

# Seton MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

SETONMAGAZINE.COM | MARCH/APRIL 2021

## **The Glories of St. Joseph**

Dr. Mary Kay Clark - pg 6

## **God on the Mountain**

Tara Brelinsky - pg 8

## **The Creative Courage of Fatherhood**

John Clark - pg 10

## **Midwinter Musings: Thoughts on Vocational Discernment**

Nick Marmalejo - pg 16

## **Using Email Forwarding**

Seton Computer Staff - pg 18

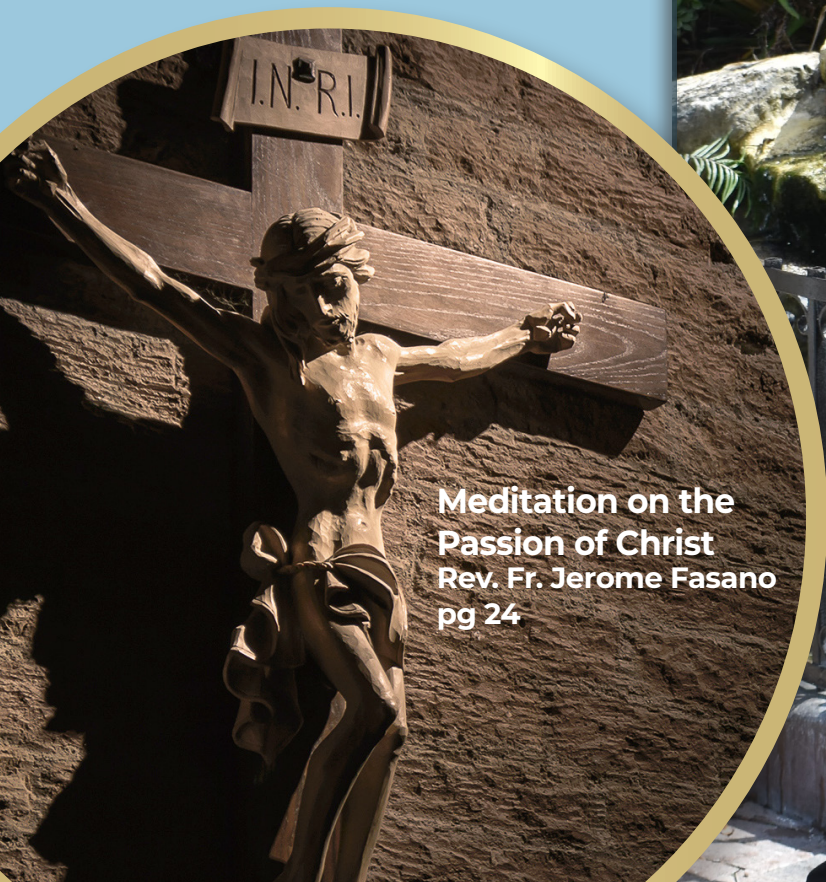
## **In the Schoolroom**

Mary Ellen Barrett - pg 22

## **Mission, Gifts, and Fulfilling Our Nature:**

*A Visit With the Scott Family*

pg 14



**Meditation on the Passion of Christ**  
Rev. Fr. Jerome Fasano  
pg 24



**EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

Dr. Mary Kay Clark

**EDITORS**

Mary Ellen Barrett  
Kevin Clark

**MARKETING DIRECTOR**

Jim Shanley

**DESIGN & LAYOUT**

Robin Hibl

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

Mary Beth Balint  
Mary Ellen Barrett  
Tara Brelinsky  
Kristin Brown  
John Clark  
Kevin Clark  
Dr. Mary Kay Clark  
Rev. Fr. Jerome Fasano  
Nick Marmalejo  
Jeff Minick  
Emily Prause  
Virginia Seuffert

**COVER PHOTO**

The Scott Family



Dear Readers,

Blessed Lent to you all! I hope this season is proving to be fruitful for all our Seton families. I recently read that to many it feels like last year's Lent never ended and we have been placed in this perpetual Lent. Truly God is seeking to draw the faithful toward Him and the purging of so many parts of our life may be the sacrifices we may need to meet Him in heaven.

This issue is a full one. Our Holy Father, in his document *Patris Corde*, has dedicated this year to St. Joseph. Without saying a word in Holy Scripture, St. Joseph lived a life of quiet strength and dignity caring for Jesus and the Blessed Mother while following God's plan. Both Dr. Clark and John Clark reflect on St. Joseph, and these articles deepened my devotion.

A new writer to our pages is Father Jerome Fasano. Father writes so poignantly of the *Passion of our Lord* as discerned through the five senses. The image of Our Lady "suffering to give birth to the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church of Our Lord," is one that will stay with me forever.

In response to some parent's requests, Seton's Computer Department gives clear directions for automatically forwarding emails from Seton to multiple email addresses. I immediately used the directions to send the Seton emails to my husband to keep him in the loop.

On behalf of the staff at the *Seton Magazine* and at Seton Home Study School, I would like to wish all of you a fruitful Lent and a happy and Holy Easter season.

"We are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song!" (St. John Paul II, November 1986).

Blessings,

Mary Ellen Barrett

**ADDRESS**

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

**CONTACT INFO**

Phone: (866) 280-1930  
Fax: (540) 636-1602  
info@setonhome.org  
www.setonhome.org  
www.setonmagazine.com

**SETON EMAILS**

**CUSTOMER SERVICE**  
custserv@setonhome.org

**COUNSELORS**  
counselors@setonhome.org

**ADMISSIONS**  
admissions@setonhome.org

**GRADING**  
grading@setonhome.org

**GENERAL INFORMATION**  
info@setonhome.org

**MY SETON**  
myseton@setonhome.org

**STANDARDIZED TESTING**  
testing@setonhome.org

**SPECIAL SERVICES**  
SSDept@setonhome.org

**SUBSCRIPTION INFO:**

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

## SETON PHONE DIRECTORY

SETON HOME STUDY SCHOOL  
866-280-1930

SETON EDUCATIONAL MEDIA  
866-241-8819

STANDARDIZED TESTING  
800-542-1066

ADMISSIONS  
866-280-1930

Draper Warren  
Darin Byrne  
John Thorp  
Jason Sparks

TRANSCRIPTS, RECORDS, &  
EXTENSIONS  
540-636-1324

Joseph Strickland  
SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION  
540-635-4728  
Deacon Gene McGuirk

SPECIAL SERVICES  
540-622-5576  
Stephen Costanzo  
Karen Eriksson-Lee  
Kathleen Hunt  
Joshua Butek

GENERAL COUNSELING  
540-622-5526  
Cecilia Sauer

ELEMENTARY COUNSELING  
540-636-1429

Cecilia Sauer  
Christina Nutt  
Teresa English  
Laura Clark  
Heather Hibl  
Laura Fusto

ELEMENTARY GRADING  
540-622-5569  
Jacinta Black

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC  
COUNSELING  
540-635-4728  
Deacon Gene McGuirk

HIGH SCHOOL GRADING  
540-622-5525  
Rhonda Way

HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE,  
COURSE APPROVAL,  
INDEPENDENT STUDIES  
540-636-2238  
Nick Marmalejo  
540-622-8478  
Bob Wiesner  
540-635-4728  
Deacon Gene McGuirk  
HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH  
540-622-5560  
Sean O'Connor  
MaryRita Gies

HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY,  
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT &  
GEOGRAPHY  
540-692-7023  
Aidan Callegari  
540-622-5571  
Bruce Clark

HIGH SCHOOL MATH  
& SCIENCE  
540-622-5557  
Tom Herlihy  
Manuel Vicente

HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION  
540-692-7023  
Aidan Callegari  
540-622-8478  
Bob Wiesner  
540-635-4728  
Deacon Gene McGuirk

HIGH SCHOOL SPANISH  
540-622-5537  
Manuel Vicente

HIGH SCHOOL LATIN  
540-692-7023  
Aidan Callegari

HIGH SCHOOL COMPUTER  
COURSES  
540-622-5536  
Kevin Clark

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Seton Home Study School, an international Catholic institution, is to ensure that all of its students thrive intellectually and spiritually using a Christ-centered, educational program that empowers them to live the Catholic Faith while embracing the academic and vocational challenges of the twenty-first century.



