

# Seton MAGAZINE



Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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'PARENTING' ISSUE



#### Executive Editor

Dr. Mary Kay Clark

#### Editors

Kevin Clark  
Christine Smitha

#### Marketing Director

Jim Shanley

#### Design & Layout

Dominic de Souza

#### Contributing Writers

Dom Alban Baker  
Jody Boyd  
John Clark  
Amy Pawlusiak  
Bob Wiesner

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

Seton Home Study School  
1350 Progress Dr.  
Front Royal, VA 22630

**Phone: (540) 636-9990**  
Fax: (540) 636-1602

[info@setonhome.org](mailto:info@setonhome.org)  
[www.setonhome.org](http://www.setonhome.org)

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Mayrose Family

**D**aily at Seton, we gather before the altar at our noon Angelus and offer prayers for our families and friends. We encourage you also to pray for other homeschooling families, especially those suffering from illness, unemployment, or other crosses. United in the Communion of Saints, God allows us to uphold, support, and console other members of His Church through our prayers. Let us pray for one another as we walk the path of homeschooling, so that we may someday all join together in prayer in Heaven.



## Letter from the Editor

No matter how much conviction and passion we have when we start, we parents quickly learn that homeschooling is one of the biggest challenges we'll ever undertake.

This month's issue shares valuable guidance for staying united as a family, and keeping marriages healthy so that our families can keep a solid foundation.

Bob Wiesner reminds us that truth should be the first and most exciting priority for all of us, while Dr. Clark paints a picture of the mutual love and learning in Our Lady's family. Amy Pawlusiak reminds moms both how to support and to let themselves be supported by their husbands. John Clark gives dads some perspective on being present to their families, and Father Alban Baker discusses three very important virtues every couple should cultivate. Lastly, this month's aspect introduces a new tool from Seton Home Study School that just might help to take some pressure off those of you homeschooling your high schoolers. After all, we could all use a little help from our friends, right?

Have a blessed September!

Christine Smitha

## Seton Directory



#### Customer Service

[custserv@setonhome.org](mailto:custserv@setonhome.org)

#### Counselors

[counselors@setonhome.org](mailto:counselors@setonhome.org)

#### Admissions

[admissions@setonhome.org](mailto:admissions@setonhome.org)

#### Grading

[grading@setonhome.org](mailto:grading@setonhome.org)

#### General Information

[info@setonhome.org](mailto:info@setonhome.org)

#### My Seton

[myseton@setonhome.org](mailto:myseton@setonhome.org)

#### Shipping

[shipping@setonhome.org](mailto:shipping@setonhome.org)

#### Standardized Testing

[testing@setonhome.org](mailto:testing@setonhome.org)

#### Special Services

[SSDept@setonhome.org](mailto:SSDept@setonhome.org)



**Seton Home Study School**  
540-636-9990

**Seton Educational Media**  
540-636-9996

**Standardized Testing**  
Patty Graham  
540-636-1250

**Admissions**  
540-636-2039

**Elementary Grading**  
Bruce Hacker  
540-622-5524

**General Counseling**  
Cecilia Sauer  
540-622-5526

**High School Academic Counseling**  
Gene McGuirk  
540-635-4728

**Special Services**  
Stephen Costanzo  
540-622-5546

Kathleen Hunt  
540-622-5542

**Elementary Counseling**  
Sharon Hassett  
540-636-1429

Carin Delancey  
540-636-2342

Lisa Clark  
540-622-8474

**Transcripts, Records, and Extensions**  
Betty Valaike  
540-635-1937

**High School Grading**  
Rhonda Way  
540-622-5525

**High School English**  
Walker Solis  
540-636-1755

Elizabeth Wagner  
540-622-5555

**High School History**  
Nick Marmalejo  
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540-636-1846

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540-636-2238

Bob Wiesner  
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Father Constantine  
540-636-1527

# Holy Homeschoolers

## *The Inspiration of Saints Joachim & Anne*

On September 8th, we celebrate the birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It seems appropriate to ask for Mary's help as we begin a new homeschooling year, which for many of us is a "birthday" of the beginning of our homeschooling some years past. As we think about the Blessed Mother's birthday, we should consider also her parents, Sts. Anne and Joachim, who were responsible for educating their Immaculate Daughter. In *The Life of Mary as Seen by the Mystics*, published by TAN Books, the author compiled material from several saints about Anne and Joachim and the birth of their daughter Mary.

The Blessed Mother's parents lived very holy lives, Joachim having regular responsibilities in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, and Anne living a life of daily prayer. While they had inherited considerable land and herds of sheep, they were generous in donating one-third of their money and goods to the Temple, and one third to the poor.

Anne and Joachim lived a life of prayer, but one prayer did not seem to be answered: their prayer to have a child. Both suffered much at the hands of those in the Jewish community who believed they were being punished by God. According to several mystics, after about twenty years of waiting, Anne was visited by an angel who told her she was going to have a baby. At the same time, Joachim was visited by an angel in the Temple who reported not only that Anne would have a baby, but also that their child was a special gift from God. Mary was immaculately conceived without original sin; this truth was first explained by several mystics and later promulgated by the Catholic Church as a Doctrine of Faith.

After Mary was born, the Jewish priests came to the house of Anne and Joachim for the ceremony of naming the baby. Joachim wrote the name Mary on a piece of parchment and placed it on her chest. The Jewish priests gave her the official name of Mary, then literally lifted her up as a gift to the Lord.

