

Seton



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Heaven's Happy Warriors: THE FISHER FAMILY

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Seton Educational Media pg 22

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The Fisher Family

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Dear Readers,

As I look outside the window above my desk, I can just see the crocuses beginning to pop out of the muddy ground in our yard. It's an unseasonably warm day, and I feel renewed by not being freezing and dreading stepping outside. Spring makes me want to dash out and do things.

Jeff Minick has written an excellent reminder of the importance of doing small things, particularly outside small things, with our young children.

It is such good advice, speaking as a mom who sometimes puts work before play.

I am so grateful that Felicity Smoot wrote an article about the testing department, an unsung hero at Seton. The article should be of great use to anyone contemplating testing at year's end.

Senior parents, take note of the details for the upcoming graduation (pg. 19) on June 18th.

Finally, I wish to call your attention to John Clark's tribute to his father, Bruce Clark. Dr. Mary Kay Clark's beloved husband was an essential part of Seton's growth and success, quietly writing books and curriculum, speaking to students, encouraging all who work at Seton, and being a wonderful husband and father. I know you all join me in praying for the Clark family as they mourn the loss of such a great man.

From all of us at Seton Home Study, I would like to wish you a blessed Lenten season and a joyful Easter!

Blessings,

Mary Ellen Barrett

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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.



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your Questions ANSWERED

FOR HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

We are not as far along as we would like this year. How can we finish our school before summer?

Homeschooling gives you a lot of flexibility to speed things up. Remember that even in brick and mortar schools, not every book used is finished.

Also, most likely the concepts that you are teaching at the end of the school year will be reviewed at the beginning of the next year. Ultimately, you are the teacher. If you decide to call it “done,” that’s your decision. However, if you want grades and a transcript from Seton, you will have to turn in the “Seton graded” assignments.

If your children are doing well in most of their assignments, here’s how you can speed things up a bit. My suggestion is to work backwards.

Take a look at your MySeton page, or at their Quarter Report Forms for their subjects, and see what work needs to be sent in to Seton for grading. Look at the parent-graded section and see if there are any assignments there that you want them to do.

From this information, looking at their books and lesson plans, try to figure out

what they need to do in order to do well on those assignments. Sometimes, it might not be much at all.

Take Spelling – if your student is generally good at Spelling, you might give him a pre-test for each lesson, and if he aces it, skip the daily work. Have him study the words for the quarter and give him the quarter test.

In History, if there are chapter review questions in addition to the tests, you might read the chapter together and do the questions orally. This way, you will also be able to gauge his readiness to take the quarter test. If he’s ready, let him take it without doing the written assignments.

In Mathematics, if your daughter seems to understand the lessons well, have her do only some of the exercises. If she gets them all correct, move on to the next lesson.

In Reading, let them work on their book reports at the beginning of the quarter, skipping the readers, and using the discussion questions to get them thinking. After students have written their book reports most grade levels have a reading comprehension test which

they can do next. The rest of reading is usually optional. You can always assign their Bible History, Science or another subject as their Reading for the day.

– *Laura Clark, Elementary Counselor.*

I want to start school in August, when public schools start. When is the best time for me to submit my Seton enrollment?

Seton accepts enrollments all year, so you can enroll on any day you wish. Even in our busiest August enrollment season, we are able to ship out materials very quickly. We do try to make updates to courses or release new courses around the beginning of May each year, but sometimes it takes a little longer. This year, we have a number of courses revisions planned, especially for 2nd Grade which is getting new Phonics, Spelling, and Geography, and 11th Grade which will hopefully have a new American History course and Church Fathers course.

I recommend June as the best time to enroll. That gives you a couple of months to review the courses, but should also ensure that you have the most recent course improvements for the next year.

Benedictine President: 2022 Seton Graduation Speaker



We are pleased to announce that Stephen D. Minnis, Benedictine College President, will be the commencement speaker at the 2022 Graduation.

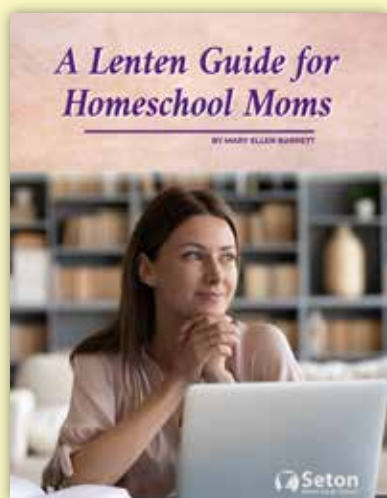
Since becoming President in 2004, enrollment has increased from 1,000 students to over 2,000. The college has built 11 new residence hall buildings; six academic buildings; has built new or renovated every dorm room, classroom and athletic facility on campus; a Marian Grotto; opened a campus in Florence, Italy; began a nursing program, an engineering program, and an architecture program making it one of few liberal arts schools and Catholic Schools in America with engineering and architecture.

During Minnis’s presidency, Benedictine has for the first time been recognized by U.S. News and World Report as one of America’s Best Colleges and recognized by the Cardinal Newman Society as one of the top 20 Catholic universities in America.

Graduation will take place on Saturday, June 18, 2022 in Front Royal, VA

To register and for further details go to: www.setonhome.org/graduation-2022/

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To help encourage families not to wait until August, we give students who enroll in June, July, and August the same amount of time to complete their courses as they would have had they enrolled on Sept 1.

We will be including more extensive information about our curriculum changes this year in the next two editions of the Seton Magazine, so keep your eyes peeled for more updates. – *Draper Warren, Director of Admissions.*

My eighth grader is a good student but struggles with his Reading course. Could Seton's Special Needs Team help us?

Yes, we can help you with that. We have found that sometimes changing a single subject such as reading to a Special Needs adapted curriculum can be the key to keeping the student moving forward and succeeding.