- 4** Questions and Answers  
For Homeschooling Families
- 6** The Glories of St. Joseph  
Dr. Mary Kay Clark
- 8** God on the Mountains  
Tara Breilinsky
- 10** The Creative Courage of Fatherhood  
John Clark
- 12** Building Saints: The Virtues of Fortitude and Perseverance  
Jeff Minick
- 14** Mission, Gifts, and Fulfilling Our Nature  
The Scott Family
- 16** Midwinter Musings: Thoughts on Vocational Discernment  
Nick Marmalejo
- 17** Staff Profile  
Robin Hibl
- 18** Using Email Forwarding for Our Seton Account  
Seton's Computer Department
- 20** Ask the Experts  
Seton Panel of Moms
- 22** In the School Room: Lilies for St. Joseph  
Mary Ellen Barrett
- 25** Student Achievements  
Joseph and Sarah
- 26** Meditation on the Passion of Christ  
Rev. Fr. Jerome Fasano
- 27** Saint Joseph  
Saint Poster by Emily Prause



## THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



SHARE YOUR "WHY WE HOMESCHOOL" ON **FACEBOOK**

“

### Why Do We Homeschool?

*The COVID pandemic made it a simple choice to begin homeschooling since schools, including Joey's parochial school, were closed to in-person learning.*

*We love that all of the classes, even math, are Christ-centered. The books are beautiful works of love and devotion, making Seton the clear choice to a sound Catholic education.*

*The Johnson Family,  
Waunakee, Wisconsin*

”



# your Questions ANSWERED

FOR HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

**It is now March, about ¾ of the way through the school year, and we are barely half done with our work. I know we have a full year to complete our schooling, but I'd like to be done by the end of May. What can I do?**

There are ways to finish two quarters worth of work in less time. Remember that our lesson plans are a suggestion. You do not have to do everything that is in them. There is a lot of daily work that can be eliminated if you are pressed for time.

One of the things you can do is to look at the Quarter Report Forms (QRFs) and see what is required for that quarter, and work backwards from there.

For example, if you are working on a concept in Math or English, and you feel your child has a good grasp of the material, have him do just a couple problems on the page to be sure, then move on to the next lesson. If you know your child is strong with verbs, quickly review the material and have him take the verb test.

If he needs more time with adverbs, work on those, then take the test. If he's a good speller, let him look over the words for the quarter, and give him a pre-test – if he does well, give him the quarter test. Let him work on the book report for each quarter, but eliminate some of the reading from the readers.

Allow him to do the religion, history and science questions orally, and discuss the things that you think are important for the quarter or chapter tests. Count writing their Spelling words neatly for Handwriting. In summary, do the things that you feel will help your child do well on the assignments sent to Seton.

**Can my child listen to an audio book for his book report? Can we watch the movie instead?**

While it may be tempting to watch a movie or listen to an audiobook instead of reading, the point of doing a book report is to get better at reading.

Some parents say they use audio books because their students don't like reading, or they read slowly. But that's part of the point of doing the book report! You can't get better at something unless you practice doing it. Love for reading can't develop if the kids aren't reading, but just listening.

We try to choose interesting and engaging books for our students, but the book reports are not just an opportunity to enjoy a great story. Reading is fundamental to life in the modern world. As they get older, the students will be reading all kinds of literature unavailable in audio or video form. They need to know how to read, and not just to read, but also to comprehend and analyze. If there is one area of education you don't want to skimp on, it's reading.

**On our Myseton page, some of the assignments under “graded by” say Parent, and others say Seton. What is the difference? Can I grade everything? Can you grade everything?**

Parent-graded assignments are graded by the parent, and Seton-graded assignments are graded by Seton graders. (On the paper Quarter Report Forms, these are referred to as Part A and Part B.) Seton-graded assignments are required in order for your students to receive a grade on their report cards.

## Featured Q & A:

## How Can We Re-Do a Test?



**My child received a poor grade on a test. Can he re-do it? Does it matter if it's parent-graded or Seton-graded?**

If it's a parent-graded test or assignment, it's up to you, but we suggest that you allow it. Remember the important part of homeschooling is not that your children get good grades, but that they learn.

If a student gets a bad grade on an assignment, that usually means he didn't understand the material. Go over it again, and when you feel he is ready let him re-take the assignment and report the new (hopefully better) grade.

For Seton-graded assignments, you are allowed to do one re-take. If you mailed in your work, do the ones you got

wrong on a new sheet of paper, attach it to the original test and QRF, and mail it back to us. If you uploaded it, do the same, then scan all the pages back to us.

If you did an online test, there should be a button to retake on your MySeton page for that quarter's work. At the elementary levels, the new grade will replace the old grade. In high school, the two grades will be averaged.

**Remember,** you can look over your students' tests before submitting them. If you feel that he is not understanding the material and are afraid he'll get an unsatisfactory grade, don't submit the tests. Allow him another chance to learn the material and correct it and then submit the tests.





**Order Now!**

## Helping Homeschool Moms Have a Fruitful Lent!

- *Spiritual Exercises for Mom*
- *Fun Activities for Children*
- *Includes Quick, Easy, and Kid-Friendly Meatless Recipes*

The parent-graded items are usually more of the day-to-day work that your student does, although in some cases there are specific assignments (a paragraph or test). Grades for these assignments are optional; if you don't assign parent grades, then your child's grade will be based only on the Seton-graded items.

Regarding Seton-graded items, you may grade these yourself informally to see how the student is doing. Some parents like to look over student work before it is submitted to make sure the student has understood the concepts or has done careful work. However, we can't accept and record parent grades for Seton-graded assignments. For security reason, we can't release the answer keys for the Seton-graded assignments.

### Speaking of parent-graded, what is a "parent-graded course"?

A parent-graded course is one that has no Seton-graded assignments, meaning everything in the course is graded by the parents. These include Art, Music and PE for all grades, Handwriting for the elementary grades, History and Science up to Grade 3, and the entirety of the Pre-K and Kindergarten programs.

Besides using the Seton-provided books and lesson plans, you are also welcome to supplement or substitute anything else at your discretion.

You do not have to let us know what modifications you are making. Just enter the grades on your MySeton account or the quarter report forms.

### How do I determine the parent grade for my child's assignments?

Remember, if it's a parent grade, it's completely up to you how you want to determine the grade, but here are some suggestions.

If it's something objective, like a spelling test, divide the number correct by the total number and that's your grade. If it's something more subjective, feel free to give partial credit for any question.

If it's for the daily work for example, the workbook pages of the English or Phonics books, you do not have to grade every single page and average the grades.

Hopefully you are at least looking over the work students do every day. Just give us your sense of how you think they are doing in those courses (and yes, attitude counts!).

But again, it's entirely up to you.



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



**Belmont Abbey**  
COLLEGE



**UNIVERSITY**  
OF DALLAS



**CHRISTENDOM**  
COLLEGE



**UNIVERSITY**  
ST. THOMAS  
HOUSTON



**BENEDICTINE**  
COLLEGE



**JOHN PAUL THE GREAT**  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



**MAGDALEN COLLEGE**  
OF THE LIBERAL ARTS



**WALSH**  
UNIVERSITY  
A Catholic University of Distinction



**AVE MARIA**  
UNIVERSITY



**THOMAS AQUINAS**  
COLLEGE



**Wyoming**  
Catholic College  
Wisdom in God's Country



**OUR LADY**  
**SEAT OF WISDOM**  
COLLEGE

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



# THE GLORIES OF ST. JOSEPH

BY DR. MARY KAY CLARK

**I**f you are looking for inspiring yet practical Catholic reading for Lent, consider *The Life and Glories of St. Joseph*, published by Tan Books. A favorite chapter is “Abode at Nazareth—Education of Jesus.”

While the holy parents of Mary and Joseph did not leave us written lesson plans, we certainly can pray to Jesus to let us receive in prayer some guidelines from the perfect parents, Joseph and Mary, to help us in our homeschooling.

St. Matthew’s inspired words in the Bible reveal that the night Joseph realized Mary was pregnant, God sent an angel who appeared to Joseph in his sleep, saying, “Joseph, Son of David, fear not to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”

## OUR PARENTAL MISSION

St. Joseph surely was amazed at the message of the angel. Married couples always should be amazed at God’s generosity of the gift of a child. While a first response is happiness and thankfulness to God, eventually parents should commit to providing the Catholic education needed to help their children grow in their Faith, and eventually attain eternal happiness with Jesus in Heaven.

Most Catholic homeschooling parents pray daily to Jesus and to Mary for help in their homeschooling with their children. Especially during the month of March, which the Catholic Church dedicates to St. Joseph, we Catholic homeschooling parents, and grandparents, should include special prayers to St. Joseph. Prayers to St. Joseph, even in the middle of school lessons, seem appropriate as “energetic” and “wiggly” sons and daughters suddenly want to rush through their lessons as they look forward to their afternoon sports.

St. Joseph is especially helpful in answering questions related to raising sons. As a mother who homeschooled seven sons, I can assure you that my prayers, both at daily Mass and at home, were essential for homeschooling success. Though aware of my shortcomings, I prayed at Mass that my sons could learn in spite of my weaknesses. St. Joseph also helped my husband, both with schoolwork and baseball, even when he was tired. Those were years before homeschooling support groups existed!

## ASK AND RECEIVE

We parents need to call on St. Joseph because he is ready to help us and to find people who can help, perhaps a friend from church, or an uncle who loves math or who loves doing science projects! St. Joseph can help us understand our children’s spiritual needs. Have faith in St. Joseph!

We should contemplate the amazing faith St. Joseph must have had when, in the cold and dark middle of the night, he obeyed the angel to leave his work tools, his home, and his belongings, to travel with Mary and Baby Jesus on the back of a donkey, and literally pulling the donkey behind him, to run to freedom with his wife and miraculous Baby in a strange, far-off land.