Anne and Joachim realized Mary was a miracle from God, yet they were surprised at Mary's religious understanding. Some mystics have believed that little Mary could speak, read, and understand the Jewish teachings even as a toddler. Totally free from sin, she was able to understand various doctrines about God at a very early age.

While Anne and Joachim taught Mary at home for the first few years, it is traditionally believed that her parents learned much from little Mary's insights into various spiritual truths. Evidently, the homeschooling in the home of Anne and Joachim sometimes included heavenly inspirations from little Mary!

When Mary was quite young, she asked her parents if she could go to live, learn, and pray in the Temple in Jerusalem. At that time, many young Jewish girls served the priests, worked, and prayed in the Temple. While Anne and Joachim did not know the particulars of the future of their holy daughter who would be the Mother of the Messiah, they did believe that she belonged in the holy Temple of God where she could spend more time in prayer and meditation. With great sacrifice and obedience to God's Will, they agreed to their longed-for daughter joining the Temple School. While it was a sadness for Anne and Joachim to be separated from Mary, they realized that Mary was a special child who had been given a special mission from God.

We can be confident that Anne and Joachim, holy and loving parents, visited Mary frequently at the Temple school. It seems likely that, through prayer and discussion, Anne and Joachim continued Mary's "homeschooling," which helped both Mary and her parents to grow in understanding spiritual mysteries. Some of us homeschooling parents have found ourselves growing in our own spiritual lives,



learning as much or more than our young innocent children who provide an example of being open to mystical truths.

May we homeschooling parents follow in the footsteps of Joachim and Anne in having a lively faith in God and His plan. May we, like them, never cease praying for His favor and His graces. May we stay united in love for one another and for Christ, so that we can faithfully and devotedly teach our children as Joachim and Anne taught the Blessed Mother.

May all of us homeschooling parents receive a special blessing from the Blessed Virgin Mary on her birthday not only to help us to teach our children the eternal truths of the Catholic Faith, but also that our children may help us to learn, and to grow, and to practice our Catholic Faith more deeply as we teach our young ones with words, actions, prayers, and devotions.

*Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, we fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins our Mother; to thee do we come, before thee we stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer them. Amen.*



Dr. Mary Kay Clark has been the Director of Seton Home Study School for more than 30 years. She regularly writes columns for *Seton Magazine* and is the author of *Catholic Homeschooling: A Handbook for Parents*.

# your Questions ANSWERED

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

## **If you were to give one message to home schooling parents, what would be your most important message?**

Be involved daily with the teaching of your children. Don't look for someone else to "take over" your home schooling. Your Catholic values, the daily practice of your Catholic Faith and devotion to your Catholic Faith is the essence of Catholic home schooling for your children. It is not the responsibility of anyone else!

If you don't understand something in the science book, or if you feel frustrated that your little one is taking so long to learn phonics or math, all these things are "sidebars" to what home schooling is all about. The essence of Catholic home schooling is living and loving the Catholic Faith, the teachings of Jesus, and showing your children that He is the Essence of life itself.

Don't worry about how fast your children are learning, or that they don't

seem to understand an English rule or a math concept. All those things will come with time and age and grace. Trust in Jesus. He is the one Who is really in charge of the learning of all these things by each and every one of us.

## **Is there a limit to the number of phone calls we may place with the Seton counselors?**

We do not limit the number of calls or emails, from the students or from parents of enrolled students, but we do ask that parents or students first recheck the lesson plans, look over the online Course Resources to see what is available in the way of supplementary lessons, alternative resources, and extra practice exercises, and check the Seton Message Board for advice on your topic or problem. We may have answered your question already.

At the present time, we have four elementary academic counselors, as well as several high school counselors. Our high school counselors specialize in the subject areas, such as math, history, science, religion, English, Latin, and so on.

## **What is the most frequent recommendation you make so home schooling is easier?**

Combine the children in the same courses if at all possible.

The children can help each other and you can teach two children the same subject at the same time. You don't want to hold a child back if it would be better for him to move ahead, but this is usually not true in all subjects. Often a child can benefit from retaking a course that was a struggle the first time. Some children do not mind or even enjoy redoing a course, such as math or science. Such a student may like helping a younger sibling. More importantly, you don't want to push a child beyond his ability so he is struggling in an upper grade level. Some children would benefit from taking

over again a whole grade level of the major courses [not music or art].

Most children respond very well to any subject Dad is teaching. They know that Dad has an important job to support the family, and when he takes the time to help with the teaching, the children respond in a special way. Whenever Dad teaches a class, it is more beneficial if he teaches two children at the same time, even if they are in adjacent grades. This can turn out to be an amazing experience for the children as well as for Dad!

## **There seems to be lots of work on your English Courses...**

Developing analysis or thinking skills is not easy for anyone. However, we receive many letters and emails from parents and students telling us how successful the former Seton students are in college. Many are offered money by their colleges for helping other students to write essays, research reports, and book reports.

We just received an email from a mother whose son went to the local community college to take a class to prepare for the ACT test. When he took the test for "readiness" to take the preparation class, the college professor said she had never seen such a high writing score. This is an example of the kind of letters we receive frequently. If students and parents stick with it and keep trying, the effort and the practice will result in very good writing skills, and the likelihood of future academic success.

## **What would you recommend I do to help my sixth grade son improve his writing skills?**

Have him write every day at least one paragraph about something he did that day, or something he liked that happened that day, or about his thoughts concerning something he heard about or read about that day. Ask him to write about something he read in a book or in the

### **Trouble Viewing Grader Comments on Uploaded Work?**

Sometimes students/parents have technical difficulties viewing grader comments on uploaded work. There is assistance on MySeton.

