

Seton MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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The Wonderful Gifts of Homeschooling

THE LARA FAMILY

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Planning for Success

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Nurturing a Vocation in the Home

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Impossible Odds

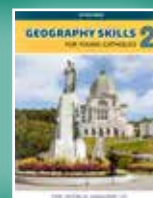
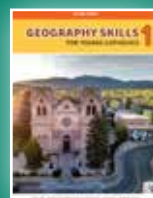
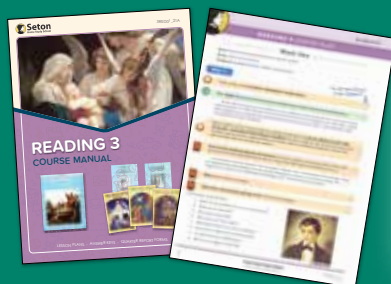
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MISSION STATEMENT

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.

**LETTER FROM
THE EDITOR**

Dear Readers,

I hope you are all having a lovely summer. My roses are in bloom, and this always makes me so happy. It's the little things, isn't it?

We have exciting updates for you. Draper Warren, Director of Admissions, has written a detailed article to inform you about curriculum updates and what new courses and books are now available.

He has also written about the new format for the lesson plans, which marries beauty and function to make your experience using them as pleasant and efficient as possible. The curriculum development and graphics design teams have worked tirelessly to help you have the best homeschool possible. Your prayers for them would be appreciated.

In addition to these important updates, I would like to call your attention to an article that is very dear to me, written by my friend Deacon Andrew Clark. By God's grace, Deacon Andrew will be ordained to the priesthood in 2023 and wrote an article describing how his parents nurtured his vocation through their homeschooling. It's a beautiful testament to the love his parents have for God and their family, as well as Andrew's love for them. Have a tissue nearby.

I hope that the longer days, warmer temperatures, and blooming flowers are helping to create memories for your family. Make sure to find time to rest and rejuvenate, busy times are around the corner, but summer is the time to "stand still and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:16).

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Ellen Barrett". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Mary Ellen Barrett

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Pray for us!

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The Lara Family

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your Questions ANSWERED

FOR HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

Do high school students need to do science labs? What are the requirements for submitting labs?

Only students seeking the Advanced Diploma are required to do labs. Those students need to do labs for three of their four science courses.

Labs are recommended for Physical Science, Chemistry, and Biology and may also be done for Physics.

The *Apologia Physical Science* and *Chemistry* textbooks contain the labs, and Apologia makes it easy to find materials for these labs at reasonable prices. The lab materials are also available through SetonBooks.com.

We have just come out with an excellent lab manual for Seton's *Biology for Life* textbook.

Biology for Life and *Saxon Physics* lab manuals are available through SetonBooks.com.

We also have a Biology dissection kit for sale at SetonBooks.com. Dissections, however, are not required.

Directions for reporting and submitting labs are within the MySeton online course resources. For Biology, find these resources within SetonOnline.com, located on your **MySeton page**.

If you would like to do more elaborate labs, you may consult esciencelabs.com.

– **Manuel Vicente, High School Science**

How can I keep my children reading over the summer?

Consider joining Seton's Summer Reading Club! We have recommended book lists available for students in Pre-K through high school, so there is something

for everyone. The club is a fun way to motivate students during the summer, boost their reading skills, and introduce them to great literature. – **Christina Nutt, Elementary Counselor**

Do we need to complete all of the assignments in our current grade before re-enrolling in the next grade?

One of the great benefits of homeschooling is the flexibility that it provides. The amount of flexibility, though, is greatly determined by the homeschool regulations for your state. Once you understand your state's regulations, you can decide what work to complete for your student to progress to the next grade level.

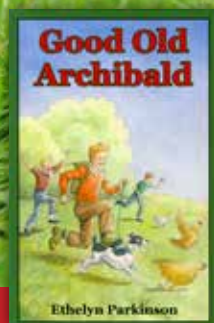
For elementary students: If you require a grade report for your elementary student, the student must complete all assignments graded by Seton.