St. Joseph, we pray to you to help good Catholic parents to recognize the present and future importance for their children to have a good Catholic education. Give parents the strength, and perseverance, and whatever else is needed, to teach their children.



**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 Home Schooling*.

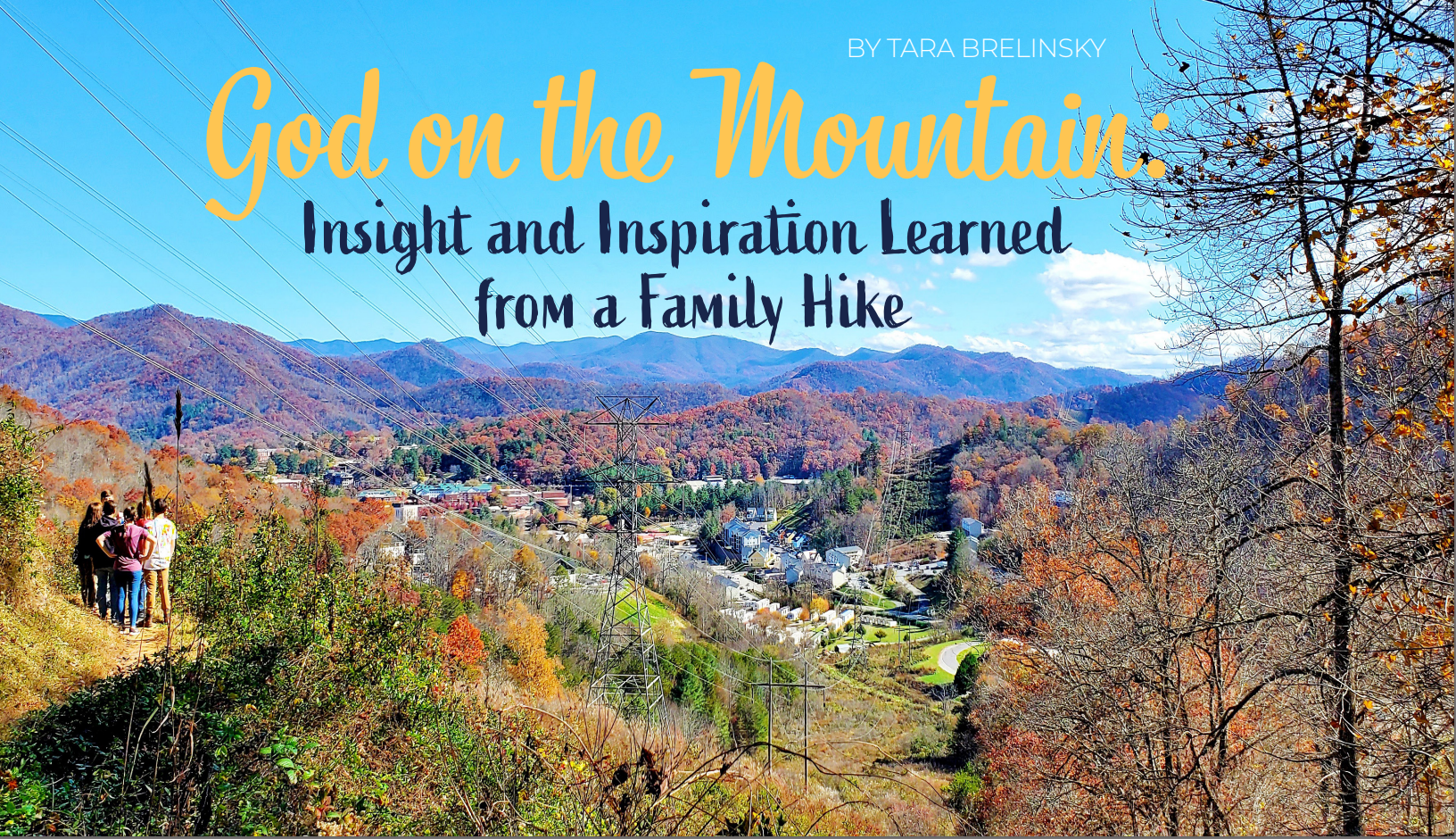






# God on the Mountain:

## Insight and Inspiration Learned from a Family Hike



**My** son, a Seton graduate, wanted us to visit his college campus. Though I had seen the expansive university grounds and the mountains cradling them, his father and siblings had not. Scheduling the five-hour road trip in November brought some challenges, but it was time to make the visit.

However, I could not manage more than a one-night getaway, so I advised my son to make the best use of our limited time. He decided on a family hike.

On the day after our arrival, we stepped onto the path of a three-mile journey up and down an autumn mountain. Taking my first steps, I had figured the day was meant to be a simple exercise in family bonding and physical exertion, but God had other plans. As we homeschoolers know, He often uses ordinary means to teach extraordinary lessons.

### Will, Not Ability

At 49 years old I admit I'm more soft than firm (okay, firm has never been an adjective for my body). My regular exercise includes moving laundry and empty cups, bending to pick up stray socks and forgotten books, and climbing the three sets of stairs in our house. When I planted my first step on the trail, I knew my will, not my ability, would have to be the motivating factor to propel me forward.

Laying my running-sneaker-shod foot down, I heard the crisp crunch of the dried leaf carpet. Inhaling the cool mountain air, I tugged my zipper a little higher and tucked my hands into my pockets. I put the next foot forward, leaning in against increasing resistance.

Quickly, I fell to the rear, as the rest of my crew had far more stamina and lung capacity. Not more than a few yards into the ascent, my breaths felt shallow and labored. My calves stung from the contraction of my out-of-shape muscles. I realized I needed a strategy if there was any hope of me completing the hike.

### Starve the Negative, Feed the Positive

So, I made up my mind to let go of the bigger picture and focus on the details. Rather than think about the three-mile trek, I would concentrate on the next step. Often big picture thinking leads me to unnecessary anxiety, whereas focusing on details tethers my mind to the present reality.

I resolved to savor every single observation and not stew in the what-ifs (what if my legs quit, what if I ran out of steam halfway through, what if I failed.)

In addition to remaining attentive to my senses, I committed to singing an internal litany of thanksgiving. I not only wanted to starve my negative thoughts, the big picture what-ifs, but I wanted to feed the positive.

I started with the obvious. "Thank You, Lord," I sang in my heart, "for the ability to walk, for shoes on my feet and sweater on my back, for clear skies and moderate temperatures, for family and the opportunity to take time away..." I counted every big blessing and expressed gratitude to the One Who provided. Unsurprisingly, the more I praised, the more my eyes, heart, and lungs expanded.



## Whisling Wind and Blooming Plants

Soon, my mind was so enraptured with the beauty of creation that I forgot the big picture scenarios entirely. My ears were attuned to the gentle whistle of the wind and the rustling of leaves beneath the joyful chatter of children.

I felt the flush of warmth that radiated across my skin as my body worked to keep pace and I sensed the subtle relaxation of my chest as my lungs adapted to the exercise. The soft green hue of plants in bloom on the mountain floor caught my eye, as did the puzzles of bare, twisted vines in the fall canopy.

Awe overwhelmed me, and I praised the Creator for every inch of the magnificent landscape He had placed in my path that afternoon.

Then, my mind's eye opened to the unseen world of inhabitants above, below, and beside me. Stepping on the hard soil, I conjured images of vast insect armies marching around me. My day-dream led me to consider the lives of so many creatures who inhabit the same world. Birds nesting in bare trees, rodents burrowed out of sight, and countless insects climbing, flying, and marching – my mind considered the vast company through whose territory I was passing. And I thanked the All-Good God for every single one.

Having reached the halfway point on the trail, I expected the second leg would be a downhill stroll. Unfortunately, I discovered the return trek required just as much endurance and strength. Thankfully, I understood the strategy needed to complete it.

## A Strategy for Hiking and Living

My steps came easier when I was not counting. The journey became light when I laid down the yoke of what-ifs and invited Christ to walk alongside me. Additionally, whenever temptations tried to push in, I drew closer to Jesus. Rather than denying the challenge or becoming overwhelmed by it, I whispered a prayer of surrender and entrusted my walk to His care.

At the start of 2021, God's Plan, beginning on that mountain hike, is still unfolding. As the world spins into chaos anew, I am understanding the value of this present moment. Big picture thinking, while important for mapping directions and establishing goals, can rob you of the beauty, peace, and fellowship that exists in the present moment.



Had I focused on the length of the hike, the challenge it presented, and my insufficient capabilities, I might have chosen to sit out. Or having started it, I could have quit as soon as my chest burned and my muscles ached.

But because I did not, I discovered a treasury of beauty and blessing. My eyes were opened to the reality of the vast world of creatures and living things that traveled along with me, each having its place and purpose, making its contribution.