Select the grey "Help" tab at the top of your MySeton page and then click the submenu option "Frequently Asked Questions."

The first question addresses grader comments and answers problems that can arise viewing comments through Chrome and Firefox. It also has a form to request further assistance from our computer department.



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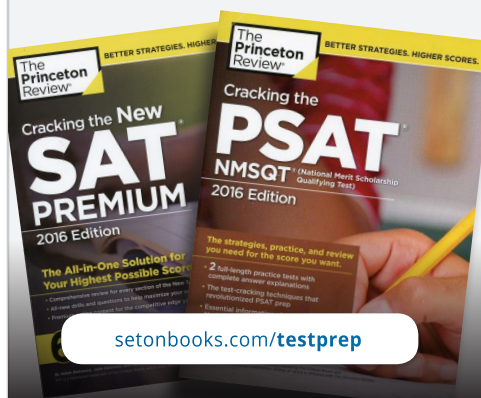
With 6 full-length practice tests created specifically for the newly redesigned exam, brand-new content reviews, and updated scoring strategies covers every facet of this challenging test.

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local newspaper, about how he would have reacted in that certain situation. Ask him to read his paragraph to you or to Dad or to the family. Consider having a rewards system in place to incentivize his completion of these assignments.

Purchase a colorful spiral bound notebook that your son likes. Let him personalize his notebook with pictures or stickers. When he has filled all the pages with completed writing tasks, talk with him about his achievement from his first paragraph to his last paragraph.

**I have a friend with a son at the local high school. His son would like to enroll in just one course at Seton to make up for a course he did not pass.**

We have many students who enroll in Seton for one course to make up for a failed course in another school. Because we are accredited, it is usually not a problem for the other school

to accept our course for their graduation requirements. We encourage students to take such courses over the summer, however, when they can focus on the work and put in the time and effort needed to obtain a high grade.

### My daughter would like to enroll in the local parish co-op ...

First, we have to make a distinction between “Seton credits” and more generally the credits which count toward graduation. A “Seton credit” is given for a Seton course, meaning a course which uses the Seton books and lesson plans and which is at least partially graded by Seton. These courses will be recorded on grade reports and transcripts, and the grades students receive in these courses will count toward the student's official Grade Point Average (GPA).

Students can take other courses as “independent study,” either on their own or at a co-op, and these courses can count toward graduation requirements. If they are, for example, math or science courses, they can take the place of required courses. You can take other courses, such as a driver's education or music course, which can count as an elective credit toward the total credits needed for graduation. The credits for courses which are taken as independent study do not count toward a student's GPA, but they do count toward graduation and the credits will be listed on the student's transcript.

Some co-ops groups use Seton textbooks and lessons. In such cases, as long as the student is enrolled in the Seton course and submits the Seton tests, the student will receive Seton credit for the course.

There are some subject areas in which we do not permit students to do independent study: religion, English, history, literature, and government. (An exception to this general rule is that students who are citizens of countries other than the United States may do an independent study of the history or government of their country.) The reason for this is that we feel that these are areas in which a Catholic perspective is very much needed, and an independent study course is unlikely to provide that perspective.

For more information please see this page: [www.setonhome.org/independent-study](http://www.setonhome.org/independent-study)



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The Seton College Partner Program is a way to encourage students to continue their Catholic education by attending solidly Catholic Colleges after high school.



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BELMONT ABBEY COLLEGE



CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE



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NORTHEAST CATHOLIC COLLEGE



JOHN PAUL THE GREAT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE



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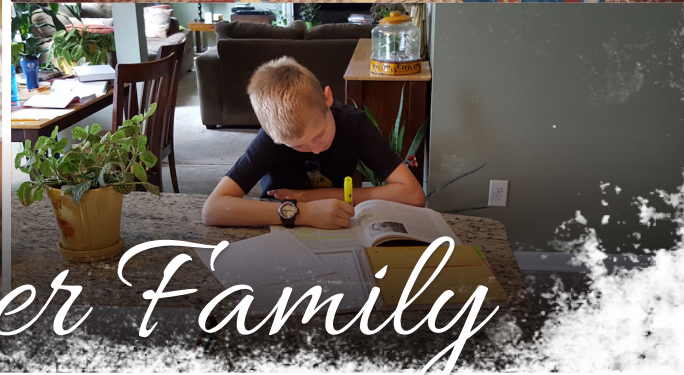
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# A Stranger Family

## Why We Continue to Choose Seton

BY JODY BOYD

As an active duty military family, we are not able to choose where we live. In our encouragement and support of Mike's call to service, part of our sacrifice as a family has been to go where he is needed. As a result, we have experienced a range of diversity in the quality of the schools at each duty station. Our last relocation was particularly challenging, as we moved from a solid school district to one that was incredibly insufficient.

The impact was felt immediately. Our boys, both of whom had been in accelerated learning classes, were now attending schools

that did not offer any comparable programs. In addition, the school was implementing the Common Core standards, and with that the mandate that all children work on the same assignments at the same rate. Learning was not occurring, and our boys were stifled. So we decided to homeschool.

When my husband and I first entertained the idea of homeschooling our two boys, we had a list of requirements by which we judged each curriculum provider. We wanted valid and reliable reasons to enroll our children, and would accept nothing short of a curriculum that was Catholic, accredited,

complete, flexible, with online options, available support, and affordable. Heading into our third year of homeschooling, we continue to choose Seton. Here's why.