If you do not require a grade report for your elementary student, the only

The Seton Summer Reading Club

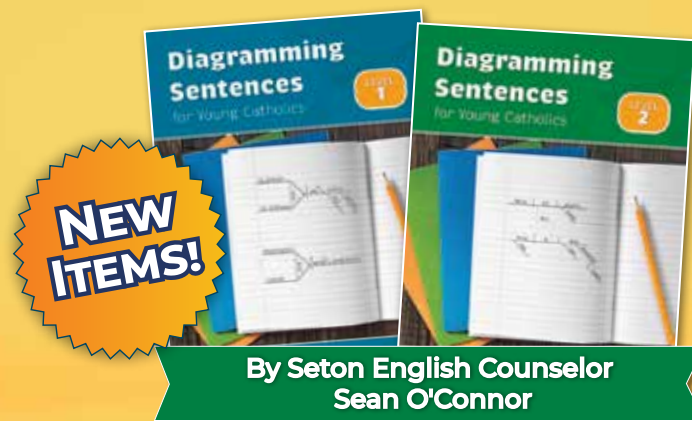
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*A fun way to keep up reading
skills over the Summer!*



www.SetonBooks.com/SummerReading

Diagramming Sentences for Young Catholics



**An easy way to learn and
practice sentence diagramming.**

assignments you should complete are those needed to ensure your student's future success.

In either case, Seton does not require that you have a complete grade report for the current academic year before re-enrolling your student.

For high school students: High school students who would like a Seton diploma and have unfinished courses going back more than a year are NOT eligible for re-enrollment. In other words, a diploma-seeking high schooler wishing to enroll in 11th grade must have all required 9th-grade assignments completed, submitted, and graded before enrolling in 11th grade.

This policy applies only to high schoolers seeking a Seton diploma. It does not apply to K-8 students or non-diploma-seeking high schoolers.
– *Laura Fusto, Elementary Counselor*

Does a student need to take the honors version of American Literature to receive the Academic or Advanced Academic Diploma?

No. Students intending to graduate with either the Academic or Advanced Academic Diploma do not have to take the honors version of American Literature. Completing the regular American Literature course is sufficient for both diploma tracks.
– *Sean O'Connor, High School English*

Would you explain how dual enrollment courses work?

Dual Enrollment allows high school students to take college courses and earn both college and high school credits. However, you must follow some rules to take advantage of this option.

Colleges may have age or grade restrictions and seek the high school's permission, so families should check with the college's admissions office to determine if they can use dual enrollment courses toward their high school requirements.

Seton requires students to take all religion/theology, English, and social studies courses from Seton. Biology must also be from Seton, but other science, math, and foreign language courses are acceptable as dual enrollment courses and electives.

Once a dual enrollment course is accepted by the college and by Seton, the family should let Seton's counselors know so it may be noted in the student's file.

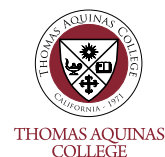
After completing the course, have a college transcript sent to records@setonhome.org to record the credit for graduation purposes.

A three or four-credit college course will earn full high school credit. A college course of fewer than three credits will earn a high school half-credit.

– *Gene McGuirk, High School Academic 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.



setonhome.org/colleges

A Marriage of Beauty and Function: The New Lesson Plan Design for 2022

Looking back over the history of Seton, there have been several watershed moments for our curriculum. In the 1980s, we started writing our own workbooks. We started publishing our books in full color in the 1990s. In the 2010s, we started making online courses available for high school. Now, we are revamping the way we present lesson plans.

We are in the middle of a project to re-design all lesson plans with a full-color layout and with significant formatting changes which improve their functionality.

I wanted to introduce these changes to you here in the magazine and give you more insight into our process and the features and reasons behind the new design.

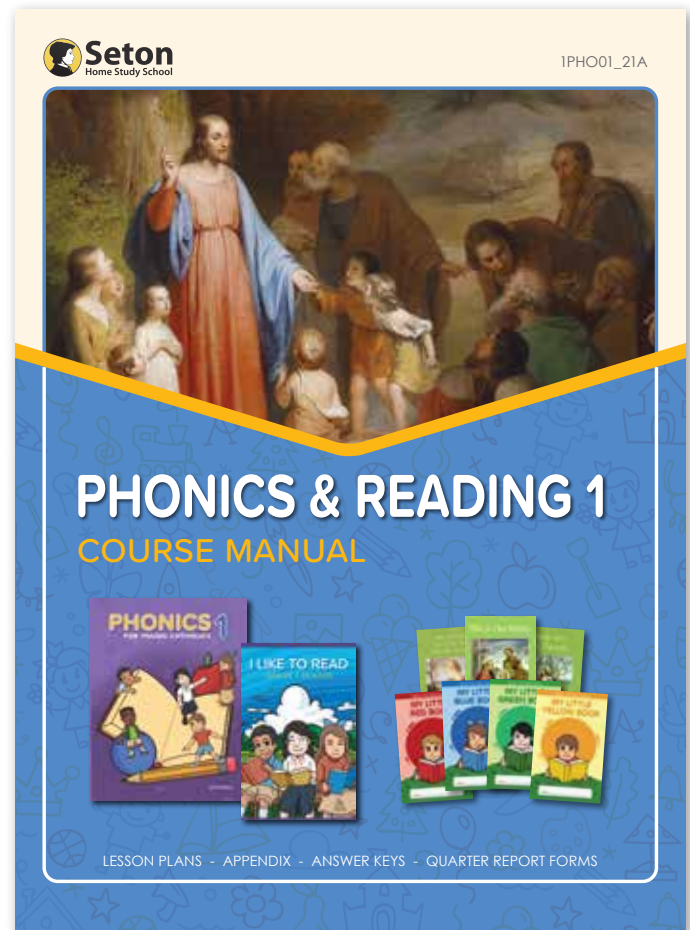
If you have had a student using our new Kindergarten or First Grade Phonics/Reading program or enrolled in high school in the past two years, you might have already seen some examples of individual colorized lesson plans.

