in accordance with reason. It would not be logical to suppose that the flesh from which the flesh of the Son of God was to be formed, the flesh of His mother, should ever have belonged to a person that was subject to the enemy of man, from whose power Christ came to redeem us. Now as Queen of Heaven, where she was assumed in body and soul, she continues to intercede for us and for the Church.

Under your protection, Blessed Mother of God, we take shelter, and we entrust ourselves and the Church to your powerful intercession.



Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro Carámbula has been the Executive Director of the Rome office of Human Life International. Msgr. Barreiro has published hundreds of articles on theological and life issues, and historical subjects in popular and scholarly publications.



FINALIZING COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

The usual deadline for college acceptance lies in March. At that point, colleges will generally expect a high school transcript which is complete except for the final twelfth grade courses. Sometimes a student will get a bit behind on certain subjects, most often English. There are even times when some eleventh grade work has been delayed!

If your transcript is not quite what it should be, now is the time for really buckling down and getting all delayed work to Seton for grading. After all, you really do want the college to see everything about you in the best light and a complete transcript is a large part of that.

In a competitive race, a runner will most often try for an extra burst of speed when nearing the finish line. Seton students would do well to follow the same course. Do not give in to the temptation to slack off, to indulge in that common disease called the “Senior Slump.” Rather, put in that small little bit of extra effort and complete your work in a timely fashion.



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

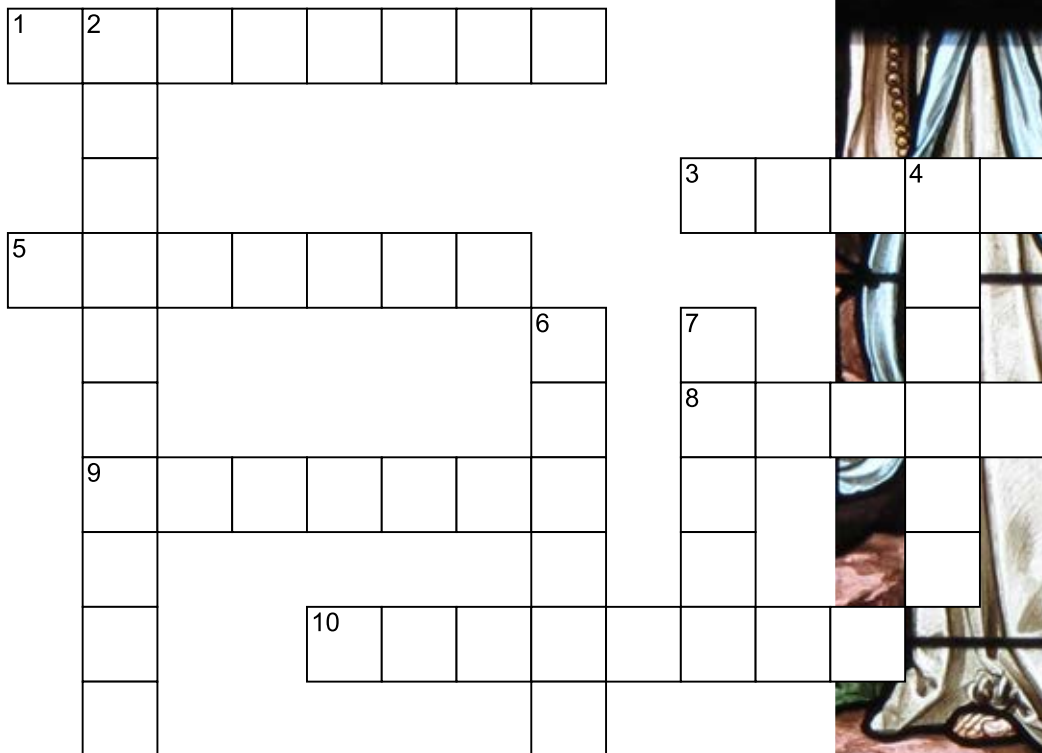
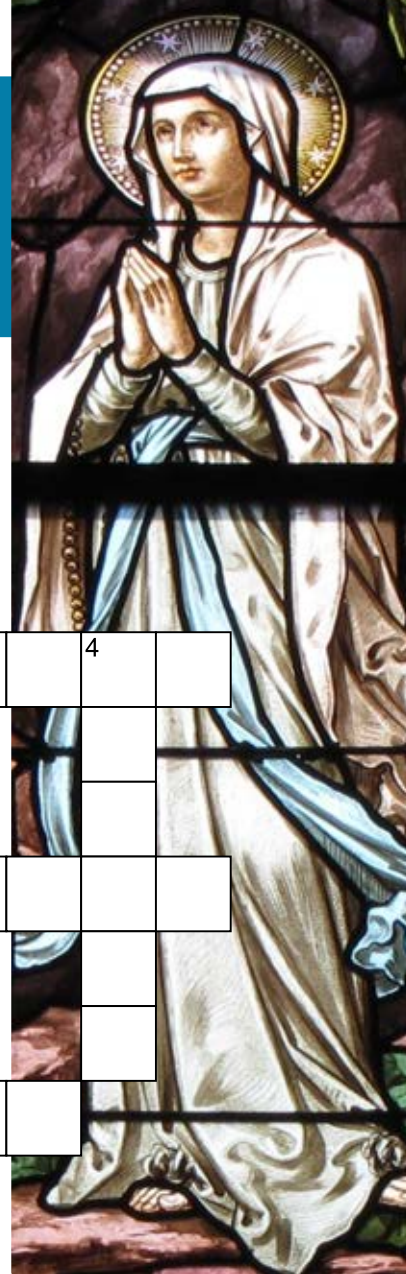


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THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



ACROSS

- 1 The Blessed Mother appeared to St. Bernadette ___ times.
- 3 "Hail Mary, Full of ___!"
- 5 At the Annunciation, the Angel ___ appeared to the Blessed Mother.
- 8 "I do not promise to make you ___ in this world, but in the other."
- 9 Our Lady appeared to Saint Bernadette at ___.
- 10 St. Bernadette was only ___ years old when Our Lady appeared to her.