If you are fully enrolled, we are happy to exchange one standard course for the special needs version of that course. There is no change in your tuition for this benefit. Don't hesitate to contact our Special Needs Department for details. – *Stephen Costanzo, Director of Special Services.*

With Spring coming, I find my kids (and myself) looking out the windows daydreaming! Do you have any tips for staying on task?

Why fight it? When the sun finally comes out, I want to take full advantage! (I am writing this on a dreary winter day, with rain turning all the snow to slush and mud.)

And that's where homeschooling is perfect! Pack up your books and a picnic lunch, and head off to a nearby park or nature center. Let your children run around for a bit, then come back and work on a subject while the toddlers play.

"Workbook" subjects (such as Phonics, Spelling, English, Math K-5) require only the book and a pencil. They can work on a page or two, then run around again.

Even high school students can bring along their book analysis book and read in the sun, or a textbook if they're so inclined. Notebooks can be brought along for journaling, sketching, creative writing or other "extra-curriculars."

Remember to rejoice in God's creation! – *Laura Clark, Elementary Counselor.*



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



BENEDICTINE COLLEGE



JOHN PAUL THE GREAT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE



OUR LADY SEAT OF WISDOM COLLEGE



A Catholic University of Distinction



setonhome.org/colleges



Testing Made Easy

BY FELICITY SMOOT

Seton Testing Services began in 1982 to solve the growing demand for testing and evaluation of homeschool students.

Dr. Mary Kay Clark, director of Seton Home Study School, realized the importance of showing growth, measuring progress, and fulfilling the standardized testing requirement required by many states. We've been growing ever since.

In the beginning, there was only one option: the California Achievement Test, taken on paper and with a number two pencil. Thirty years later, as the popularity of homeschooling has increased worldwide, our testing services have grown to include four different options, including online as well as traditional paper and pencil tests.

Fifteen years ago, we were a team of three that grew to five during our peak testing season. Today, we are a team of twelve full-time staff, with an additional crew during our peak season.

OUR MISSION

What has helped us achieve such growth is our commitment to offering the absolute best testing experience for our students and families.

The testing process can be overwhelming, especially for first-time homeschooling parents. Our mission is to take that stress away. We do that by being available through live chat, phone, and email support. We are here to walk you through the process and make testing as simple as possible. We stand by our commitment to "Testing Made Easy."

In addition to offering standardized testing for grades K-12, we also provide computer-based diagnostic testing for reading and math. Diagnostic testing is a remarkable tool that can highlight strengths and weaknesses and assist in building an individualized curriculum for your student.



NEW AND EXCITING RESOURCES

We are constantly working on adding more resources that fit the evolving needs of the homeschool community, whether it be adding another online testing option, offering tests for international students, or extending our customer service hours. We are here to listen to you and be your trusted resource in your homeschooling journey.

Although our business has grown substantially, we still strive to provide an individualized experience for each of you. We have many returning customers who test with us year after year because of our commitment to providing reliable and friendly service. Families will call us to order that last twelfth grade assessment, and say “We’ve been testing with you for over twenty years.”

Our team has over 100 years of combined experience as parents and educators, so whether you are a first-time homeschooling parent, a twenty-year veteran, or somewhere in between, we know how to make your testing experience successful.

HERE TO SERVE YOU

One of the members of our team is Lisa Hartley. She has been a dedicated member of the Seton Home Study team for over 20 years, and currently serves on the Customer Care Team and as a Test Administrator. Lisa administers the Stanford 10 Online, and assists customers during their student’s online test session.



Lisa provides our parents and students with an easy and straightforward testing experience, and believes that, “It’s rewarding to guide a parent through the testing process and help them gain the confidence to meet their testing requirements.”

Lisa’s commitment to our mission reflects what Seton Testing Services was founded to do—assisting the homeschooling community in educational evaluation of student progress while meeting state testing requirements for standardized testing.

Our team of experts at Seton Testing Services is ready with answers and materials to help you through the process. If you need any guidance or information about standardized tests, give us a call today.

It’s as easy as that!



Felicity Smoot is a former homeschool student, and holds a B.S. in Psychology from Old Dominion University. She enjoys going on outdoor adventures with her three kids, traveling, long distance running, and reading historical fiction.

Seton Testing Services **Test For Success**

✓IOWA ASSESSMENTS FORM E

The IOWA Form E can indicate college and career readiness

- **Easily interpretable**
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- **Grades K-12**

A bachelor’s degree is preferred but not required for administration.

✓STANFORD 10 ONLINE

Done online at your computer, the Stanford Online’s untimed and multiple-choice format:

- **Facilitates student engagement**
- **Increases test completion**
- **Nationally renowned in 2018**
- **Grades 3-12**

No degree required. Seton is the Test Administrator.

✓TERRANOVA 2/CAT 6

The TerraNova 2 meets most states’ annual testing requirements and is:

- **Stimulating to take**
- **Extremely accurate**
- **Nationally renowned in 2005**
- **Grades K-12**

No Bachelor’s Degree Required

✓CAT SURVEY

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Ask the Experts:

How do you work with a child or children who have different needs?

Three Veteran Homeschooling Moms Share Their Experience

Slow Down When You Need To...



Homeschooling can present challenges when your student can easily grasp the lessons, but those challenges are more significant when a student has different needs.

Whether owing to a difference in comprehension, a health issue, or some other special need, some students are not best served by following a standard schedule or course of action when it comes to schooling. And while a student with different needs can pose extra challenges in the homeschool room, it is precisely there where we can best meet their needs.

The first step in home education is to reflect on the long-term goals. We educate our children for eternity, but our method depends on their individual needs and gifts. It is essential to teach all students to pray for discernment in their vocations.

Have discussions within the family about how different gifts and abilities fit, or not, with other disciplines. Understanding that there is not just one path for all students (i.e., the college path) can relieve students' and parents' pressure when working with different needs.

Don't be afraid to seek help when you need it. Ask Seton counselors for support or advice. Talk with other homeschoolers and find out what opportunities exist for supplemental classes or support.

“Don't Be Afraid to Seek Help When You Need it.”