This year, we have also upgraded about half of our elementary lesson plans. By the summer of 2023, we expect to have all courses completed.

This year, applying this format throughout elementary and junior high has been a huge focus for our curriculum development and Visual Arts Departments. However, Rome wasn't built in a day. While every grade level has at least one course with the new format, all elementary is a mix of newly colorized and original black and white lesson plans.

BEAUTY

The Catholic philosophical tradition has always held that beauty is something good in itself. As the Book of Wisdom says, "For from the greatness and beauty of created things come a corresponding perception of their Creator" (Wis 13:5).



Traditional Catholic artwork has been a hallmark of Seton's books since we started printing in color. Exposure to beauty is important for our students, but it is also important for our parents, and that is why we have extended this philosophy to our lesson plans.

You can expect to see sacred art on all of the individual lesson plan covers and inside most lesson plans, along with other images related to the subject matter.

IMPROVED FUNCTIONALITY

The new format is far more than just an attractive appearance. Several new features make lesson plans easier for parents or older students.

First, we now clearly distinguish between tasks/assignments and further explanation or suggested optional activities.

Each specific task now has a box you can check off when it is completed, so you can see at a glance the most important things which need to be done. This separation of core tasks from optional assignments should make a huge difference, especially if you feel overwhelmed or behind.

If a course uses multiple books, each task now shows a small picture of the book corresponding to the assignment.

We have also added color-coding for different kinds of tasks, so if the assignment is to read pages 55-57 in one of your Faith and Freedom Readers, there will be a picture of the reader that contains the selection.

The task will also be color-coded to show it is an assignment that involves reading from a book. Assignments that involve writing will be a different color. The purely optional activities will have their own color as well.

SEPARATION OF SUBJECTS

With the introduction of new art, changes in font sizes, and making sure each distinct task has its own line with a check box, the new formatting increased the page count of some of the larger lesson plans.

Each subject looks like its own little booklet with its sacred art covers. This presented an opportunity to change the way we package our lesson plans.

Instead of coming as two large packets, one having all the daily lesson plans and the other having all the answer keys, tests, and quarter report forms, lesson plans will now come grouped by subject.

For example, English lesson plans, tests, keys, etc., will arrive as a separate piece from the Religion lesson plans, tests, keys, etc.