### 1. Catholic

The importance and advantages of Catholic education extend beyond academics. Catholic education addresses the spiritual formation of the students while also nurturing the development of God-given gifts and talents. Catholic teaching naturally incorporates a belief in all students and their successes, while maintaining high expectations with challenging curriculum.

A strong and genuinely Catholic education promotes self-discipline and moral values that aid in the development of leadership and prepare students to be productive citizens and good stewards. Seton offers a Catholic curriculum, provides solid religious instruction, and addresses both the spiritual and educational development of the whole student.

### 2. Accreditation

As college graduates ourselves, accreditation is essential for my husband and me. In the process of validation, in





which a school is evaluated by a peer review board, the school must meet general standards pertaining to mission and growth, objectives and goals, student requirements, services available to students, quality of education, reputation of the faculty, and integrity of the agency. This matters because schools that are accredited are more likely to offer diplomas that are recognized.

We can have confidence that the diploma earned from Seton will be backed with the education needed to transfer into other reputable institutions, namely universities. Schools that hold accreditation, including Seton, regularly review, evaluate, improve, and report on goals and growth. They constantly seek to achieve a higher level of greatness and excellence.

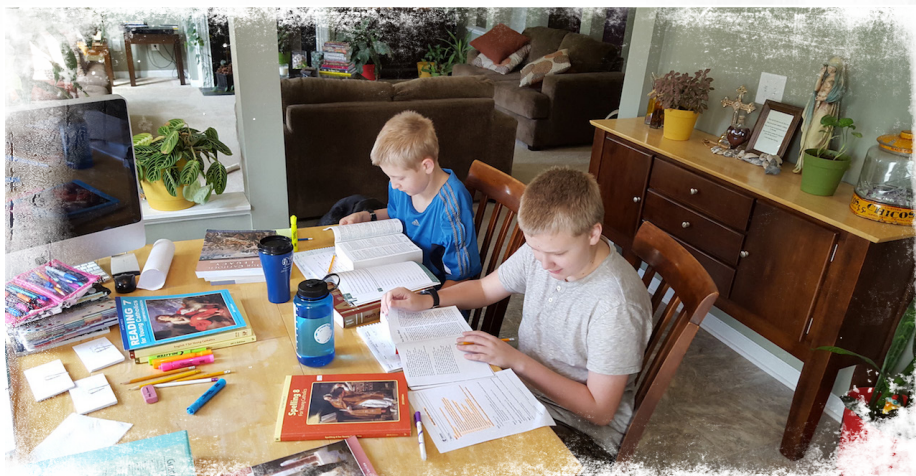
### 3. Complete Curriculum

Seton offers a well-rounded and complete curriculum. The knowledge gained from the courses is extensive across all subject matters. However, the beauty of what Seton offers extends beyond information. The curriculum aids development of moral character, developing habits and skills that are relevant to students not only today, but also throughout college and beyond. Students are challenged to become both critical thinkers and successful communicators.

Seton is designed for students to “explore the argument” by taking time to really hear and comprehend what is being said and find what is most important, not just to listen, complete the task, and advance. Seton’s curriculum cultivates a love of wisdom, fosters self-learning, and teaches our children to be evaluative, so that they may make judgements based on moral truth.

### 4. Flexible

Seton offers flexibility that any family can appreciate. In addition to the convenience of choosing a start date that works best for your family, the way you structure your individual homeschool and present information is up to you as the parent. This allows for individualization according to the needs of each student. Seton provides in-depth lesson plans that detail the scope of each subject, identify objectives for student learning, present teaching and learning activities, and provide strategies to check for student understanding. These lesson plans



can be used as is, or can be adapted to fit each student’s particular needs.

Seton also offers flexibility in that we are able to school wherever we are, be it on extended trips or even relocation. Any parents, regardless of personal education level, will find confidence in their vocation as natural and primary teachers of their children.

### 5. Online Options

For our family, the convenience of online options is appealing. Our boys, who began with Seton for their 5th and 6th grades, enjoy the ease of uploading typed book reports and taking available tests online. They appreciate the timely grading and comments on assignments. My husband and I appreciate having all school work and grades for both boys available on our “MySeton” page. With a quick log-in we have a complete view of each child’s work and grades for all the years they have been enrolled. There are also additional resources and video tutorials that can be accessed.

### 6. Available Support

Seton stands behind its program. There are numerous ways you can reach the Seton staff should you have questions or seek additional information. Our experience with Seton staff has always been positive. We have found everyone to be knowledgeable, understanding, patient, and kind. Our boys have always received valuable feedback on their assignments that offers a fair critique of their work and challenges them to do better.

### 7. Affordable

Seton offers a high quality, academically sound, Catholic education in all subject areas. When you enroll with them, your

enrollment covers tuition and fees, books, lesson plans, grading services, accreditation, record keeping, online and offline options, and available support for one reasonable price. For a fraction of what you pay in tuition for private schools, and what public schools spend per pupil, you get Catholic, comprehensive, academic excellence with Seton.

### Stronger in Faith & Family

Seton has been an answer to our prayers. Every day we build toward stronger family bonds in how we pray together, study together, work together and play together. The desire to seek knowledge for the sheer fun and enjoyment of it has found its way back into the hearts of our boys, and Mike and I enjoy seeing their interest set afire.