Slow down when you need to. If a student requires more time to complete a course, stretch the work out over an extended period. Start a textbook or class again if a child needs a review of concepts they didn't grasp the first time around.

And most importantly, pray for your children. Pray for the courage to lead them and for the wisdom to understand their individual needs and gifts. Pray for patience and humility. Then, rest assured that you will be successful in your eternal mission.

Tara Brelinsky, North Carolina

Fantastic Counselors Are There to Help...



My oldest son is a sophomore, and we have been with Seton since Pre-K. He is twice-exceptional, meaning he has more than one special need.

In his case, he is gifted and autistic. This has made for challenges and blessings, and our family is better for having him in it. I have found the Seton program easily adaptable for the needs of each of my children, including him.

“The Seton Program is Easily Adaptable.”

As of now, he does not want special services per se, but we do have some things we utilize to help his academic career. He struggles with fine motor skills, so anything at all I can give orally, I do. It used to be spelling, vocabulary, and religion quizzes.

Now it is the parent-graded history and English Literature exams. Sometimes if he gets overwhelmed typing an essay for a history exam, I will step in and type verbatim what he says. That way, he can

focus on the content of his answer and not be stressed by typing it all out correctly.

If he has a problem and needs to call a counselor, we rehearse what he will say, and after practicing with me, he makes the call himself. I have a note on his file that the counselor can see that he is autistic, and one of his struggles is auditory processing, so be prepared to take a bit longer with him and repeat yourself two or three times. It's not that he's not listening; he just needs more time to process what they say and formulate a response.

The counselors have been fantastic and understanding and recently helped us switch his foreign language from Spanish to German mid-year. I was concerned about being behind, and they assured me that he has 12 months to complete the work, and a happier, more relaxed student is better than a stressed-out miserable one that finishes in nine months. It was a good reminder to me, even after all my years at this.

Author's note: I have done everything I have shared here with his permission, as respecting my children's dignity and privacy is of the utmost importance.

Kristin Brown, Virginia

School is No Longer a Dread...



Of my eight children, I have one child who has a challenge that my other children do not, and that is that he struggles with holding a pencil and the physical act of writing.

It also does not help that he is left-handed. This challenge has resulted in him disliking schoolwork very much.

For this child, I would have to sit with him for his schoolwork more than I would the other children to keep him on task and motivated, which I think gave him the reassurance he needed that “okay, Mom is with me in this.”

We have a daily date of doing Algebra together, which has helped build a bond between us. I enrolled him in Special Services for 8th and 9th grade English, which has been a godsend!

“Special Services Has Been a Godsend!”

He has made use of oral answers, computer-typed paragraphs and tests, and me not pushing him to write so much in all his subjects. School is no longer a dreaded part of the day for the first time in nine years!

Susan Brock, Virginia



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Heaven is for Heroes

BY JOHN CLARK

On January 10, 2022, Bruce Clark passed to eternal life. For the eighty-six years of his life, he was many things: son, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, athlete, soldier, pilot, carpenter, entrepreneur, and musician.

Since I began writing this column fourteen years ago, I have devoted many pages to describing these pursuits. But if you readers will indulge me one last entry about my father, I would like to tell you about the final years of his life. Because as it turns out, of all the lessons my father taught me, he saved the best for last.

Walking With Christ

Many of my Dad's accomplishments in life were physical, if not super-athletic. Even at the age of sixty, he dreamed of playing softball in the Front Royal church league with us. He also dreamed of going on the senior golf tour.

*Of all the lessons my
father taught me,
he saved the best for last.*

But these things were not meant to be. Because at the same time, the doctors told him that his leg was experiencing massive circulatory problems and that he would need an amputation. His leg was amputated at mid-thigh.

By that point, my Dad had already done his share of suffering. During a combat mission in Vietnam, my father parachuted into a tree in enemy territory; consequently, he endured shoulder and back pain for the rest of his life. So his amputation added to what

was already a frequently agonizing daily struggle. When he lost his leg—especially considering all the recovery that he and his body still had to accomplish—some people might have thought this would be the end for him.

But it was not the end, nor even the beginning of the end. It was the beginning of the beginning. For when my Dad lost his leg, he walked with God—better than ever before.

Casual onlookers might have thought he was supported by his crutches. He was not; he was supported by Christ. For nearly three decades, my father leaned on his Savior for strength. And with three legs, they walked to Calvary together—as two friends on one final mission, as friends focused on a common destination.

But it was a tortuous journey.

A Rescue Mission

As a Special Forces soldier in Vietnam, my Dad was taught to perform rescue missions. If that meant parachuting into enemy territory, so be it. Once he removed his green beret for the last time, he must have thought his days of rescue missions were over. But his greatest rescue mission lay ahead. Let me explain.

From the day of the amputation, it was no longer athletic prowess but pain that became my father's constant. In addition to all the other physical difficulties, searing phantom pains ravaged him for minutes, hours—even days—at a time. Sometimes his pain was so intense that it would literally take his breath away. Some nights, as I would hear him gasp in agony, I would silently beg Our Lord, "Dear God, please let his pain stop."

But as I was making this plea to God, my Dad offered a different prayer. His prayer was that his sufferings would "get just one more soul out of Purgatory." I'm not sure where or when my father

developed that devotion to the souls in Purgatory, but there is no doubt that he had that devotion. My Dad believed that there was a soul who had almost suffered enough in Purgatory to get to Heaven and that his sufferings on a given night could help him get the rest of the way.

*...no one had ever taught
him to give up.”*

For nearly three decades, my father conducted a rescue mission to Purgatory. For a quarter-century, it's as though my Dad traveled to Purgatory, saw the suffering souls, and assured them, "Follow me. It's time to go home."

It is said that if your prayers and sufferings help release a soul from Purgatory, that soul will pray for you for the rest of your life—hopefully, all the way to Heaven. I can now envision the greeting line of Heaven as my father entered Paradise—so many souls lined up to throw their arms around the man whose pain helped end theirs.