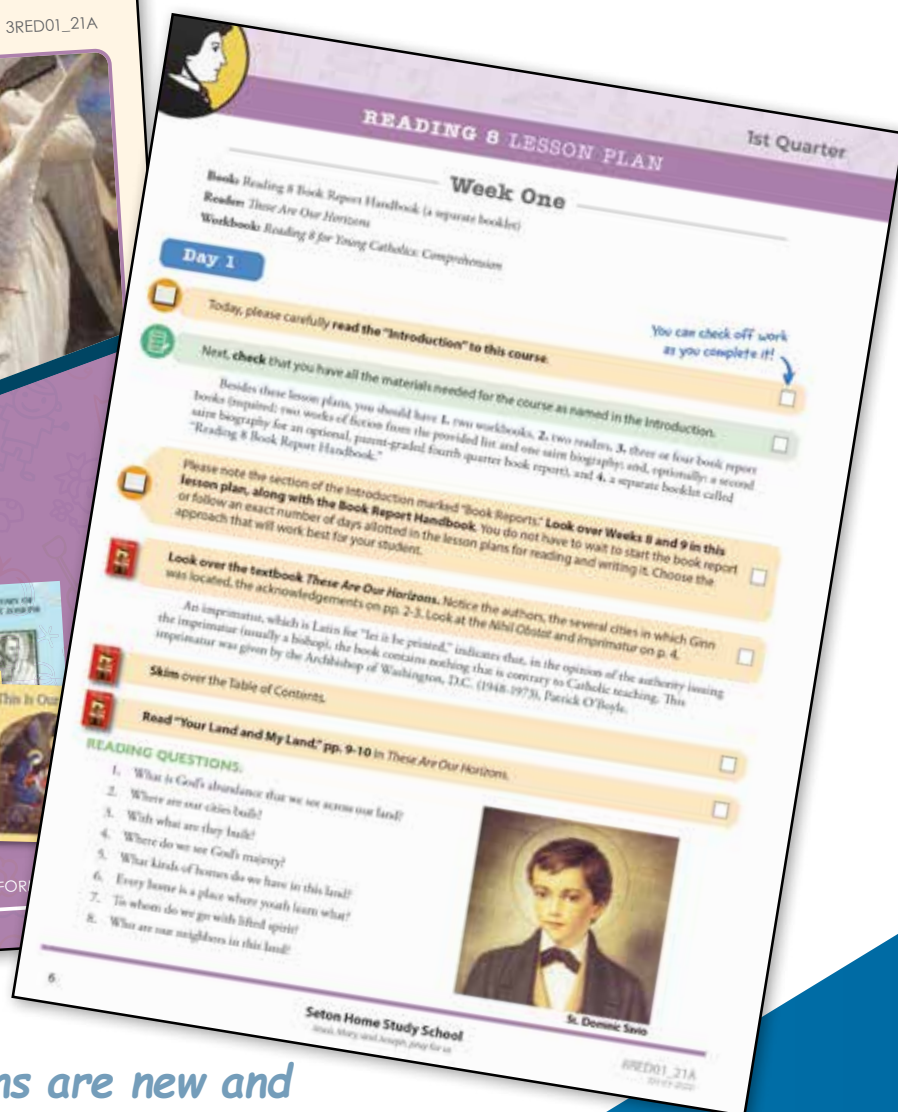
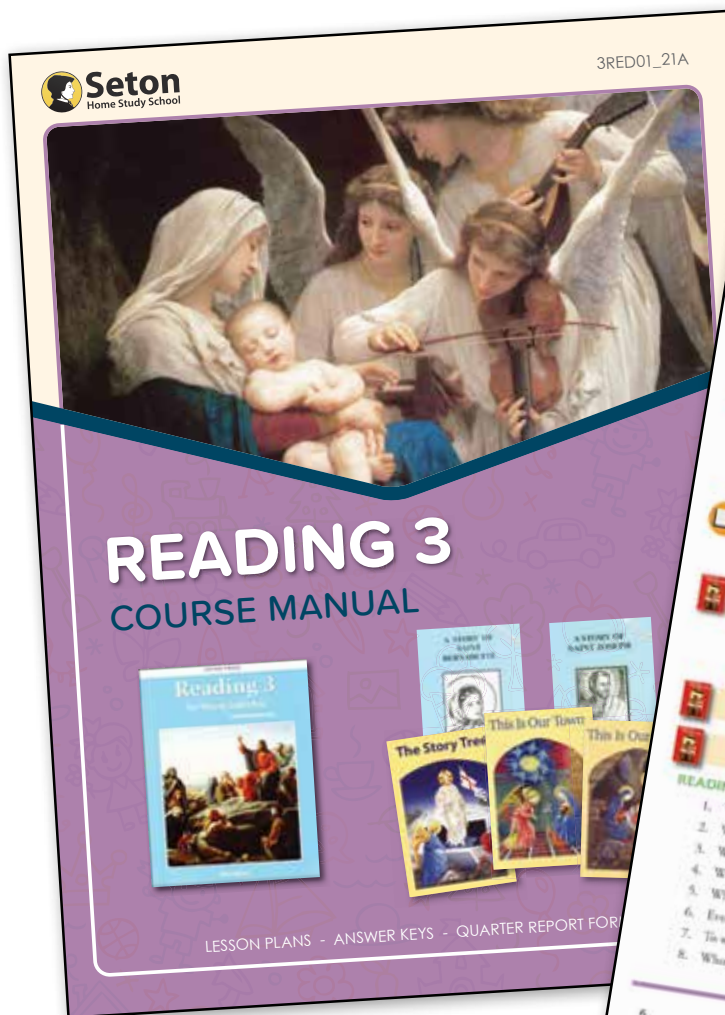
Everything will still be three-hole-punched, so if you have a binder system you like to use, you can continue to use that.

Separating the subjects eliminates a common cause of confusion for many families. Previously, the lesson plans for all of the default courses for a grade level were pre-packaged together. If a student took any courses not part of the default list, we would add the additional individual lesson plan.