Feeling a part of the wider Seton community has also been a blessing. Having support and solidarity in a shared clarity about the call to provide a sound moral education brings peace. We are able to trust the educational and spiritual materials coming into our home.

We are stronger in faith and as a family since choosing Seton!

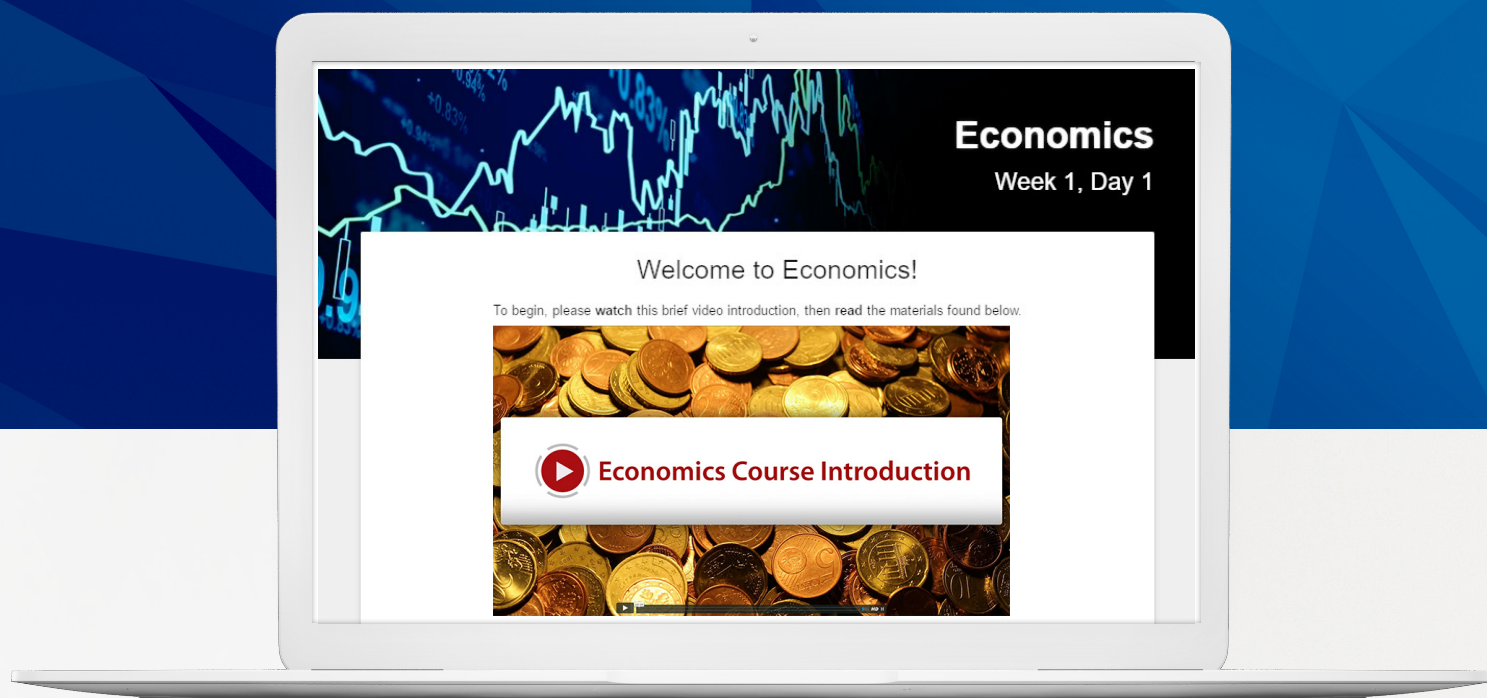




# Beginning this year... SetonOnline

## Digital Courses for High School

BY SETON STAFF



[setonmagazine.com/setononline](http://setonmagazine.com/setononline) ▶

### Introducing SetonOnline

Seton is excited to announce that this year we are beginning our roll out of interactive digital courses. These digital courses combine the traditional homeschooling experience with cutting-edge online tools that deepen and enrich homeschooling for both students and parents.

As this is our first year, we are treating it as a year for testing so that we can get your feedback and input. During this testing period, there is no additional course fee associated with SetonOnline digital courses. Your feedback is very valuable to us, especially as we prepare a full release of these exciting new offerings from Seton.

- ✓ Integrated multimedia
- ✓ Intuitive design
- ✓ Interactive lesson materials
- ✓ Completely flexible and self-paced
- ✓ Powerful parent tools




## Course Availability

Currently, High School Economics and American Government are available for enrollment. Both of these courses are entirely new courses that teach the subject matter in an academically rich and thoroughly Catholic manner.

In the next few weeks, we'll start rolling out digital course versions of our existing course offerings. Because these courses will completely align with the print-based lesson plans, as new online courses become available, students will be able to switch over to the online format smoothly. Switching can be done without interruption to their progress in the course.

We will send out emails to enrolled families whenever a digital course is made available, with instructions on how to activate it for their students.



"My son loves the new SetonOnline course. He can't wait to start his homeschool day by logging on and continuing the course. We can't wait for more!"



"I like the way the course is set up very much. It is very easy to use!"

"The interactive reviews really helped me prepare for tests and to know what is important to memorize. The course is really fun, and also challenging."

"I am really enjoying this course so far... thank you so much!"

"Very good! I am enjoying this course a great deal!"

"We are enjoying the course immensely!"