Writer & Teacher

When my Dad first lost his leg, I think he felt frustrated and sad, pondering all the things he could no longer do. That period of my Dad's life lasted approximately forty-eight hours.

And then he got busy.

You see, with all the lessons he had learned over the years, no one had ever taught him to give up.

He redirected his efforts and focused on what he could accomplish. He began writing—a lot. Starting with *The Custer Legacy*, he wrote several full-length novels, including *The Castro Conspiracy*, *The Blood-Red Flag*, and *Redcoats and Rebels*. I attended numerous books signings with my Dad over the years, and it was fun to witness so many people come back to buy his latest novel. He always had a story for them, along with a note of encouragement and a signature. My Dad was properly proud of those novels.

But there was something that he was much prouder of and loved much more than his novels. And that was you students. He began teaching American history to thousands—tens of thousands—of you Seton students.

He wrote history books and blogs and made dozens of videos explaining historical events. Over the years, he took phone calls from thousands of parents and students. He graded mountains of tests and essays. He wrote recommendation letters to help Seton students get accepted to college.

And you know what? He loved every second of it. He loved you.

Officially, my Dad had seven kids on this earth. Unofficially, he had seventy thousand. Over the years, when my Dad spoke about you students, he would always refer to you as "my kids." When I visited him some evenings, he would smile and say things like, "One of my kids wrote a great history essay today."

I believe it is important you know, in so many ways, that you students kept him going. You made sure he did not have time to get discouraged because he was so busy teaching you.

So, even if you never realized it, you played a huge and positive role in my father's life.

Continued on page 12...



MARY KAY AND BRUCE CLARK



FOUR GENERATIONS - KEVIN CLARK, ERIN HAISLMAIER,
CONNOR HAISLMAIER, MARY KAY AND BRUCE CLARK

The Christmas Lights Of Heaven

One of my father's favorite sayings was, "A soldier who dies in battle while saying a prayer will finish that prayer in Heaven." So while I will pray for my father until I join him in Heaven, I am deeply consoled by this: my father's entire life was a prayer.



Since I learned on January 10 that my father had passed away, I've been thinking a lot about what my Dad is doing in Heaven right now. With his glorified body, he's certainly been playing baseball with those men who used to play for the Cleveland Indians but were called up to a better league.

I'm sure he's been reacquainting with his Green Beret squad—those men who have waited patiently for him to rejoin their unit. I imagine he's been enjoying his mother's Scottish shortbread cookies, baked with love in Heaven.

But I've also been thinking about something else. At His Ascension, Jesus assured us that he was going to Heaven to prepare a home for those who love Him. My father, a master carpenter in addition to all his other skills and talents, was constantly doing home improvement projects, whether it was building a ramp for his wheelchair, building bookcases for his wife, or building a cabinet for his classic-film DVDs.

And I wonder if my Dad is helping Jesus prepare a home for his family in Heaven. After all, my Dad's family will need a rather large house. *Psalm 128* assures us that it is a great blessing to see our children's children. Bruce Clark did that one better. He lived to see his children's grandchildren. And he will certainly want us all to visit him in our heavenly home.

I've written previously about my Dad's love for Christmas and that my father made sure to put Christmas lights on our family's house every year. So maybe that is my father's job: to prepare the Clark house in Heaven with sparkling lights, colorfully announcing the perpetual love of Jesus.

With the sanctifying grace of God, I have good hope to walk in my father's footsteps all the way to that house. And I'll know just how to find it: the house in Heaven with all the Christmas lights.



John Clark is a homeschooling father, a speech writer, an online course developer for Seton, and a weekly blogger for The National Catholic Register. His latest book is



Seton Student Achievements

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY



Undefeated Season - Twins Chloe and Lily

Seton has helped us develop a strong work ethic that has become part of our softball training.



Dominic Wins 4-H Reserve Champion

4-H winner in Dog Training for Agility and Obedience, Dominic is in seventh grade and a first-year Seton homeschooler.



STAFF SERIES

A chat with those who serve you!

Vasily Vasilyev, High School Mathematics Counselor

It's a long and sometimes rigorous trek from Uzbekistan to Front Royal, Virginia.

Born in December 1991, in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, Seton high school mathematics counselor Vasily Vasilyev spent the first ten years of his life in that city.



When his sister studied in medical school in Voronezh in Central Russia, Vasily and his parents moved to that city. There, his father found work, and Vasily graduated from a high school specializing in math, physics, and IT.

From there, Vasily entered a veterinary college, where for 18 months he studied

such subjects as large animal husbandry and chemistry. And then came another change in his life.

On to the U.S.A.

His sister had come to the United States, married, and settled in Winchester, Virginia, with her husband. In the lottery to win a Green Card for working here, Vasily's father finally acquired the right to enter America, and once again, Vasily and his parents followed his sister to a new land.

Once the family arrived in the US, Vasily committed to improving his English through various courses and self-guided studies. He enrolled in Warren County's Lord Fairfax Community College and took a degree's prerequisite courses and more math and physics courses. After graduating in 2015, Vasily landed at Shenandoah University in nearby Winchester. He again studied mathematics and accounting and graduated in 2018 with a double major in both subjects.

Afterward, he went to work for a local accounting firm where he had served as an intern while an undergraduate. The work was stressful and intense, and became even more so after

the COVID-19 restrictions came into play. "I was working 13 hours and more a day and wanted something more from life," Vasily says.

On February 15, 2021, that hope became a reality when Vasily came to work for Seton Home School Study after he responded to an advertisement for a math counselor.

Helping Others Through Seton

Since then, Vasily has advised parents and students by phone and email on the intricacies of mathematics, helped them select appropriate courses, graded tests, and even developed the physics portion of the Seton science textbook for third grade. Though he describes himself as an introvert, Vasily has come to treasure his conversations with Seton students and their parents. "I've found I enjoy explaining things."

"What's most satisfying to me," he notes, "is when the kids' light bulb goes on. When they understand what I am explaining to them—that's the best."