## A Plan for Freedom

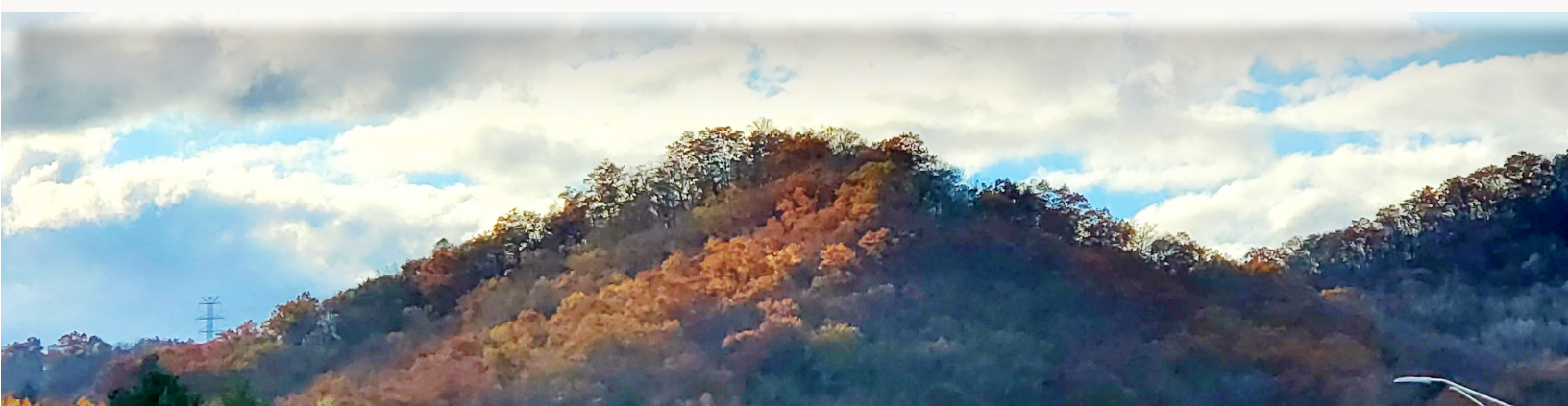
Details matter; instead of looking at the big picture of 2021 or of your child's education journey, focus on the present moment. Snuggle on the couch as you read a history lesson to your child. Pour yourself a cup of coffee and inhale the aroma. Call your friend and laugh together. Smile and wave hello to your neighbor. Take a walk and enjoy your surroundings. Sit in a spot of sunlight and feel the warmth on your face when giving a spelling test. Be attentive where you are. Love all who cross your path, in word and action.

Count your blessings and express gratitude. Say thank you to your cashier and delivery driver, your priest and mentor, your spouse and children. Teach gratitude by example. And above all, give thanks to the One Who supplies you with every good and perfect gift.

Adopting this strategy will not only make the course ahead easier; it is the key to unlocking freedom, a freedom no one can suppress. For Christ is in the present moment. Look for Him there; you are sure to find Him.



**Tara K. E. Brelinsky** is a homeschooling mother of eight living children. Married to her childhood sweetheart, they make their home in North Carolina where they teach NFP, grow a garden, and raise a small menagerie in addition to all those wonderful kids. Tara studied journalism in college, but now she writes simply for the glory of God. You can read her musings on her blog *Blessings In Brelinskyville*.





**In** his recent Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* (*With A Father's Heart*), Pope Francis has called the faithful to ponder the wondrous life of Saint Joseph. It's a beautiful reflection of Saint Joseph's life, and an echo of the previous pontiffs who had much to write about the foster father of Jesus. In the course of his letter, Pope Francis highlights one quality in particular that grabbed my attention. He calls it "creative courage."

It is no secret that today's world is one of infidelity, where sacrificial love commonly cedes to selfish pride and inordinate pleasure. Even for us Catholic men—especially as our chosen callings become increasingly fraught with difficulty—temptations can be both strong and ubiquitous.

There's not a single devil in Hell who wants to see your marriage succeed, nor is the devil lacking anti-marriage minions on Earth. As someone once put it, the devil's not after your family; he's after your marriage. Knock down the matrimonial domino, and the rest is child's play.

## Give Up or Engage

With this societal backdrop, Pope Francis posits that "in the face of difficulty," we have two basic options: "we can either give up and walk away, or somehow engage with it." In a time and place when the world walks away, we are all called to engage—to be true to our engagements.

This requires courage—that much is sure, but it is incomplete. Saint Joseph chose to engage with difficulty, but that was only the beginning of the story. He rose up to protect Jesus and Mary, but when he stood on his feet, he needed all the creativity that God had given him.

Saint Joseph creatively outsmarted and outmaneuvered all of those who sought to harm his family. When his home was under the threat of danger, Joseph found another home. As Pope Francis writes, "Joseph took a stable and, as best he could, turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God come into the world."

The pope continues, "Joseph was the man chosen by God to guide the beginnings of the history of redemption. He was the true 'miracle' by which God saves the child and his mother." As Saint Joseph's fatherhood illustrates, when courage and creativity meet, worlds can be conquered.

Worlds can be saved.

## Find Your Saint Joseph Moment

Pope Francis writes that "difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had." Of course, that's true not only for Saint Joseph, but for us. And if you think about it, you discover that Saint Joseph's mission in life is much like yours and mine. "Rise up, take the child and His Mother." And certainly implicit in this is to protect, nourish, and love them.

In a myriad of wonderful ways, the Holy Family was very much like yours and mine.

### Pope Francis notes:

"The Gospel does not tell us how long Mary, Joseph and the child remained in Egypt. Yet they certainly needed to eat, to find a home and employment. It does not take much imagination to fill in those details. The Holy Family had to face concrete problems like every other family..."

Of course, none of this is to say that your and my duties as husband and father are easy—they can be very hard. But that only serves to highlight another reality; namely, that in some sense, God believes in me. Yes, there are those friends and family members who have illustrated their confidence in me over the years, but none so much as God. Who else has entrusted ten souls to my care?

The proper response I can have to this gift is to love with creative courage.

We men can mistakenly believe that virtues such as courage and fortitude are confined to the actions of war. We Catholic fathers are said to be members of the "Church Militant," and that terminology can cause us to desperately hunt for both battles and battlefields.

But it's worth recalling the words of Sun Tzu, one of the greatest military strategists in history, who wrote, "A general who fights a hundred battles and wins a hundred battles is not a great general. The great general is one who finds a way to win without fighting a single battle."

Saint Joseph found that way. In the struggle to protect our wives and children, Saint Joseph's life reminds us that the greatest protection is neither sword nor shield.

The greatest protection is love.



**John Clark** is a homeschooling father, author of *Who's Got You* and *How to be a Superman Dad*, a speech writer, an online course developer for Seton, and a weekly blogger for *The National Catholic Register*.





# *The Creative Courage of Fatherhood*

BY JOHN CLARK



# Building Saints: The Virtues of FORTITUDE *and* PERSEVERANCE

BY JEFF MINICK

**When** Seton Marketing Director Jim Shanley suggested I write a series of articles on the virtues and character building, he mentioned that the conscious practice of the virtues acted like a tomato stake. A tomato plant left lying on the ground will likely rot and die, whereas that same plant tied to a stake will thrive and produce wholesome fruit.

A fine analogy, I thought, and one that is certainly apt in today's culture.

I'm writing these words near the end of January, but they won't appear in print for at least another month. At the moment, our country has endured close to a year of pandemic, months of unrest, and a messy presidential election.

I wish I could predict sunnier days ahead of us in March and April, but no matter what comes down the pike, we as home educators and Christians will still need those tomato stakes to keep us upright and growing in holiness.

In *Character Building: A Guide for Parents and Teachers*, David Isaacs examines twenty-four virtues and how parents and teachers may instill these values into young people. Two of these virtues especially pertinent to our own time are fortitude and perseverance.

## ***Standing Strong***

Michael Walsh's recent book of history, *Last Stands: Why Men Fight When All Is Lost*, which I have read and highly recommend, gives us a look at men who either died fighting their enemies when all hope was lost or else prevailed against overwhelming odds.

Thermopylae, the Alamo, and Grant at Shiloh are names familiar to most of us; the Jews fighting to the death against the Nazis in Warsaw, the French Foreign Legion charging into a mass of enemies at Camaron, or the Marines battling the Communist Chinese at the Chosin Reservoir may be unfamiliar. In all these conflicts, however, many soldiers fought desperately not only for their lives but for their fellow soldiers and, as Walsh tells us, for "their families, their property, and their way of life."

In his accounts of these battles, and their causes and consequences, Walsh wonders time and again whether our culture is still capable of producing people who will rise to these challenges.

And though Walsh's book addresses largely secular issues, we as Catholics can take lessons from these pages. We live in an age of cancel culture, a time when many Americans fear speaking out against wrong and injustice, rightly afraid of losing friends, family members, and even their livelihoods to a digital mob.

Yet we who are faithful to Christ and His Church must instill in our children the means and ways of fortitude, teaching them to stand fast, for example, when one of their university professors slams the faith or when a classmate belittles Christianity.

## ***A Resolution Kept***

Like many of my readers, I struggle with the virtue of perseverance. Occasionally I practice it quite well. I have, for example, lived alone in my daughter's house in Front Royal for eighteen months, mowing the lawn, taking care of minor maintenance problems, and seeing to the general well-being of the property. These tasks and my isolation mean persevering through times of loneliness and gloom.