English 9 ENG 101

COMING SOON



100 %	5 of 5 topics complete
DAY 1: Course Introduction	✓
DAY 2: Course Introduction Review	✓
DAY 3: Composition: Sentence Fragments, Part 1	✓
DAY 4: Composition: Sentence Fragments, Part 2	✓
DAY 5: Composition: Sentence Fragments, Part 3	✓



# Busy Dad? Finding Quality Time When You've Got Nothing Left

BY JOHN CLARK

Years ago, I had a job that required me to leave my house at about 6 AM every morning and return home at around 10 PM at night. I also worked Saturdays for three or four hours, again accompanied by that lovely sixty-minute commute each way. Some nights, when I pulled in the driveway, I looked at the twelve stairs leading up to my second-floor deck and front door, and wondered if I had the energy to climb them all. And I knew that when I opened that door, I would be greeted by a little boy who would want me to pitch wiffle-balls to him. Of course, after pitching a few wiffle-balls and watching him run around the green Persian rug that doubled as an imaginary major league infield, I would quickly remember why I worked those long hours in the first place.

What I experienced in those days wasn't your garden-variety exhaustion; the fatigue was exquisite.

And I was young then.

I'm not claiming that my work schedule was unique; far from it. Some of you parents reading this have an even tougher schedule and/or more demanding profession than I ever did, and as you know, it is not only the physical demands of a schedule like this that takes a toll.

It is often not without an overactive conscience that we leave home early every morning and arrive late every night. And the popularity of the maxim, "it is not

quantity, but quality time that matters to children," doesn't help. Of course, like many clichés, this is not necessarily a binary question—in the great debate between the quality and quantity, its worth observing that many boys and girls in America experience neither quality nor quantity time with parents.

Looking back over 23 years of parenting, what I can tell is that there will be periods of your life in which quantity is not a feasible option. Remember that while God often expects the difficult from you, He never expects the impossible. While He always expects love, it is a stark reality of a fallen world that though love always means union, it does not always mean presence; in fact, it may dictate absence. In our role as parents, love demands providing materially for our families—quite often outside the home.

Sometimes, providing for our family means being really, really tired. And that's OK. Vince Lombardi, the great football coach, motivator, and devout Catholic, once expressed: "*I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle...victorious.*"

As you're finally travelling back home, consider Coach Lombardi's words. You haven't just worked a full day; you have

worked your heart out in the cause of your family. There is a proper pride you should take in that reality. Consider also that maybe exhaustion helps us in some way. Maybe exhaustion grants us an opportunity to answer questions otherwise left unasked, like: what is important to you, who you love, who you are. Though the query exhibits both faulty metaphysics along with an intentional ignorance of Zen, the real question is: *What do you have when you have nothing left?*

Children notice how you answer that question.

Give your children a little credit—your sons and daughters probably *do* understand that you have to work 40 or 60 or 80 or more hours a week. In my experience, it is not our *work time*, but our *free time* that our families notice; they notice what we are doing in the time that does not need to be spent at work. Maximize the quality of those times—of those moments.

If you're working ridiculous hours, here's a tip when you get home, bring all of yourself home. As you're pulling in your driveway, say a quick prayer giving your concerns, anxieties, and worries to God for the night. Time for you to be a parent. Trust me, that flight up the stairs is a lot easier without a briefcase, and not just physically.

Try to be an energetic, happy, and present parent. If you have to fake it, then fake it until you make it. Enjoy these moments. Be home. Enjoy the company of your family, and let them enjoy the company of you. As the song says, "Laugh a little, cry a little, until the clouds roll by a little."

And don't forget to pray a little, too.

Read John Clark's weekly blog at [setonmagazine.com/johnclark](http://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.



# KEEP IT TOGETHER

## 3 WAYS HOMESCHOOL PARENTS CAN STAY CONNECTED

BY AMY PAWLUSIAK



The day explodes before it even begins. The toddler has decided he can make breakfast himself, and the milk and cheerios are all over the floor, while he cries hysterically in dismay. Against this backdrop, the middle-schooler can't seem to get dressed or fix his bed, and my other children are studiously hiding. I look at the clock ticking by as my husband walks in, ready to go to work. One look at my pained expression and he knows. He rounds up the kids, gets my coffee going, and kisses me with a reassuring squeeze as we wish each other good day while we each move into our routine.

This is a battle. Not of us against the kids, but of us together, working to create productivity out of chaos. Some call it a division of labor, but, I call it “divide and conquer.” Together we can do so much more.

### 3 Ways To Help Each Other Keep A Unified Front While Homeschooling

It can be hard to include our spouses in our homeschooling. We need their help, but we don't know how to ask for it, or even what we might need if they do offer. Given that we don't have special eyeglasses into each other's hearts or minds, it's important to stay connected so we can remain on the same page. I have found the following things have really helped my husband and

me to stay united, while supporting each other in our God-given roles as parents of homeschooled children.

#### 1. Discuss the Children's Upcoming Year Together

I remember the first year I started homeschooling. I spent HOURS poring through homeschool websites to give me ideas on making our homeschool successful, deciding what activities we should join, and figuring out the placement of each child in various subjects with Seton (Okay, I was going a bit crazy!). I couldn't make sense of it all until my husband sat down with me and listened while I pondered the pluses and minuses of each decision, then considered the children's personalities, and also what I could reasonably do during the year while homeschooling. When I finally got it all out, my husband helped me pick out what was best for our family. Somehow, until he was with me on the decisions, I couldn't make my “final” choices. Moreover, once he understood all that I was planning, he became very supportive and excited with me. He needed to be kept “in the loop” and I needed his listening ear and wisdom. After that first year, I have learned to always come back to him to ask his thoughts on the upcoming year's

activities, to hear his insights, and to include him in what our homeschool days will look like once we choose.