In his spare time, Vasily most enjoys the time he spends with his wife and children. "I'm also a movie geek," he says, crediting film with helping him to learn English but also taking pleasure in American, Australian, and European movies.



When asked for some final words, he says with a smile, "When calling for help, please leave your name and family number on my voice mail so I might better serve you."

Here at Seton, we're blessed to have the expertise and services of mathematician Vasily Vasilyev.



WITH JEFF MINICK

Heaven's Happy Warriors: The Fisher Family

When asked what kept her going throughout her busy day, Theresa Fisher, a Seton homeschooling mother of 12 children, answered, "God, a wonderful husband, and good coffee." Her reply caused me to burst out laughing, so I'm adding a fourth item to her list, "A sense of humor."

Along with 11 children and one more on the way, Theresa and her husband Ben care for 26 chickens, four sheep, a couple of ducks, three cats, and a dog.

Lots of responsibilities, yet the woman on the phone, whose family has faced some major challenges, sounded merry and bright and wise. Here was another gift for me, an interview with a Seton parent that would provide a candle flame in the sometimes dark world of the present.

Some Background

Theresa grew up in the small town of Lebanon in Indiana, while Ben was raised in Tennessee near Knoxville. Interestingly, both are 1999 graduates of Seton Home Study, making their children second-generation Seton students.

They met that same year at Christendom College on the first day of freshman orientation. Even during their courtship, the two decided that once they were married and had children, they would teach them at home.

Theresa graduated in May 2003 with a degree in English language and literature. Ben, who had transferred after two years to the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, earned his degree in mechanical engineering. They married that same year.

Today Ben works as an engineer—formally known as a Technical Fellow—for BWXT in Lynchburg, Virginia, where, as Theresa proudly says, "he comes up with ideas and inventions."

Full House

And then came the children. The oldest four—Nicholas 11th grade, Zachary 10th grade, Nathaniel 9th grade, and Abigail 8th grade—are fully enrolled with Seton.

The next four young ones—Margaret and Elinor in 4th grade, 3rd grader Anna, and her sister Mary Elizabeth in Grade 2—will be enrolled full-time with Seton when they enter 6th grade. Evelyn is in kindergarten, and Catherine is a preschooler. Theresa describes little Bridget as "our mascot," though she may be bumped from that position when Rosalie is born.

A typical day for this tribe of youngsters starts with breakfast followed by devotions. Knowing their assignments, the older children then go to the study areas they have selected and begin their work while Theresa tutors and guides the younger children.

With breaks and lunchtime, school usually runs until mid-afternoon, when Theresa sets aside some time to help the older children with any questions or difficulties they've encountered. Around 4 p.m., the children scatter out and do their chores. After supper, there is time set aside for family prayer in the evenings.



Like all homeschool teachers, Theresa faces challenges. “You can’t step in and do everything for them,” she says. “You can’t hover. You’ve got to step back and let them do the work. That’s one reason I do high school the way I do. Also, though I second-guess my choices sometimes, I have to remember to trust that God gave us this mission and He doesn’t make mistakes. Everything will work out.”

Extracurriculars

Because of their family size, the Fishers participate in activities that include as many kids as possible. They’ve joined a local running league—some of them run in 5Ks—and are avid hikers, with the Appalachian Trail only about 15 minutes from their house.

And about four years ago, they created the ability to entertain themselves at home when they moved from Tennessee to Lynchburg, Virginia. Their newly-acquired house was a “fixer-upper,” but the property included a swimming pool—“The little ones live there during the summer”—and space for the animals they eventually purchased. The kids will soon learn to shear sheep and card wool, and Ben teaches the boys blacksmithing in an outbuilding on the grounds.

In addition, the family is active in their church, Holy Name of Mary, in Bedford, Virginia. Theresa helps out with First Communion class as a catechist, Zachary and Nathaniel both serve on the altar, and Abigail, who is in the choir, is learning to be a cantor.

Special Challenges

First-born Nicholas entered the world at 24 weeks, on the very cusp of viability. He survived but with special needs: cerebral palsy, developmental delays, and an inability to communicate verbally.

In her son’s early years, Theresa tried some different approaches to further his education, but none of them worked. However, one homeschooling mom, Virginia Blatchford, who collaborated on Seton’s Art 1 Book, helped her develop an early elementary school curriculum that brought some positive results.

When Nicholas was in fourth grade, Theresa contacted Stephen Costanzo at Seton’s Special Services Department and has worked with the counselors there ever since. Her confidence that her son could learn, what she calls “her gut instinct,” coupled with the help she has received from Special Services, has made all the difference in the world in her son’s education.

Fourth-grader Meg contends with autism, and Theresa remarks, “I’m glad to know that Seton will be there for her.”

Happy Warriors

When asked what advice she might give new homeschooling moms, Theresa gave an answer I’ve heard several times: “Take it one day at a time. Things won’t always be perfect. Laundry piles up, dishes pile up.” But then she laughed and added a detail new to me: “And a plumber pulls a potato out of the toilet with an auger.” One of the children decided to see if a toilet might flush away a spud. The plumber even wrote down what he’d retrieved from the commode on his report. “Never had that in my experience,” he told Theresa, and I was again reminded of her sense of humor.

Cheaper by the Dozen

And her husband Ben must surely mirror her sense of merriment. With his twelfth child on the way, he took an image for the original cover of *Cheaper By the Dozen* from the Internet and turned it into a birth announcement.

“The Character of the Happy Warrior” is a poem by William Wordsworth. One of my online dictionaries defines a happy warrior as “one who is undaunted by difficulties.” Near the end of the poem, Wordsworth writes that the happy warrior “draws his breath in confidence of Heaven’s applause.”

Down in Lynchburg, Virginia, are some happy warriors. And surely heaven is applauding.





If John Paul II was a Seton Homeschool Student

If John Paul II grew up today in America as a Seton homeschool student, he would likely take an interest in Magdalen College.