So, for example, if you were doing 4th Grade but using the alternate *MCP Math 4* course in place of Seton Math 4, you would get the lesson plans for both.

We can now fully customize which lesson plans we are sending for a student by separating the subjects. We expect that this new system will avoid confusion, especially for new families.

I wanted to especially thank our Visual Arts team (Joe Sparks, Emily Prause, Kristen Ehiem, and Felicity Egan) and the Curriculum Development team (John Adams and Thomas Centrella), who saw this project through from conception to launch.



“These lesson plans are new and updated and in full color! Great religious art!”

Information on the 2022 Curriculum Updates

While the changes to lesson plan formats have been a major focus for our Curriculum Development team, several new books and courses are coming out as of the beginning of June as well. These changes affect a few grade levels, with 2nd Grade having the most updates. The following is a comprehensive list of all of the significant changes you might want to be aware of.

First Grade

A new *Geography Skills 1 for Young Catholics* book is part of the History 1 course, replacing the Scholastic Map Skills for Today series.

Second Grade

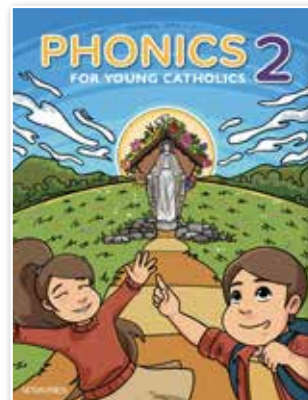
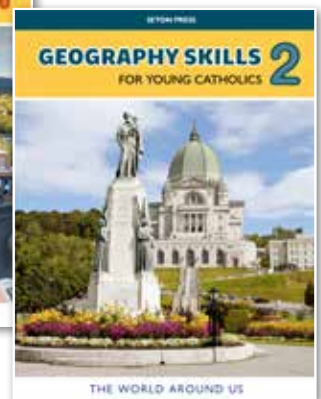
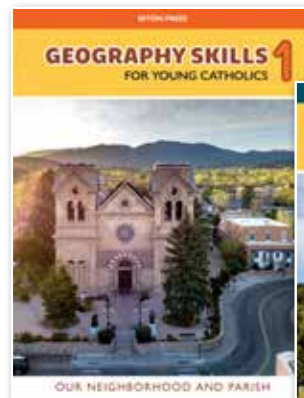
Phonics 2 for Young Catholics (2nd Edition) is the latest release in our new Phonics series, which started two years ago with Phonics K. There is a completely new Phonics 2 workbook, but the course also has an entire game component. The board is durable material like a mouse pad and includes flashcards and plastic game pieces to move around the board.

Spelling 2 for Young Catholics (2nd Edition) is an entirely new book made to align with the new Phonics book.

History 2 is getting a new *Geography Skills 2 for Young Catholics* book.

Third Grade

There is a new *Health 3 for Young Catholics* coming out this year. It will be added to our Science 3 course and will become the basis for the 4th Quarter of that course, with the main text being completed in the first three quarters.





HIGH SCHOOL

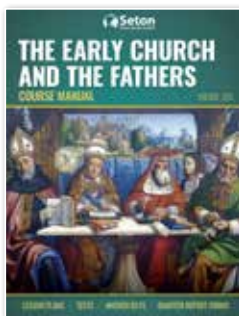
Early Church and the Fathers

This is an entirely new high school Theology course. It is ½ credit and is a default course in 11th Grade along with the Moral Theology course. It takes the place of the Fr. Laux Mass and the Sacraments course default, but the Fr. Laux course is still available as an option.

The Early Church and the Fathers course is a mix of history and theology as it covers the history of the early Church. It also looks at the Church Fathers in depth and explores the theological themes of their writings which, in turn, are the basis for much of our understanding of Sacred Tradition. I have been working on this course for a couple of years as project manager and editor with Frances Spear, the primary course author. (She did our popular Understanding the Scriptures course.)

While some sacramental theology is covered in the Fathers, we felt this course was more important than another course on the sacraments as the sacraments were already covered in extreme detail in the Catholic Doctrine course most students take in 9th Grade.

As with other aligned courses, Early Church and the Fathers could be done without the online materials, but the online course enhances it. That is especially true for this course because of the podcast lectures. The course text is an existing book by author Mike Aquilina, who also made a podcast covering most of the Fathers, and we have those podcast episodes present in the course.