On the other hand, I find myself wildly and humorously incapable of keeping most New Year's resolutions and Lenten vows. Of the seven resolutions I made on December 31, I have already abandoned three and only indifferently practice two others.

Yet one of these resolutions I have maintained. Having become aware through conversations with friends that old books and I had parted ways, I vowed to read six such books this year. On the surface, that goal may



not appear difficult, but I must add that I write a weekly book review column for the *Smoky Mountain News*, which generally means I must get through 45 books or more every year.

At any rate, I have just finished Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*.

## A Woman's Resolve

After becoming accustomed to the antique language and sentence cadences of this 200-year-old novel, I found myself enamored by this tale of knights and knaves, kings and commoners, and priests and monks. I discovered circumstances reminiscent of our own trials today: the arrogant Norman elites who despise and insult the conquered Saxons, the cultural clashes between these two groups, the distinction made between power-hungry ambition and worthy aspiration.

And like the Templar knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, I fell in love with Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York, a

Jewish moneylender. Scott's descriptions of her beauty, the tender scene when she cares for the wounded Ivanhoe, and her wisdom in dealing with friends and foes alike won my heart.

Most of all, however, it was Rebecca's bravery and perseverance that attracted me. Despite Bois-Guilbert's advances, Rebecca resists him. Even when she is accused of practicing sorcery for her knowledge of medicine and for attracting the affections of a Templar, Rebecca persists in refusing Bois-Guilbert's offers of salvation if she will only love him. Eventually, even that knight comes to admire her for taking this stand.

Rebecca provides an example of the strength and endurance we need today.

## Exemplars

All of us, young and old, can benefit by following the examples of others: historical figures, fictional heroes and heroines, the saints and the apostles, friends, family members, and neighbors. My self-employed neighbor across the street, for instance, a young Catholic man with a sweet wife, two little girls, and another baby on the way, leaves the house before dawn nearly every workday morning and often returns home after dusk. He daily reminds me of the importance of duty and work.

When we look to those worthy of our admiration, and when we try our best to practice the virtues and teach them to our children, we are following in the footsteps of those saintly men and women who are with God and who pray for us and listen to our own prayers.

Leon Bloy, French novelist, poet, and defender of the Church, once wrote, "The only real sadness, the only real failure, the only great tragedy in life, is not to become a saint."

Fortitude and perseverance are two as key virtues in pursuing that sainthood.



**Jeff Minick** has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, NC. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, VA.



# Mission, Gifts, and Fulfilling Our Nature:

## *A Visit With the Scott Family*



I watched a video on Facebook of a Seton student, Marianne Rose Scott, daughter of Rosa and Marion, playing the piano in a prestigious competition and almost tumbled from my chair. Not only did her fingers dance on the keys, but she also was calm and composed as could be. My favorite part of the video, in fact, was when she nodded for those accompanying her to begin the piece.

And I then paid a visit to the Scotts by phone.

After speaking with Rosa and Marion, I clicked on their website at [thescottduo.com](http://thescottduo.com), and almost fell out of my chair.

Here are two musicians who have not only won a list of awards and honors as long as my arm—better make that both arms—but who are in love with the faith and work for the Church. During our phone conversation, they mentioned they had attended various universities, including the famous Juilliard School in New York City, but they never once said anything about their many accomplishments. If there were a reward for humility, they would have yet another star to hang on their glittering string of achievements.

Now let me back up and return to our interview.

Marion Scott is a native of North Florida and Rosa hails from Lima, Peru and they met while studying at Juilliard. After earning several degrees in music—you can find these on their website—they today live in Miami, Florida, where they are homeschooling their two daughters, 8-year-old Marianne Rose and 5-year-old Faith Eugenia. Both girls began playing piano before they were four years old—their parents are their teachers—and they are

also studying the violin with concert violinist Mari-Liis Pakk.

### An Education Centered on the Faith

Rosa was educated in Catholic school in Peru and Marion was a homeschooler. When the time came to choose their educational pathway for their children, home education proved the most attractive route because it allows them to give Marianne Rose and Faith an education centered on the Faith.

“The primary thing,” Marion told me, “was we knew we could bring our daughters up in the church and not have to deal with a lot of the indoctrination in the schools. Also, they can explore their God-given talents without social pressures, free to worship God and to follow their gifts.” Rosa added these thoughts: “We really emphasize that God has given them a mission and that he has given them a gift to develop and to serve others. We tell them their lives will be fulfilled by serving God and others with their gifts.”

They also appreciate the time they are able to share with their girls and the flexibility homeschooling allows them in their work. “We’re able to spend every minute of their lives with them,” Rosa said. “Every day is a little adventure, and we can schedule learning experiences in different ways, like going to the Everglades or the zoo.”



Because both parents work for different churches, perform in several other musical venues, and teach piano lessons, they have arranged a schedule that allows one or the other of them to be with their children. “We do a lot of switching off” Marion said.

## A Day in the Life

When I asked what constituted a typical homeschooling day, Marion replied, “We tend to have breakfast and immediately start school. The girls focus better in the evening when it comes to the music. We probably start the school day about ten and then after lunch we do more school and sometimes take a walk. During the day and the evening we usually do two or three short practices on the piano with Marianne Rose and Faith. We’ve found their attention span is better with the short practices.”

*“Their lives will be fulfilled  
by serving God and  
others with their gifts.”*

When I wondered what they considered the greatest difficulty in homeschooling, Rosa laughed and said, “Sometimes the scheduling is hard. And sometimes when they take their breaks from their schoolwork, the breaks go on a little too long. So we keep a balance between their studies and time for play.”

Both parents commented on the importance of time spent away from screens. Though Marianne Rose and Faith do watch shows like *Veggie-Tales* and some basic educational programs like math and spelling on the computer, their parents emphasize reading, exercise, and pursuing other non-academic interests. “When we turn off the screens,” Marion said, “it’s like a detoxification process takes place.” He paused, then added with a laugh, “Those screens are like a sugar hype for the brain.”

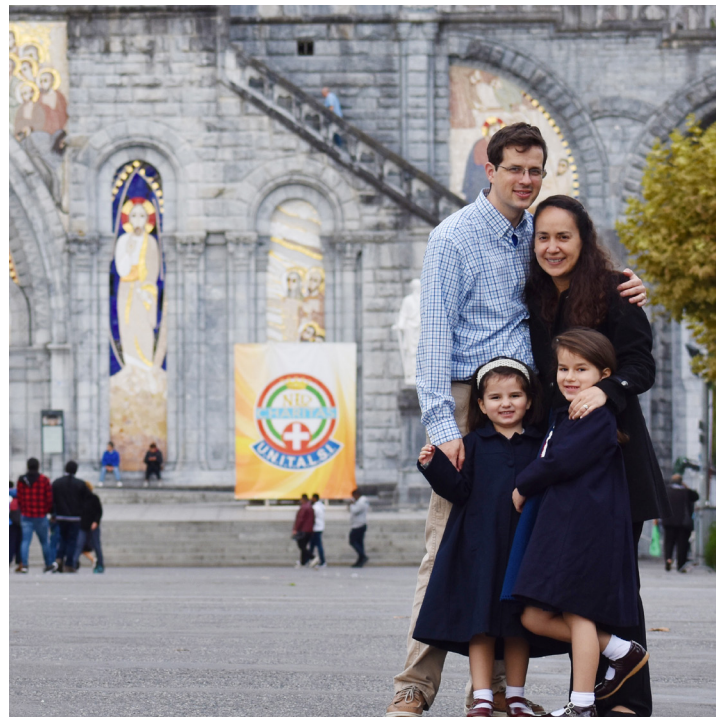
In addition to their piano practices, recitals, and competitions, Marianne Rose and Faith have other interests as well. Marianne Rose has taken up drawing, and her sister loves to be in the kitchen practicing the culinary arts.

## Flames for the Future

And because the girls were already homeschooling, the pandemic interrupted neither their academic education nor their piano lessons.

When I asked the Scotts why they selected Seton Home Study for their children’s academics, Marion said, “Seton covers all the subjects, which means I don’t have to put together other programs. Plus, I like the fact that Seton is accredited.” Rosa agreed, and then told me she loved that the Catholic faith was taught not just as a separate course, but also throughout the program. She was especially pleased with the books used to teach religion, praising them for the beauty of their art and photographs.

After concluding our conversation and looking at the Scotts’ website, I thought for a good while about our visit together. As a nation, we are living in dismal times with no end in sight to our troubles. And yet, as I thought of the Scotts, I also thought of my children and grandchildren, and all those Seton families I’ve interviewed over the last few years that offered solace and inspiration.



Around this great country are hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of parents like the Scotts, who are teaching their children that they’re on a mission from God, that each of them has different talents, and that God is pleased when they try to make the most of those gifts.

To the Scotts and their daughters, to my own children and grandchildren, and to all of you Seton families reading these words: let me end by saying you are candles in the darkness, the hope and the flame for the future.





BY NICK MARMALEJO

# Midwinter Musings: Thoughts on Vocational Discernment

*Unlike* many of my colleagues and family members, I live for winter.

Once the temps drop and days shorten, my attention naturally turns to manning the woodstove.