We know that he cared deeply about the identity and mission of Catholic colleges, as is evident in his apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. But also, in temperament, personal passions, and theological interests, JP II would find a home at Magdalen!

First, he loved philosophy, theology, poetry, literature, and language. He enthusiastically studied great thinkers like Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas. And the question that drove him, as it drives us, is, “What does it mean to be human?”

JP II would have loved our liberal arts curriculum and especially our humanities program, which is unique in the country. It immerses all students on campus into the same books, questions, and conversations at the same time. I can just picture JP II and Magdalen professor Anthony Esolen getting into a long conversation about poetry or Dante and not being able to pull them away.

A Heart for Youth

JP II also had a heart for young people. When making his first visit to the United States in 1979, he greeted throngs of teenagers in New York City. The youth in Madison Square Garden that day began to cheer, “John Paul II, we love you!” The pope responded, “woo-hoo-woo, John Paul II, he loves you!”

His passion for young people led him to create World Youth Day early in his pontificate. These celebrations attracted millions of young people from all over the world. In fact, during WYD 1995 in Manila, over five million people attended the closing Mass, making it one of the largest papal crowds in history.

Like him, Magdalen College cares deeply about young people—their hopes, dreams, struggles, ideals—and views them as taking a leading role in the New Evangelization. Our mission is to call them, serve them, and shape their whole person at a very formative stage of life through a Catholic liberal arts education.



JPII loved the outdoors, especially the mountains. If he were anywhere near New Hampshire today, you would likely find him hiking, kayaking, and especially skiing. Moments after being elected Pope, he commented to a well-wisher, "I will ski again when they let me."

JPII would smile wide if he saw Magdalen's mountain home.

Likewise, he once told a journalist, "I wish I could be out there somewhere in the mountains, racing down into a valley. It's an extraordinary sensation." JPII would smile wide if he saw Magdalen's mountain home. Joining other students to climb Mt. Kearsarge and kayaking the Contoocook River would be among his favorite extracurricular activities. And he would be the first to take advantage of Magdalen's partnership with a nearby ski slope, which enables students to ski for free with only \$10 rentals.

Speaking of extracurriculars, JPII had a passion for the theater. Growing up, he wanted to be an actor, and upon entering university, he helped form a student theatre group.

According to his biographer, "Theater, for Wojtyla, was also an experience of community, the self-disciplined action of a group of individuals who, by blending their individual talents with the talents of others, become something more than the sum of their parts." It sounds like Wojtyla would have loved the way Magdalen's all-college choir unites the voices of all students to produce beautiful sacred music. But he would, I guarantee, sign up to be part of the St. Genesius Players club, which produces plays and musicals like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (this year's production).

Finally, JPII tirelessly guarded the orthodoxy of Catholic doctrine. And he loved the Eucharist, doing much of his writing in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

If he experienced the reverence of the liturgies at Magdalen, if he saw the way we approach Eucharistic Adoration, if he were present for our faculty taking the *Oath of Fidelity* at the beginning of each academic year, JPII would indeed feel at home. He would find renewed hope in the promise of faithful Catholic colleges serving the Church's mission, for which he called in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Is it any wonder why we chose him as our co-patron?

If JPII were a Seton Homeschool student in America today, he might even ask for the opportunity to take a Magdalen course for credit at our summer program!



Dr. Ryan Messmore is President of Magdalen College (Warner, NH), Oxford D.Phil., author of *In Love: The Larger Story of Sex and Marriage*, and fan of JPII.



Attention Seton Students:

Seton students who visit and apply to **Magdalen College** by **March 18, 2022**, are eligible to receive a one-time **\$2,000 scholarship** if they enroll for the fall of 2022!

Applications will also be reviewed for acceptance into the Scholarship Competition weekend which will be held on **April 9, 2022.**



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Finding a Home at Magdalen

—Persis Johansen, class of '25

Flying from Texas to New Hampshire to attend Magdalen College was a huge change for me, but moving from Seton's curriculum to a collegiate liberal arts program was easy.

The emphasis on classics, theology, and language I received in high school transferred into my first semester at Magdalen, where I fell more in love with my Faith and the world's masterpieces. I am continuing my education begun with Seton at a higher yet deeper level.

At Magdalen everything goes into the cultivation of the whole person—the swing dances, competitions, campus work, pro-life hours, icon painting, and daily Mass. What I learn in the classrooms I also experience personally interacting with the beautiful New England nature, my friends, and God.

When I was researching colleges, Magdalen stood out to me as closest to what I had been striving toward, a place where God is the center of an ordered life of learning and recreation.



Each day begins and ends in prayer, and classes surround the focal point of the noon Mass. Excited as I was, I anticipated a difficult transition from homeschooling to in-person classes and schedules. However, the reverent and familiar liturgy made me feel at home while I met students who would become some of my closest friends.

A Priceless Experience

As a young freshman, I have a ways to go before I understand Faulkner, Aristotle, or Hegel, but my experience thus far at Magdalen has been priceless.

I have come to look forward to the diverse conversations among the dinner tables, the hallway hot chocolate socials, exposure to different liturgical traditions—including the Traditional Latin Mass, wandering through the campus' woods, and watching the sun setting between the mountains.

At Magdalen, I have found a unique balance and life that Seton students especially would appreciate, oriented to grow not only the mind but the soul.



Persis Johansen is the oldest of seven homeschooled children. Persis graduated from the Seton curriculum in 2021. She currently enjoys the best of both worlds between Texas and New Hampshire.

PLANNING TO ATTEND THE SETON 2022 GRADUATION?

Here's What You Need to Know:

On June 18, 2022 Seton will hold a high school graduation ceremony at Warren County High School in Front Royal, Virginia.

Note: this date is a change from the Memorial Day Weekend when the graduation often was held in the past.