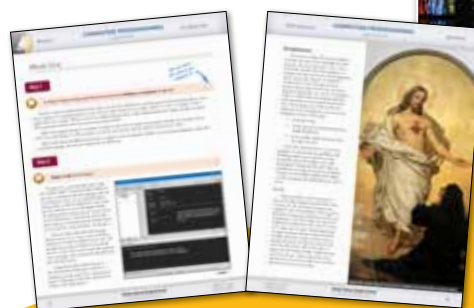
Renaming English Courses

There are no significant content changes to English 10, 11, and 12, but those courses are renamed Literature and Composition II (English 9 had already been renamed Literature and Composition last year), Literary Interpretation, and British Literature, respectively.



Computer Programming

The course has been entirely changed. We shifted the programming language we teach from the outdated Visual Basic to the more common Python.



Planning for Success



Let me tell you the deep, dark secret of successful homeschools.

Careful planning.

I know, it's not fancy or stylish. We can't order it from Amazon and click our troubles away. We must do everything to have a successful homeschool (or anything really). We must be disciplined and careful in approaching our days, and only prudent, prayerful planning can help with that.

"Where there is order, there is harmony; where there is harmony, everything happens in due time; where everything happens in due time, there will be benefit." - St. Irenaeus of Lyon.

**We must be
disciplined and careful
in approaching our days.**

I am, by nature, a planner. I like a schedule and organization. To achieve my goals, I must have a plan broken down into annual, monthly, weekly, and daily objectives, and I must follow the plan to get anything done.

I must plan my homeschool, housework, family activities, work obligations, and spiritual life for my days to be ordered correctly. That doesn't mean I am a slave to a schedule, quite the opposite.

Because I build in some "white space," don't plan too far in advance, and keep things flexible, having a daily plan provides a lot of freedom because what needs to get done gets done quickly.

How to Plan

I use a Catholic planner because many of our activities revolve around our parish (choir, altar serving, cantors, committees, etc.). I try to create a liturgically aware atmosphere in our homeschool, so having all the feasts and seasons noted in the planner is a time saver for me.

I've used secular planners that I have thought useful and pretty, but I have found that my Catholic planner works best for the life I lead. I've used *The Catholic Daily Planner* (www.catholicdailyplanner.com) for about fifteen years now, and it is where I note down everything I need to remember for our family. The roomy boxes help enormously.

Another priority is to have a space to sit down and consider all the planning needed. We are blessed to have a home office now, so I have a desk, but for many years a corner of the couch and a basket filled with planners, calendars, and pens was my space.

**That doesn't mean I am
a slave to a schedule,
quite the opposite.**

Sometimes, my space was an hour at the library to have peace and quiet. Whatever works for your life now, give yourself the gift of space and time to be thoughtful. There will be many fruits of this type of planning time.

I begin every month by writing all the fixed things in my planner: karate, music lessons, scout meetings and activities, youth group, choir, and Mass obligations.

On the daily pages, I add in work deadlines, phone calls to make, emails to send, student assignments to keep track of, household chores, errands to run, library deadlines, doctor appointments, etc. Writing this down doesn't automatically make it happen. I must look at the book a few times a day. Sometimes I set alerts on my phone or Alexa to make sure I get to something on time as a backup plan.



My youngest daughter is the keeper of our online family calendar. She inputs all the information from my planner in addition to her siblings' travel schedules and plans for houseguests. We all get alerts for those things.

Homeschool Goals

For school planning, I make use of all of Seton's resources. I like to know the end goals of each grade level for each of my students. It helps to keep me on track.



Fortunately, Seton helps us by posting a scope and sequence for each grade level you enroll in on our My Seton page. Go to your page and click on the grey tab that says "Resources."

Scroll down that page to the title, Course Resources, and click on that. At the top of that page, there should be a Curriculum Guide (it will say Curriculum Guide for Grade ____). Click on that for a PDF of the Scope and Sequence for each of the subjects in this grade. The Scope and Sequence is an overview of everything covered in the course and helps create a vision for your student.

**For school planning,
I make use of all of
Seton's resources.**

Now divide your year into quarters by picking a starting date and counting nine weeks. That's your first quarter, count nine more weeks for your second quarter, and so on.

While this schedule is the more traditional school year, it is not the only way to plan your year. Many families prefer to do a six-week on and one week off schedule all year long with longer breaks for holidays.

However you choose to schedule is entirely up to you, and we encourage families to plan the year that best suits their needs. Military families who move often or are subject to a deployed parent have different needs, and the schedule should reflect that.

Our families living outside the United States may wish to schedule things differently based upon cultural or local considerations. We encourage all of that.

Plan for the Unexpected

When it's time to write out the assignments in the lesson plans, I use a pencil, and I only plan three weeks at a time. This method, I found out the hard way, makes it very easy to adjust when life happens, as life does.