DOWN

- 2 Our Lady called herself the ___ Conception.
- 4 Our Lady desired a ___ to be built where she appeared.
- 6 Our Lady asked that Bernadette pray the ___.
- 7 St. Bernadette said that Our Lady wore a blue belt and a ___ dress and veil.



2015 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

TX, Fort Worth February 12-14, 2015 (Thurs.-Sat.)

Texas Homeschool Convention
Fort Worth Convention Centre
1201 Houston Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102
www.greathomeschoolconventions.com

MO, St. Louis March 27-28, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

2015 St. Louis Catholic Homeschool Conference
Cardinal Rigali Center
20 Archbishop May Drive
St. Louis, MO 63119
www.stlouiscatholichomeschool.com

OH, Cincinnati April 9-11, 2015 (Thurs.-Sat.)

Midwest Homeschool Convention
Duke Energy Convention Center
525 Elm Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202
www.greathomeschoolconventions.com

LA, Covington April 11, 2015 (Sat.)

Roman Catholic Homeschool Association of Louisiana "Catholic Homeschooling: A Way of Life"
St. Peter's Catholic Church, (St. Mary's Hall)
125 E. 19th Avenue, Covington, LA 70433
www.rchal.org

AZ, Phoenix April 18, 2015 (Sat.)

Arizona Catholic Homeschool Conference
Diocesan Pastoral Center
400 E. Monroe Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004
www.shhe.org

TX, Houston April 18, 2015 (Sat.)

Houston Homeschool & Parent Conference
University of St. Thomas
Jerabek Athletic Center
3800 Montrose Boulevard
Houston, TX 77006
www.arch-homeschool.org

TN, Nashville April 18, 2015 (Sat.)

IHM Tennessee Homeschool Conference
Aquinas College – Main Building
4210 Harding Pike, Nashville, TN 37205
www.ihmconference.org

FL, Jacksonville April 24, 2015 (Fri.)

IHM Jacksonville Homeschool Conference
Embassy Suites Jacksonville – Baymeadows
9300 Baymeadows Road
Jacksonville, FL 32256
www.ihmconference.org

TX, San Antonio April 30, 2015 (Thu.)

IHM South Texas Homeschool Conference
New Braunfels Civic Convention Center
375 South Castell Avenue
New Braunfels, TX 78130
www.ihmconference.org

MD, Mt. Airy May 8-9, 2015 (Fri.-Sat.)

IHM Maryland Homeschool Conference
St. Michael's Parish — Poplar Springs
1125 St. Michael's Road, Mt. Airy, MD 21771
www.ihmconference.org

Student Achievements



Sean | A West Virginia Seton senior, I received three nominations to U.S. military service academies. I acquired two nominations to the US Naval Academy from a U.S. Representative and Senator.



Theresa | Theresa joined Ballet 5:8, a professional Christian ballet company, as a trainee in 2012 after graduation from Seton Home Study School.



Brooke | Brooke performs with STARS, a non-profit organization in the small farming town of Cabool, Missouri. The STARS Foundation is a community-wide fine arts school.

Share your achievement!

Visit us online at

www.setonmagazine.com/students

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

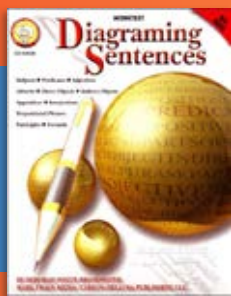
Seton Home Study School

1350 Progress Drive

Front Royal, VA 22630

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Supplemental Workbooks

Diagramming Sentences

Helpful for visual learners, this book dissects sentences when something does not sound or look right.



Writing Step by Step (Grades 3-8)

Guides the student through the writing process from organizing main ideas to proofreading and revising for the final product.



Writing Skills 4 Book Set

Instruction alternates between grammar, mechanics, and composition illustrated by rules and examples!

More detail at www.setonmagazine.com/writing2015



PAPAL WISDOM



Educating is not a profession but an attitude, a way of being; in order to educate it is necessary to step out of ourselves and be among young people, to accompany them in the stages of their growth and to set ourselves beside them.

Give them hope and optimism for their journey in the world. Teach them to see the beauty and goodness of creation and of man who always retains the Creator's hallmark. But above all with your life be witnesses of what you communicate. Educators — Jesuits, teachers, operators, parents — pass on knowledge and values with their words; but their words will have an incisive effect on children and young people if they are accompanied by their witness, their consistent way of life. Without consistency it is impossible to educate! ... Schools are a precious means for making a contribution to the progress of the Church and of society as a whole. **Moreover, the educational field is not limited to the conventional school. Encourage each other to seek new forms of non-conventional education in accordance with "the needs of the times and of people".**

Pope Francis, Address to the Students of the Jesuit Schools of Italy and Albania, June 7, 2013