To be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony, 2022 graduating students must:

- Be 12th grade Seton Home Study School students
- Be taking sufficient courses in 12th grade to meet graduation requirements
- Have at least three-fourths of quarter grades by the graduation date
- Have completed, or expect to complete, high school work in the 2022 calendar year
- Be current on any tuition or fees owed to Seton
- Register and pay the graduation fee by May 15, 2022

In addition to 2022 graduates, students who completed their diploma requirements on or after July 1, 2020, and have not already attended a Seton graduation ceremony, are eligible to participate.

- If you are unsure about your credits or courses, please contact our high school guidance counselor John Thorp at 540-636-2238 or guidance@setonhome.org.
- If you register and then find you cannot attend for any reason, a full refund of any fees paid will be available until the day of graduation.
- If you register and then find you cannot attend for any reason, a full refund of any fees paid will be available until the day of graduation.



For full details about the graduation weekend go to:

www.setonhome.org/grad2022



Springtime and Special Moments: Parenting the Little Way

BY JEFF MINICK



Recently a friend, an older homeschooling father, lamented that he hadn't spent more time with his children when they were young.

He'd kept his nose to the grindstone all his adult life—he once heard a daughter say of him, “Dad shows his love for us by working”—and now wishes he'd devoted himself more to playing with his kids. He told me, “No one on his deathbed ever says, ‘I spent too much time with my children.’”

Many moms and dads—and I include myself in this company—may experience this same regret. One morning we wake up, and that kid we used to tuck into bed with prayers and a kiss is all packed up and off to college, or to join the military, or to take a job on the other side of the country.

*“Sunrise, sunset
swiftly flow the days”*

Obligations sweep up our time and energy, every day seems a race to earn money, get the laundry done, or put a meal on the table, and the days, months, and years click past us like a freight train.

These lines from *Fiddler on the Roof*'s “Sunrise, Sunset” sum up this sensation:

*Is this the little girl I carried?
Is this the little boy at play?
I don't remember growing older
When did they?
When did she get to be a beauty?
When did he grow to be so tall?
Wasn't it yesterday
When they were small?
Sunrise, sunset
Sunrise, sunset
Swiftly flow the days.*

Yes, those days race past us in the blink of an eye.

In most homeschooling families, I suspect, one or even both parents may spend time, like my friend, working outside of the home. How might they snatch some moments from that flow of days and insert themselves more deeply into the lives of their children?

Misguided Disagreements

Years ago, when I was parenting my children, a debate raged between the benefits of quality time versus quantity time.

Some experts stressed the importance of “quality time” to reassure working moms and dads that they weren’t missing out on their children’s development. Other experts in the “quality time” camp emphasized that the number of hours you spent with the kids mattered less than how you spent that time together. An evening devoted to reading books to a 5-year-old along with some conversation or games could offset the forty hours the child had spent in pre-K care that week.

“Now is the perfect season to add to that treasure house of riches.”

On the other hand, those who argued for quantity time believed what mattered more was the number of hours children and a parent were together. The interactions during the day between a parent, most often a stay-at-home mom, and young children counted more heavily in a child’s development. They contended that presence mattered most.

Let’s assume for the sake of my argument that parents on both sides of this question love their children and want the best for them. Let’s also assume that some of these parents, particularly those on the quality side of the debate, have little choice in whether they must work or remain at home.

Keeping those assumptions in mind, let’s move past the quality versus quantity discussion, and look instead at how moms and dads working outside of the home can connect with their children and make the most of the flow of days.

The Little Way

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux became famous for her practice of *The Little Way*. This French Carmelite nun who died from tuberculosis at age 24 taught the rest of us the value of doing small things for God with great devotion. She is an exemplar of what it means to offer all our prayers, all our actions, and all our love to the God who created us.

So what, you might be wondering, does the *Little Way* have to do with work and parenting?

Just about everything.

Christ sees the father who comes home beaten up by a day at the office and worried about putting bread on the table for his family, but who still manages to throw a football in the yard with his 12-year-old son. Christ sees the exhausted mother who works part-time as a nurse sitting beside the bed of her feverish daughter, offering her sips of water and praying over her when she finally falls asleep.

By the time the kids are grown, most parents have forgotten these myriad moments of grace. Nonetheless, they are real, true, and beautiful, and they add up to a pile of riches over the years.

The Perfect Season to Start

Spring is fast approaching. The frozen earth of winter is unlocking, the days will grow longer, the grass will soon turn green, and flowers will send forth shoots and buds.

Now is the perfect season to add to that treasure house of riches.

Now is the time when parents arriving home from work have the daylight hours to kick a soccer ball with the younger set, spend a few minutes playing catch, go on a family stroll, or set up a target and pop off some BBs in the back yard.

The time needed for these shared activities is negligible in the broad scheme of life but can provide wonderful memories for our children and teens.

Being outdoors together this way is healthy for the entire family.

And this time together, this casual expenditure of minutes, helps forge lifelong bonds.

Sunshine and Simplicity

Long ago, on another spring day, I was 15 feet up a ladder, painting the side of the bed-and-breakfast my wife and I owned, when my five-year-old daughter grabbed the bottom of the ladder and shook it. She scared the heck out of me—I acquired more gray hairs that afternoon—and I shouted, “Do you want me to come down off this ladder?”

She missed the threat implied in my question. “Yes,” she said. “I want you to come and play.”

*“It’s spring again now.
Get the kids outside
—it’s good for them...”*

Her innocent request touched my heart. I laughed, came down from the ladder, wrapped my paintbrush in cellophane, and we kicked a soccer ball back and forth for a few minutes.

I wish I could say I had done this more often with all my children, come down from other ladders both real and metaphorical to spend time with them, for that moment was magical. For once, I practiced the *Little Way*.

It’s spring again now. Get the kids outside—it’s good for them—but even more, get yourself outside with them.

That’s good for you too. In more ways than one.

And to the man whose daughter said of him, “Dad shows his love for us by working,” I would say: That’s not a criticism.

No—it’s a high compliment from a wise young woman who loves you.



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.