Stomach bugs, house guests, leaky roofs, sick relatives, and new babies all require adjustment to the plan. Mentally prepare for these situations and maybe even schedule a few extra days every quarter just in case.

Once the children are in high school, they use their Seton High School planners to keep track of assignments and have a place to write down social activities, lists, and notes about the day.

We have become a society that keeps track of everything electronically, and that's fine while it works, but one broken phone is all it takes to create chaos in your life. I am always encouraging my children to use the physical act of writing both in their learning (taking prodigious notes when studying) and in scheduling. It cements the knowledge in your brain more effectively.

Thoughtful people write down their thoughts. It's something I have always believed to be true.

Summertime is the perfect time for a busy homeschool mom to prayerfully begin the habit of thoughtful planning for her children's education, the running of her home, and, yes, time to rest and recharge.

Once the plan is out of your head and on the page, you will be pleased with how ordered and happy your homeschooled days will be.



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*.



Ask the Experts: _____

What's your best tip to balance your school, activity, and church commitment schedule?

Three Veteran Homeschooling Moms Share Their Experience

Balancing Your Schedule...



The best way to balance your homeschooling lessons, extra-curricular activities, and church commitments is to prioritize.

Knowing your overall priority and your immediate priority gives you the power and freedom to choose where your time and energy need to be focused each day.

For example, on Monday, you may have the option to attend a field trip to the science museum, but doing so would require you to skip homeschool bookwork for the day.

Additionally, you would have to find a substitute for your committed Monday hour in adoration.

Since you know that your overall priority is to raise your children in the faith, you might place the commitment to adoration at the top of your priority list, followed by schoolwork.

However, when you weigh that overall priority and your immediate priority, you may decide that you can easily swap your adoration hour this week with another adorer, and you can afford to take a day off from bookwork. So, you can confidently choose to make the field trip a priority that day.

“Homeschoolers are blessed with many opportunities...”

Of course, when you were weighing your priorities for the day, you might have come to a different conclusion. You may have remembered that there wasn't a substitute available to cover your adoration hour or if your children have a research paper or project due Tuesday.

Homeschoolers are blessed with many opportunities for learning, service, worship, and recreation. Understanding how to prioritize those opportunities brings the right balance into the home and the heart.

Tara Brelinsky, North Carolina

Service Outside the Home...



Put the big rocks in first! Imagine you have a vase and a large assortment of rocks you must fit in, of various shapes and sizes, colors and textures.

The vase is your life. The rocks are all the demands on your time and the commitments you've made: spouse, school, kids, God, baseball, scouts, volunteer time; everything has a rock.

If you fill your jar with the small and medium-size rocks first, then try to shove the big ones in at the end, it won't work. I have five "big rocks."

The first is God. Sundays as God's day with Mass and family time is a non-negotiable. Daily Scripture and rosary, prayer time with my husband and kids follow. Next is my marriage. Communication, date nights, little daily "check-ins."

The third rock is my kids and their school. We need to be home and well-rested to do schoolwork well. Therefore, school comes before any outside activity. Otherwise, my rocks won't fit. The fourth rock is me. I need to prioritize taking care of myself, or I can't do anything. I already mentioned prayer. I also do daily exercise, love to read, and am trying to learn the art of hand lettering.

“Giving back to God is important to me.”

The fifth rock is stewardship. I require service hours for my children. Giving back to God is important to me. After those five big ones, the medium and small rocks fit in easily.

If they don't, reprioritize. Cut back on dance lessons or field trips. If we make time for the "big stuff," the small stuff has a way of taking care of itself.

Kristin Brown, Virginia

Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God...



The best tip I have for balancing homeschooling, activities, and church commitments is two tips.

First, according to Scripture, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

We need to focus on God and trust that our lives will give glory to Him. So, everything we do (hopefully) is centered on Him.

The second tip is self-discipline. We must be able to recognize the difference between want and need and follow through with that discernment.

“Say no to too much busyness for our family.”

This self-discipline for me is to wake up earlier than everyone else, get a lot of the background work done to prepare for the day, stick to a daily schedule, and say no to too much busyness for our family.

Susan Brock, Virginia



“CONNECT WITH SETON FAMILIES”

Want to Meet Seton Families in Your Area?

Click This Ad on Your MySeton Page.

3,000 Families Have Joined!

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



“

I graduated from Seton and I knew it would give both of my kids a well-rounded Catholic education.

I love the individualized curriculum, that lesson plans can be adjusted to the student, and that the counselors are always willing to answer questions and provide help when needed.