#### 2. Don't Compare Your Work

After a rough day, I used to fantasize about how much easier my husband had it. Sitting quietly in his office, not having to deal with all the stresses of young children and cleaning, planning meals, etc. However, I have learned that he has many rough days too. His boss may have criticized his work, or something may have gone horribly wrong that he had spent days or weeks planning. And don't forget the constant stress of being the only income earner in the household. In other words, each of us has it rough. If we compare our days and our work, it becomes a competition for whose day was more difficult. I've learned that it's much better to just ask, “How was your day?” and to truly listen and be connected and thoughtful. Then, when my husband asks back, I can give him the low-down on which child caused problems and which ones shined. I can be tired or upbeat and happy, and so can he. We're rooting for each other, because we understand that we both have good days and bad days. We are equal in our efforts, even though we may be doing vastly different things. By appreciating this



fact, we can be united. Each of us has very important work to do, and both of us are doing our best to accomplish what God gave us to do that day.

### 3. Husband and Wife First

It's easy to start putting ourselves into categories. I'm a homeschool mom, and this becomes an easy moniker to hide behind. I just say, "5 kids and homeschool" and this elicits anything from surprised gasps to admiring glances. At some point, it's easy to forget that I'm a wife first. Similarly, my husband can easily define himself by his career. What he does for work is much easier to offer in a conversation than that he has five kids who are homeschooled from teenager to toddler. However, we are husband and wife FIRST. We are not the type of couple that is openly demonstrative, but we know that time spent together means that the other things we do all day are secondary to what we are together. By talking together over ice cream, watching a TV show, reading an article to each other, or even just holding hands while walking, we've found that our vocation as husband and wife first keeps all the rest in check. We can't do it all on our own, and by staying connected, we have the blessed reassurance we don't have to.

### God Knew What He Was Doing

In the end, let's face it; we all have a lot to do. The work will never end. Our lives will always have one more thing to do, or one more goal to attain. The days run into each other, and the kids will eventually grow up. As my more mature homeschool friends can attest, this time of homeschooling is limited. Our unity as husband and wife is where we started, and one day, where we will end. God knew the stresses we would face when He created marriage, and we can depend on God's design for families to keep us together when homeschooling, or doing anything else He asks us to do.

By staying united in Christ, we can show the foundering world that God's plan for marriage and family is truly the best!



**Amy Pawlusiak** lives in Florida raising and homeschooling her 5 very active children, from high school to preschool. She has a masters in Education from Wayne State University in Detroit, and worked for Catholic talk-show host and writer Teresa Tomeo before devoting herself to homeschooling.





# Prayer, Forgiveness, & Wonder

## The Foundation of the Family Community

BY DOM ALBAN BAKER

In his ever ancient, ever new Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, St. John Paul II makes the bold but true claim that “the future of humanity passes by way of the family” and then asserts that “marriage is the foundation of the wider community of the family.” Thus husband and wife have a significant and indispensable role to play in the future of humanity, especially those privileged to call themselves “sons and daughters of the Church,” and all the more so those called to take educating their children into their own hands. But what does this mean practically? What are some concrete things that homeschooling parents can do to truly be the foundation of their own families?

### Pray Together

First, pray together. This might seem obvious, but it is too often neglected. Yes, families should pray together with dad and mom leading, whether it be the Rosary, daily Mass, the Divine Office, or other devotions. But when family prayer time is over, dad and mom should pray more, both as individuals and as a couple. It can take many forms; here are two examples.

St. John Chrysostom suggests that husband and wife ought to ponder the liturgical readings individually and then come together to discuss them: “Let your prayers be common. Let each go to Church; and let the husband ask his wife at home, and she again ask her husband, the account of the things which were said and read there.” With the advent of personal Bibles and Missals, such contemplation of the readings ought to be a way of continually refreshing the married couple and cementing their motivation and inspiration in the things above. As St. Paul says, “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” For homeschooling to be truly effective, it must be rooted in the supernatural and the

pursuit of God and this entails the regular reading and consideration of Scripture.

Another example is to choose a patron saint or saints and put together a collection of prayers to him/her/them which can be recited each night by husband and wife before retiring to bed. One can never go wrong with turning to Our Lady and St. Joseph, but there are also Sts. Joachim and Anne, Basil and Emmelia (parents of Basil the Great) or Louis and Zelie Martin, just to name a few. Each spouse should add his or her patrons, and an easy but solid litany develops.

### Sleep in Peace

Second, again from St. Paul, never let the sun go down on your anger. It might seem a small thing, but a few years ago I heard of a testimony from a couple married happily for forty years. The husband was asked the secret of their marriage, and he said, “We never went to bed angry with one another,” that is to say, they never allowed their own pride or hurt to get in the way of the common good of the family. Misunderstandings, poor communication, and even hasty and hurtful words are bound to happen, given the stresses laid upon contemporary families, especially those swimming against the tide like homeschooling families. The stress of fighting against the world creeps into the home and threatens to poison the relations of husband and wife since the devil knows that if he can strike there, he can poison the whole family. Happily the remedy is always at hand: a ready apology, kind words, the humility to accept an apology or appreciate the other’s point of view, or to simply acknowledge that weariness or stress got the better of you.