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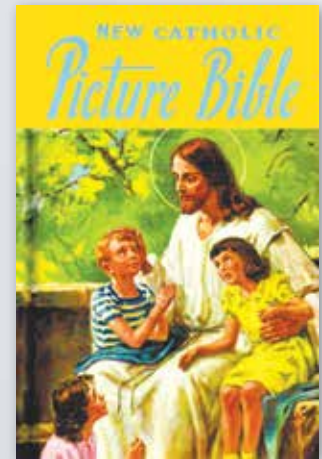


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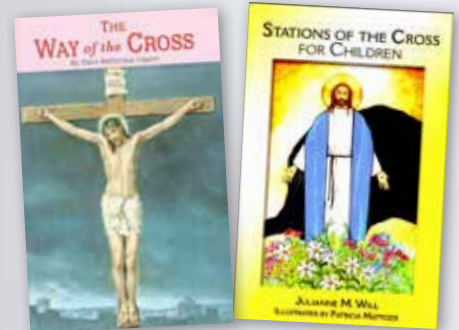
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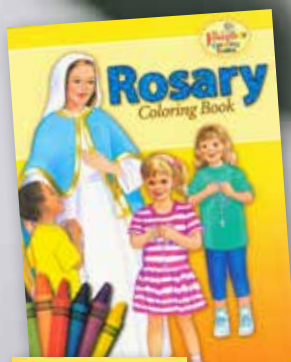
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Hometown Tourism

in the *Schoolroom*

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

Living as I do, right outside of Manhattan, I am often asked if I've seen the Empire State Building or been in the Statue of Liberty. The answer to both questions is yes, but I must admit, not since my seventh and eighth-grade field trips.

The fact is that most people rarely explore their town, city, or state unless forced to do so by the occasion of visiting relatives or grammar school teachers.

“A state study can become a family project.”

Spring is here, and with more temperate weather, I would like to encourage you to explore your hometown or home state. Those of you doing the fourth-grade state project might already be immersed in these trips, but it should not stop there. My children, for this project, made big promotional posters extolling how wonderful a visit to New York City could be (this was a while ago) and the historic sites all over the state. The whole family can get involved.

A state study can become a family project, and like the fourth-grade assignment, help families become familiar with their own state's history.

What a wonderful opportunity we have to learn firsthand about the place in which God planted us! Perhaps your family has a place in the history of your state or region.

When did your family settle there? What brought them there? Why did they stay? When I asked these questions, there were a few phone calls to relatives and a bit of online searching.

Have the children get creative with posters, scrapbooks, lapbooks, or writing an article for a local paper. Let them have fun with the project.

So get your wish list started on where you would like to go for a day trip or even longer holiday. There is no need to wait for a visiting relative to be the green flag to get this road trip started!

Editors Note: We include the websites in the box to start your search but do not necessarily endorse all content.

Some websites to help :

www.onlyinyourstate.com
www.americaslibrary.gov
www.statebystatetravel.com



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 *Seton Magazine* and also a contributor to

The Long Island Catholic.

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



“

The greatest benefit of homeschooling has been having the flexibility to balance school with other enriching activities and the peace of mind that my children are receiving a superior education and thorough formation in the Catholic faith.

I choose Seton Home Study School to be sure my children would receive an academically rigorous and fully Catholic education at home.

Meeting other Seton families was also a reason!

”

- The Suess Family – New Milford, CT



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BY BRUCE CLARK

Tuskegee Airmen



In tribute to Seton Historian, Bruce Clark, we offer this memory from his pen. While Bruce's knowledge of history was vast, he had a particular fondness for the details of the great tapestry of our shared past.

Few today are aware of the story of the Tuskegee Airmen, the Black Bombers of World War II. The details of how our black citizens became heroic airmen during that war is told in detail in a marvelous movie, *Tuskegee Airmen*.

Some misguided people at that time believed that non-whites could not be trained to fly airplanes. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt thought otherwise. She wasted no time to bring her influence to change the situation. With pressure and determination, Mrs. Roosevelt went for an historic airplane ride with a black pilot and then personally arranged for a \$175,000 government loan to train black pilots.

In the safety of the First Lady's support, the historic Tuskegee University Black Pilot training program began in June, 1941, with the 99th Pursuit Squadron.

Though the trained black members of the 99th squadron were sent to Africa and Italy, the black flyers were to protect the white American flyers, but were not allowed to have air contact with the enemy. One historic day, two white bomber pilots from Texas stopped at the 99th Squadron headquarters.

"Are you really pilots?" the flyers asked. The affirmative reply was greeted with howls and laughter from the white pilots.

***"Are you really pilots?"
the flyers asked.***

In desperation, because of a shortage of flyers, the black 99th Squadron was re-assigned to protect B-17 bombers from the swift German aircraft. On further missions, no bombers were lost with the protection from the black pilots. The black pilots painted their plane's rudders bright red to tease the Germans and to give the American bombing crews confidence when they saw them in the battle. Their fame quickly spread.



Bruce T. Clark, has been the Seton Historian since 1989. A homeschooling father of seven, Mr. Clark served as a Green Beret Captain in U.S. Special Forces and is the author of five historical novels: *The Custer Legacy*, *The Castro Conspiracy*, *The Blood-Red Flag*, *Redcoats and Rebels*, and *The American Renegade*.



Feast Day - April 25

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Christian Parents - Educators in Prayer

By reason of their dignity and mission, Christian parents have the specific responsibility of educating their children in prayer, introducing them to gradual discovery of the mystery of God and to personal dialogue with Him:

"It is particularly in the Christian family, enriched by the grace and the office of the sacrament of Matrimony, that from the earliest years children should be taught, according to the faith received in Baptism, to have a knowledge of God, to worship Him and to love their neighbor." [151]

The concrete example and living witness of parents is fundamental and irreplaceable in educating their children to pray.

Only by praying together with their children can a father and mother-exercising their royal priesthood-penetrate the innermost depths of their children's hearts and leave an impression that the future events in their lives will not be able to efface.

John Paul II
Familiaris Consortio

On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World
November 22, 1981