For me it is a preferred task, one that I simply enjoy. If you heat with wood regularly, you know it's not a simple matter of throwing a few sticks and a match into your fireplace and kicking your feet up. It's quite the opposite. Much planning for each winter takes place in order to support the wood burning. It is also a bit of an art and habit to start, stack, and maintain the fire.

So, what does all of that have to do with the guidance department?

**Answer:** Life goals.

## Finding Perspective

As you plan for your academic and personal future, the goals you identify now for yourself are important and should remain in perspective as you move forward in life. Your goals do not have to be huge or outlandish. What they need to be is meaningful—that is, meaningful to you.

We live in an age where, everywhere we look, we are inundated with some type of lifestyle marketing. From conventional car commercials to our peers posting on social media, most everyone is telling us what we should think and how we should live. Academia and university is not immune to this trend.

Don't get me wrong, salesmanship is a part of life. Some of that can be and certainly is a good thing. Ideas and new things can inspire us. But the world environment is such that it is easy to get distracted from our own goals and perspectives and become obsessed with someone else's.



Don't do that. Have goals that you consciously define for yourself. Stay focused.

## Focused, but Flexible

The world needs each of us as we are, as we were created to be—to serve and love God and do the good. How we accomplish that in our vocations is given to each of us to discern and decide.

I was fortunate to achieve what I considered some lofty personal goals early in my working life. After doing so, I discovered that what I had identified as a life goal was in reality unsatisfying and overly stressful. It led me to hands-on work and later to education.

The point I wish to make is flexibility should be considered when developing your life plans. If you choose to be a baker right out of high school, great. It can be for a time or it can be forever. Sometimes you need to pivot. In the end, it is totally up to you.

And then sometimes a vocation chooses you. It just resonates. Not long ago I became well-acquainted with a talented chef specializing in high-end French cuisine. (Note: Friends who are 5-star cooks are good friends to have.)

Soon thereafter I learned that before becoming a chef he was a glass sculptor. His work is now in museums in various parts of the world. When I asked him what attracted him to glass-blowing in the first place and then cooking, his reply was loud, short, and followed by booming laughter: Fire!”

But he was serious. Fire was—is—his medium and he uses it to create art.

## To Conclude

All of this is a long way of saying that vocational discernment is a continual as well as intuitive process. It's critical to be discerning, to keep an open mind, and not reject a life path outright if the reason somehow does not seem grand enough. Conversely, taking note of and being responsive to what personally satisfies our needs are equally important.

Simple things, whether it's working with fire or heating with it, can be enough to sustain you, give you joy, and create meaning as you go about your life. Your Seton education will help you with the rest.



**Nick Marmalejo**, a history major, graduated from Christendom College in 2001. He holds a Virginia Teacher Certification and lives in the Shenandoah Valley with his wife and four children.

# STAFF SERIES

*A chat with those  
who serve you!*



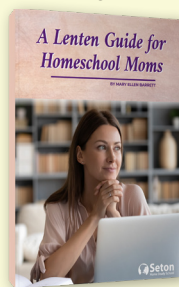
## Robin Hibl

Communications and Marketing Coordinator

We're all familiar with the term “Jack of all trades,” but here at Seton we have a “Jill of all trades.” Robin Hibl.

Though her official title is Communications and Marketing

Coordinator, Robin wears many hats at work. Among other tasks, she does layout work for the *Seton Magazine*, manages the online magazine and Student Achievement web page, works with the College Partner program, and prepares social media ads.



Recently she put up the online video with “*The First Day of School*” photos and is now working on Lenten campaigns and a new book, *A Lenten Guide for Homeschool Moms* that she enjoyed designing for Seton Educational Media.

Robin spent most of her youth on a small farm in Amissville, Virginia, where she sometimes homeschooled and at other times attended the Seton School in Manassas. The fourth of 11 brothers and sisters, she was active in a local 4-H group and learned much about animal husbandry while helping her family raise goats, rabbits, chickens, and pigs.

Outside of her work for Seton, Robin enjoys quilting, and singing in the church choir and also in a community group. She helps out at her church with the altar cloths and has given quilting lessons to the sisters in the Community of Saint John in Princeville, Illinois, where her sister is a nun. Because so many of her siblings and their spouses live nearby, Robin is also engaged in the lives of some of her 50 nieces and nephews, many of whom homeschool with Seton.

When asked what brought her the greatest satisfaction working for Seton, Robin replied, “I was homeschooled through Seton, and I enjoy helping promote homeschooling and helping families connect with social media projects. At Seton, I work with a great team.” She paused, and then added, “Working on the magazine, I have connected with a number of families and have become good friends with some of them.”

With her more than two decades years of experience, her enthusiasm, and her willingness to tackle new projects, our “Jill of all trades” Robin Hibl brings a treasure trove of talents to both the staff and the students here at Seton Home Study School.





BY SETON'S COMPUTER DEPARTMENT

## How Do We Use Email Forwarding for Our Seton Account?

**Some** families have asked us if they can associate multiple email addresses to their account. This is generally because they want notifications of grades or other updates to be sent to both parents. For various reasons, we have decided not to support more than one email address parent per family. However, if your goal is to have email from Seton sent to multiple email addresses, this is usually easy to accomplish through automatic email forwarding.

Email forwarding uses a “rule” in your inbox to send incoming mail to one or more additional email addresses. To forward email from Seton, you would set up a rule that says in effect “When email comes in from @setonhome.org send it on to these other accounts”.

To help you do this, here are directions for setting up email forwarding on several popular email systems:



## GMAIL

---

1. Go to Settings
2. Click "See all settings"
3. Go to "Forwarding and POP/IMAP" and click "Add a forwarding address"
4. Enter the destination address and click "Next"
5. In the popup window, click "Proceed"
6. Check confirmation message sent to the new address and click the link to confirm
7. Click the "Confirm" button in your browser window
8. Go to "Filters and Blocked Addresses" in Gmail's settings
9. Click "Create a new filter"
10. On the "From" line, type "@setonhome.org"
11. Click "Create filter"
12. Check the box next to "Forward it to:" and select the desired address from the drop-down menu. (If you don't want to see the forwarded messages in your Gmail account, also check "Delete it".)
13. Click "Create filter"

## OUTLOOK/HOTMAIL

---

1. Go to Settings
2. Click "View all Outlook settings"
3. Click on "Rules" under "Mail"
4. Click "Add new rule"
5. Name it
6. Under "Add a condition" select "Sender address includes"
7. Type "@setonhome.org" in the adjacent box
8. Under "Add an action" select "Redirect to"
9. Select or type an address in the adjacent box. (If you don't want to see the forwarded messages in your Outlook account, click "Add another action" and select "Delete".)
10. Click "Save"

## YAHOO

---

Yahoo Mail does not allow you to forward selected messages to a different address, only to a folder within Yahoo. You can forward all your Yahoo email to another address if you subscribe to Yahoo Mail Pro.

## AOL

---

AOL Mail does not allow you to forward selected messages to a different address, only to a folder within AOL.



## ICLOUD MAIL

---

1. Log in to icloud.com
2. Click on "Mail"
3. Click the gear icon in the lower left corner and select "Rules..."
4. Click "Add a rule..."
5. Keep the default "is from" under "If a message"
6. Type "setonhome.org" where it says "Name or email address"
7. Under "Then" select "Forward to an Email Address and Mark as Read"
8. Type desired address where it says "Email address"
9. Click "Done"
10. Click "Done" again

---

If you don't use one of these services, you can still probably set up email forwarding on your email system.

If you use a system which does not make it easy to forward mail, then you could set up an account on GMail, Outlook, or iCloud and use it for the purpose of forwarding email; once you did that, you'd just have to be sure to give Seton your new email.

Your email address can be updated easily through your MySeton page by click on "My Account" and the "Contact Info".





### *Holy Week in the City*

While city living can be stressful, and goodness knows expensive, it offers tremendous resources. This is especially true during Holy Week with hundreds of churches offering Masses and devotions.

On Spy Wednesday, we remember that one of the apostles, Judas Iscariot, betrayed Our Blessed Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Our family also attends Tenebrae, a dramatic and moving devotion where Matins and Lauds are sung.

One by one, candles are extinguished in the church, leaving all in total darkness. The darkness is only broken by the harsh clatter of the strepitus, reminding us of the earthquake that occurred when Christ commended His Spirit to the Father.

Our family often prays private Stations of the Cross on Good Friday at a local church. Later in the day, we participate in Veneration of the Crucifix services. Each person approaches the crucifix to venerate the crucified Christ.

### *“Vigil Mass is rich in readings and devotions.”*

When our children were little, we attended Easter Sunday Mass, but as they all reached school age, we switched to the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday evening. It is a long Mass but rich in readings and devotions—the perfect place for our homeschooled children to perfect their understanding of all that the Resurrection implies.

No question, many of these devotions were easier to access living in the city. One blessing of the Internet is that we can now watch them from home no matter where we live.

*Virginia Seuffert, Illinois*



### *Spiritual Traditions*

As engaging as crafts and stories are, it is so important to participate in the spiritual traditions of the week. The celebration of Palm Sunday with the waving of palm branches to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem starts the week.