### Appreciate Each Other

Finally, there is the deep appreciation of the other’s role in the family. There is an undeniable beauty to the ways in which man and woman complement one another, and that primarily in raising a family.

Perhaps the father is a joker and the wife more serious, but each is needed at the right time. So instead of despising the qualities of the other, rejoice in them! The inward looking nature of a healthy family can sometimes unfortunately foster too much focus on another’s bad qualities, or what are perceived as such. But as Lamentations says, “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.” The wonder at one’s spouse should be new every morning: wonder at the way your wife cares and comforts your children, bears up under her many burdens, joyfully and faithfully carries out her tasks; wonder at the way your husband generously goes out into the world to support the family, helps shoulder the mother’s burden as much as possible when he is home, lovingly dotes on the children whenever he has precious time with them. And beyond all those things, there is also the way in which husband and wife complement one another in terms of temperament: when one is weak, the other is strong and carry both for a while; when one is sad, the other is happy and can lighten the sorrows of the other. The key is continually strive to make these differences sources of wonder and joy, quelling resentment as soon as it rears its ugly head, combatting it with prayer and the willingness to see things with open eyes and heart.

By prayerfully considering and putting into effect these simple yet profound suggestions, dad and mom can do what St. John Paul II asks: “save and foster the values and requirements of the family.” Prayer, forgiveness, wonder—they are ever the foundation of the couple who is itself the foundation of the happy and holy homeschooling family.



Dom Alban Baker, CRNJ, received his Licentiate in Sacred Theology (S.T.L.) from the Dominican House of Studies in Washington DC. He is a member of the Canons Regular of the New Jerusalem, a monastic community serving the diocese of Wheeling-Charleston in West Virginia.



# Pride of Place: The Pursuit of Truth

BY BOB WIESNER

Rodney Stark is a remarkable writer. He is a sociology professor at Baylor University and has been variously described as anything from a Lutheran to an atheist. Yet, he has produced some of the best work ever defending Catholicism against the more egregious historical attacks leveled against her.

In *God's Battalions*, Stark thoroughly debunks the modern notion that the Crusades were a matter of unwarranted aggression. *Bearing False Witness* exposes the truth behind all manner of horrible charges laid against the Church, from the myth of Hitler's Pope to the supposedly extremely bloody Spanish Inquisition and much, much more.

In short, Professor Stark is a man committed to truth, wherever it may be found. Further, he is an enemy to falsehood, even to the point of defending a Church to which he does not belong. **And the truth, for Seton families, must take precedence over all other considerations in taking to the books again each year.** The truths of the

Faith take pride of place, but the truths of Algebra, Biology, Logic and the rest cannot be ignored either.

I am mindful of the proclamation of the greatest historical truth ever in my Byzantine Church each year at Easter: amid clouds of incense, boisterous hymnody, candle smoke and a general atmosphere of great glee, the priest strides boldly up and down the aisle, swinging the censor every which way, bellowing at full volume, "Christ is risen!" to which the congregation roars in reply, "Indeed He is risen!"

May the pursuit of truth in your families this year partake of that same spirit: be boisterous, be bold; **seize truth as a pearl of great price.** Savor truth, cherish it and weave it inextricably into the fabric of your family life.



**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.



St Louis IX, CC Fr Lawrence Lew | Flickr

## SETON FALL QUARTER CONTEST

**DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31ST, 2016**

Open to Seton high school students, grades 9-12. Research and write about an obscure Christmas tradition. All submissions will be judged by grade level, with the potential for first and second place finalists for each grade. All students interested in entering must register for free by September 31st. More details available online.

**Prizes:** 1st place: \$50 | 2nd place: \$35

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**Rose-Anne** | The Clermont Pépin Festival promotes the emergence of new regional talent in music. I take private piano lessons with Esther Bureau of St-Georges, Québec weekly for 1 hour.



**John** | In March in the Moraine Music Festival at UW-Washington Cty., I received my fifth Superior rating for violin, playing "Concerto" by Sietze and "Bouree" by Bach.



**Isabel** | I submitted a poem to *Highlights Magazine* and they published it! My interests are playing the piano and inventing things.

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

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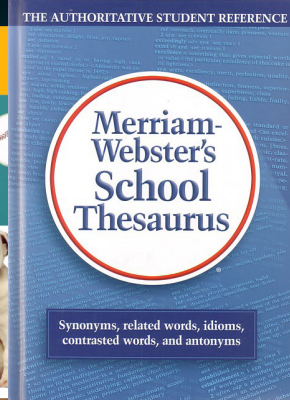
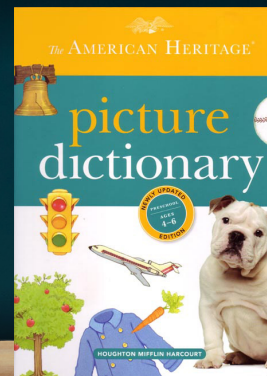
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## Papal Quotes on the Family

*How does Joseph exercise his role as protector? Discreetly, humbly and silently, but with an unfailing presence and utter fidelity, even when he finds it hard to understand. From the time of his betrothal to Mary until the finding of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem, he is there at every moment with loving care. As the spouse of Mary, he is at her side in good times and bad, on the journey to Bethlehem for the census and in the anxious and joyful hours when she gave birth; amid the drama of the flight into Egypt and during the frantic search for their child in the Temple; and later in the day-to-day life of the home of Nazareth, in the workshop where he taught his trade to Jesus.*

Pope Francis Inauguration Mass,  
Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, 2013