Attend Mass and teach your kids about the excitement the people felt welcoming their King!

This is followed by a beautiful Mass on Holy Thursday where you can teach your kids about the humility shown by our Lord when He washed the feet of His Apostles and how the Last Supper was the first Mass when Jesus instituted the Eucharist.

Participate in a Eucharistic procession after Mass followed by Adoration. This is an incredible opportunity for your family to unite their time in Adoration with Jesus’ Agony in the Garden where He bore the weight of all our sins before His arrest.

### *“This is an incredible opportunity.”*

On Good Friday, remember the suffering of the Passion and the hours between noon and three when Jesus hung on the cross by praying the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, or reflecting on the Stations of the Cross either at home or at your church. Those hours should be solemn and activities during that time should be reverent.

Holy Saturday, the day Jesus laid in the tomb, can be the day we prepare for celebrating the Resurrection by coloring eggs and baking. The anticipation of the Resurrection has been building, and our spiritual preparations all week will make us ready to celebrate Christ’s triumph over death!

*Mary Beth Balint, Virginia*



# Ask the Experts...

## "How Do You Observe Holy Week in Your Homeschool?"

### *Four Veteran Homeschooling Moms Speak to a New Mom's Concern*



#### ***Symbols are Meaningful***

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday Mass as a family. If we have not been recently, we make sure to go to confession this week as well.

Things are then pretty quiet until Spy Wednesday. In honor of the day Our Lord was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, I hide 30 quarters all over the house. The kids have a great time finding the coins, and they put it in the poor box when we go to church on Good Friday.

On Holy Thursday we watch the wonderful film *The Prince of Egypt*, and attend Mass in the evening to remember holy events transpiring. On Good Friday we alternate years, attending either the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in D.C. or Stations of the Cross and/or Good Friday service at our parish.

#### ***"Good Friday lunch is a special meal."***

But my kids' favorite part is our Good Friday lunch. I prepare a special meal, and every item symbolizes something from Our Lord's Passion.

A hard-boiled egg reminds us of the cock crowing, a sword-shaped toothpick with cheese cubes reminds us of Peter cutting off the servant's ear. Every item has a meaning and we eat them one at a time and take turns reading aloud the relevant parts of Scripture.

Holy Saturday is solemn and quiet, dyeing eggs and patiently waiting. Easter Sunday we greet each other with "He is Risen, Alleluia!" and the day is spent at Mass, with feasting and eggs, candy, fellowship, and lots of fun.

***Kristin Brown, Virginia***



#### ***We Patiently Await Easter***

Holy Week is one of my favorite times in the year because it offers the family ample opportunity to become immersed in the faith.

We maintain our daily schedule of classwork since the goal is to journey patiently through Holy Week.

Though Good Friday is an abbreviated day of homeschooling work, we avoid slipping into spring break mode before Easter actually happens. Staying the course with schooling helps us to stave off the temptations.

#### ***"Attending all of the Triduum liturgies is well worth the sacrifice."***

We make a point to attend all the Triduum liturgies at our parish. There's something deeply moving about the Church during Holy Week. The changes in the sanctuary, with covered statues and a stripped altar, lead the senses into deeper contemplation of the mystery of the Passion.

To this end, we normally don't schedule anything other than homeschooling lessons and Masses for this week.

Attending all of the Triduum liturgies can provide a challenge for some families, especially when you have little ones, but it is well worth the sacrifice.

The glory of Easter is all the greater after having fully experienced the mystery of Holy Thursday, the sorrow of Good Friday, and the silence of Holy Saturday.

***Tara Brelinsky, North Carolina***



# in the *Schoolroom*

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

## Where We Share Our Best Tips for Homeschooling with Seton

According to legend, when the Blessed Mother was three years old her parents, Saints Ann and Joachim, brought her to the temple in Jerusalem. In gratitude for her birth, they consecrated her to God and allowed her to serve Him there.

Mary, Our Lady, had made a vow to remain a virgin in service to God. Not wishing to interfere with a vow made to our Lord but unable to keep a marriageable young woman in the temple the High Priest called together the Temple Elders and asked them to pray over this. As they did so, a voice spoke from above,

“Her husband shall be revealed when all the unmarried men of the house of David bring a staff to the altar of the Lord. Then the chosen husband’s staff shall flower, and the dove of the Holy Spirit shall rest upon it. Thus, shall be fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah,”

“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.” Isaiah 1:11

All the unmarried men from the House of David were called upon and came to the temple to present their staffs. Joseph, fearing

he was too old to marry, did not come forward and when no flowers bloomed the Elders again began to pray. God sent an angel to call upon Joseph to step forward and as he walked, his staff burst out in white lilies. It was in this way that God made known the earthly father for His Son.

The legend is a beautiful one, and one which helps us to realize that Saint Joseph was chosen by God as husband for Our Lady and to foster Our Lord Jesus.

To honor this great saint, patron of the Universal Church, families, farmers, carpenters, workers, fathers, and a happy death, is a privilege. His example of faithful devotion to God and His plan, to his family, and to us is one that we should all strive to emulate and instill in our children.



**Mary Ellen Barrett** is a mother of seven children and two in heaven, wife to David, and a lifelong New Yorker. She has homeschooled her children for eleven years using Seton and an enormous number of books. She is the editor of the *Seton Magazine* and also a contributor to *The Long Island Catholic*.



## *Seton Student Achievements*

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY



**Joseph** | Joseph is interested in soccer, piano, violin, and the Troops of St. George. He says homeschooling gave him the time to create his award winning art work.



**Sarah** | Sarah is inspired to be a mom, homeschool her kids, and teach them to play the piano. In the meantime, she likes to hunt, fish, and spend time with family.



# Lilies for St. Joseph

## Handprint Lily Craft

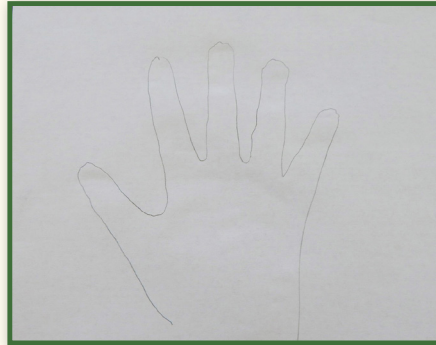
Paper lilies are a sweet craft, suitable for little hands to decorate your Saint Joseph statue or altar and later used at Easter.

### Step 1:



**Materials:** Green and yellow chenille stems (two green and one yellow for each lily), white paper, pencil, and scissors.

### Step 2:



Trace the hands of your crafters. Small hands work best.

### Step 3:



Cut out the hands.

### Step 4:



Take a yellow stem and cut it into quarters.

### Step 5:



Loop each quarter and twist two together.

### Step 6:



Roll the handprint into a funnel shape.

### Step 7:



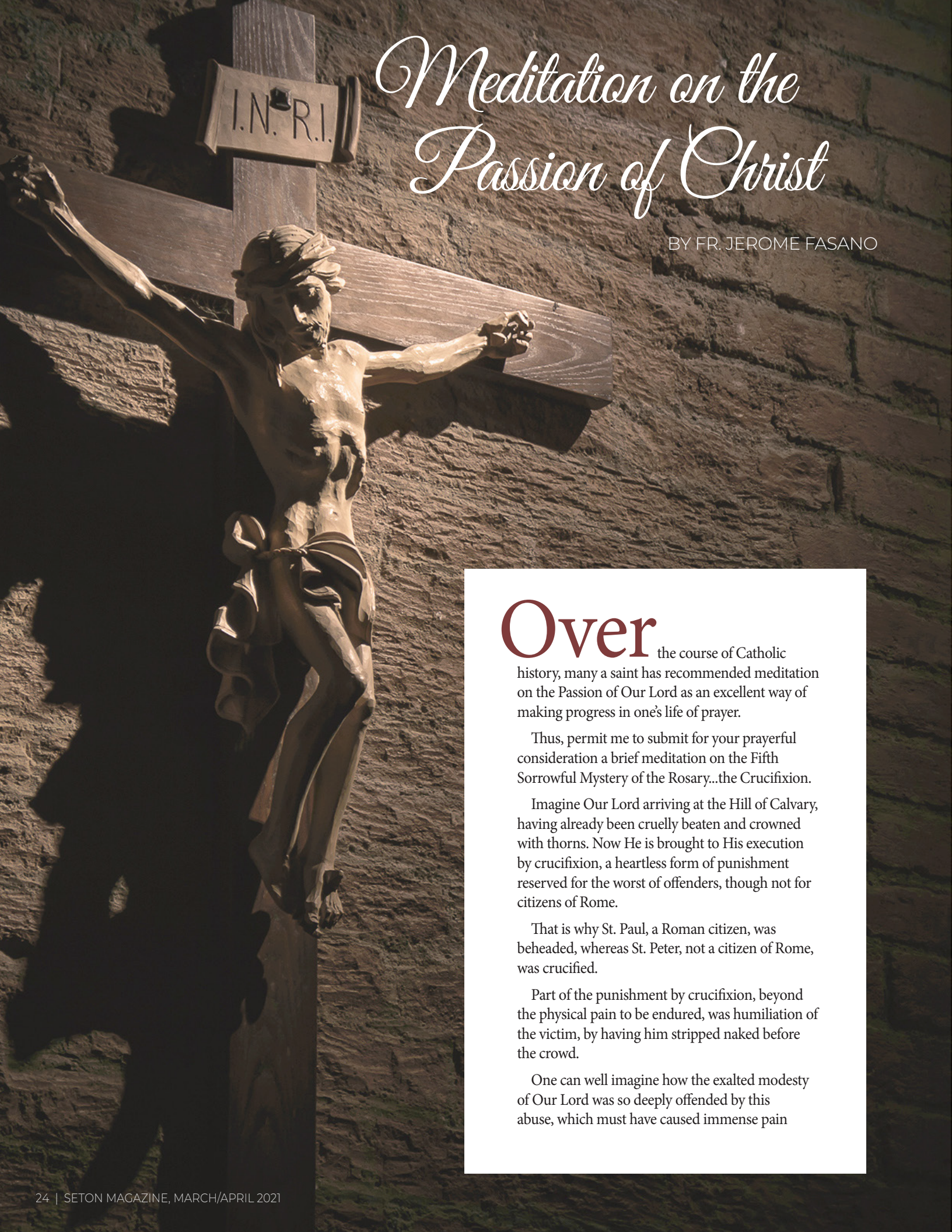
Holding the funnel at the bottom, wrap a green stem around the bottom to secure your lily. Then wrap another green stem around that and twist them together to form the stem of the flower. Bend down the "petals" (fingers) of the flower to form a lily shape.



Adding paper leaves or chenille stem leaves and additional décor is optional. This little activity has kept a few small friends busy for quite a long time and I am now set for all my lily needs.

*St. Joseph, pray for us.*





# *Meditation on the Passion of Christ*

BY FR. JEROME FASANO

**Over** the course of Catholic history, many a saint has recommended meditation on the Passion of Our Lord as an excellent way of making progress in one's life of prayer.

Thus, permit me to submit for your prayerful consideration a brief meditation on the Fifth Sorrowful Mystery of the Rosary...the Crucifixion.

Imagine Our Lord arriving at the Hill of Calvary, having already been cruelly beaten and crowned with thorns. Now He is brought to His execution by crucifixion, a heartless form of punishment reserved for the worst of offenders, though not for citizens of Rome.

That is why St. Paul, a Roman citizen, was beheaded, whereas St. Peter, not a citizen of Rome, was crucified.

Part of the punishment by crucifixion, beyond the physical pain to be endured, was humiliation of the victim, by having him stripped naked before the crowd.

One can well imagine how the exalted modesty of Our Lord was so deeply offended by this abuse, which must have caused immense pain



to Our Lady, and the pious women as well, who had accompanied Her to Calvary to witness the death of the Savior of the world!

Once Jesus had been stripped of all His garments, He lay down on the wood of the Cross to receive the piercing spikes of the nails in His hands and feet, which not long before had been bathed with costly ointment and kissed by the penitent woman. His arms were likely tied to the Cross with coarse ropes, which caused further pain by their abrasions, once the wooden Cross was hoisted in place.

Now, the Savior's agony becomes even more intense as He suffers in each of His five senses, in reparation for so many of our sins which are often caused by the inordinate pleasure we derive from our abuse of the senses, which are in themselves, gifts from God, i.e. sight, taste, touch, hearing and smell.

We should ponder how Jesus suffered in each of these senses in order to more fully appreciate how much He endured for the love of each one of us.

## Feel the Pain of All Five Senses

First, He is pained through sight, especially in having to see His Sorrowful Mother sharing His agony as She weeps bitterly at the foot of His Cross. If only He could spare Her, but knowing He is the "New Adam," He needed Her to be the "New Eve" if They were to usher in a new creation.

Though Our Lady was spared labor pain in giving birth to Jesus in Bethlehem (by virtue of Her Immaculate Conception), She now suffers such pain as She labors on Calvary to give birth to the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. Our Lord is also pained to see only the Apostle Saint John at Mary's side.

Where are the rest of His apostles who had heard every Word He had spoken and witnessed His every miracle? He suffers at the sight of so many indifferent souls, like the soldiers throwing dice for His garments.

Jesus most notably suffers in His sense of touch, first from the merciless scourging He had received earlier, the torturous journey carrying His cross to Calvary, the crown of thorns digging deeper into His brow, and now, the iron spikes that hold Him to His cross.

Jesus's sense of hearing also brought Him much pain, as He had to listen to the jeers and blasphemies of the hostile crowd. One of the thieves next to Him taunted and mocked Him. He also had to endure the sound of weeping from His Mournful Mother, Mary, and the devastated disciples near Her.

Even the sense of taste caused Jesus suffering when His agonizing thirst was quenched by sour wine. He cried out, Sitio, "I thirst!" but not primarily for drink but for souls, your soul and mine. Will we surrender to His cry and console Him by our faithfulness?

Then there remains the sense of smell. Christ had been crucified on Golgotha, "the place of the skull," where rotting human flesh caused such an unbearable stench which must have been nauseating, coupled with the odor of the unwashed and sweating mass of people all around Him.

## We Mortify in Solidarity With Christ

The next time we are tempted to sin, especially in the improper use of one of our five senses, we need to call to mind the sufferings of Jesus in each of His senses. Then perhaps, with the Crucified Christ before our mind's eye, we will have the motivation and strength to resist temptation and defer any sensible gratification until our human body with all of its senses is glorified in Heaven, when for all eternity God will reward each sense with pleasure and delight beyond our imagination!

Therefore, all Christians are called to mortify their senses of sight, taste, touch, hearing and smell. This is not restricted only to avoiding sinful pleasure, but we ought to make certain we do not go to excess in the enjoyment of even lawful things.

## ***"We are meditating on the greatest 'love letter' ever written!"***

During Lent, we are accustomed to "give up" things which may be good in themselves. We do this to stand in solidarity with Christ Crucified! Television, Internet use, going to the movies might be sacrificed to mortify our sense of sight. Candy, cake, and other sweets may all be forfeited to mortify our sense of taste.

We regulate the use of radio or other music (except maybe for sacred music), listening to gossip, or off-colored jokes, in order to mortify the sense of hearing. We can mortify the sense of touch by avoiding the most comfortable chair in the room, or by enduring the heat or cold without seeking relief.

Finally, even the sense of smell can be mortified by putting up with unpleasant odors as we clean the house, or by sacrificing the use of perfume, cologne or after-shave lotion, using instead a good deodorant soap and

*Continued on Next Page...*



scentless witch hazel. Certainly, none of us wants to be the cause of others having to mortify their sense of smell in our presence!

It's surprising how dependent we have become on seeking even legitimate pleasure through our five senses. Many who have suffered from COVID-19 lament that their temporary loss of the sense of smell and taste was very trying for them. Hopefully, this temporary deprivation caused them to appreciate more fully the gift of having these senses.

When we realize how many of our brothers and sisters are deprived of their use of sight through blindness, or hearing through deafness, or touch through paralysis, we ought to be reminded not to take our senses for granted, or needlessly to manipulate them through use of illicit drugs or excessive use of alcohol.

When we ponder the Crucifixion of Our Lord, we are meditating on the greatest "love letter" ever written! We should never tire of reading it. It is not written in ink,


but in blood, the Precious Blood of Christ. It uses not words, but wounds, as each of Jesus's five wounds speaks, "I love you!" Each lash mark on His Sacred Body is an exclamation point!

We should never grow tired of reading the simple proclamation of God's love for us as we find it in the Gospel of St. John (3:16)... "God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life!"

**Amen.**



**Fr. Jerome Fasano**, is a retired pastor of the Diocese of Arlington. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., he attended New York City public schools through high school, entered the seminary, and was ordained in 1977. Father has his B.A. from St. Stephen's College and his M.Div. from the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception. He is a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus and a professed member of the Third Order of St. Dominic.



# High School Great Books Program

AT THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

California: July 11–24

New England: July 25–August 7

*Ask the big questions and explore the answers, forging new friendships to last a lifetime*



## THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

[thomasaquinas.edu/summerprogram](http://thomasaquinas.edu/summerprogram)



**PATRON SAINT OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, FATHERS,  
WORKERS, TRAVELERS, AND A HAPPY DEATH**

**SAINT**

**J  
O  
S  
E  
P  
H**



**FEAST DAY - MARCH 19**



Seton Home Study School

1350 Progress Drive

Front Royal, VA 22630

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



**Perfect for Lent & Easter!**

**Brother Francis Lenten DVD Set**

*With sound Catholic teaching and high-quality animation, Brother Francis is an excellent resource for homeschooling.*

Recommended for Pre-K through Grade 3.

## *Patris Corde: With a Father's Heart*

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. **Amen.**

*On the 150th Anniversary of the Proclamation of St. Joseph  
as Patron of the Universal Church.*

*Pope Francis - Apostolic Letter - December 8, 2020*