- The Humphery Family, Barksdale AFB, LA

”



Seton Student Achievements

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY




Wyatt Earns His Junior Naturalist Badge

Seton's curriculum enhances Wyatt's appreciation for our natural wonders. It's a good fit because he is fascinated with nature and how the world "works!"



Reserve Champion at 1st Horse Show to Lyra

Lyra loves riding and is inspired by the other riders. She helps younger riders by being encouraging and helpful.

A photograph of three young people standing in front of a church altar. In the center is a young man, Peter Young, wearing a white clerical shirt with a red collar. He is flanked by two young women, both smiling. The altar behind them is decorated with white flowers, red poinsettias, and several lit candles in gold holders.

Seton's Peter Young Wins Christendom's Padre Pio Scholarship

This year, Christendom College awarded three full-tuition scholarships to academically excellent students judged on their performance in an on-campus interview and essay contest.

BY PETER YOUNG

Because of Seton's strong writing courses, I had the skills and confidence to write an essay while participating in Christendom's Padre Pio Full-Tuition Scholarship Competition this past April. In the first part of the competition, we had fifty minutes to write an essay in response to a prompt based on a text they had sent in advance.

During the first half, I crafted an outline and fleshed out some ideas before writing, which felt natural after Seton's strong emphasis on the importance of an outline throughout the years.

When I finished, I knew that I had written a complete, organized, well thought-out essay that addressed the prompt. While the essay was just one component of the competition, it no doubt played a key part in my winning one of the three full-tuition scholarships.

Seton has profoundly impacted my life as a Catholic and as a student. Throughout the thirteen years of my intellectual formation through Seton, I have received a unique, rigorous, and thoroughly Catholic education for which I am very grateful.

In particular, the solid theology courses and the Catholic culture of the curriculum have helped me strengthen and appreciate my Catholic Faith. I have also learned how to appreciate good literature, read and think analytically, and write well-organized and thoughtful essays through Seton.

I have also benefitted from being a part of the Catholic Harbor community. Since it opened over four years ago, I have enjoyed conversing with fellow students from all over the world and have developed a love of debate.

I have also had the opportunity to serve in leadership positions on Catholic Harbor as the first Seton Chess Club President and as one of the student moderators of the site.



Photo Courtesy of Christendom College

I am very much looking forward to attending Christendom this fall. While at Christendom, I will dive deeper into History, English, and Theology while learning new disciplines such as Philosophy and Political Science.

I hope to deepen the reading, writing, and thinking skills that I built up over the years as a Seton student. I also look forward to participating in campus activities, such as debates, swing dances, and spiritual life activities.



Peter Young is from northern Virginia, the youngest of three children, and has homeschooled with Seton since Kindergarten. A National Merit Commended student, Peter was chosen to be one of the two student speakers at Seton's 2022 graduation.

The Wonderful Gifts of Homeschooling



After her phone interview for this issue's "Featured Family," Katelyn Lara followed up with an email containing these comments:

"As I reflected on our conversation, I thought of one more thing I'd like to add if possible. I think it's kind of funny.

"We go to the library often, and when we leave, we walk out with 30-40 books. We like to go in the mornings, but then, once we get back home, the kids rarely finish up their school work for the day. That's because they are all so engrossed in their new books! There will be books all over the dining room table, coffee table, and sofa. I tease them that they need to stop reading and get back to their studies. But in all honesty, I love the sight. Seton allows them to have flexible schedules and take days off for their love of reading. I know they would not have that gift if they were in a traditional school. It's beautiful to see them reading for pleasure and learning about something that interests them."

In this one paragraph, Katelyn gathers together so many of the wonderful gifts of homeschooling. The children are "engrossed" in their books, the books themselves scattered across the furniture, and the flexible schedule of homeschooling, which allows for such reading days: all of us can easily understand why Katelyn writes, "I just love the sight."

And so do the rest of us.

Let's meet the Lara family.

A Long-Time Seton Family

Katelyn, her husband Michael, and their four children—David, grade 9; Julia, grade 5; Dalis, grade 3; and Brandon, who is in kindergarten—currently live in San Diego. Michael, who has served 13 years in the U.S. Navy, is enrolled in IDC school there, training as an Independent Duty Corpsman.

The Navy has moved the family several times and Michael once served a stint aboard ship in Rota, Italy, for 11 months without Katelyn and the children. Michael and Katelyn grew up in El Paso, Texas. During Michael's extended absences, Katelyn and the children have frequently returned to El Paso, where her parents still reside.

Michael and Katelyn met when they were young and working in a restaurant in that city. Katelyn graduated with a degree in multidisciplinary studies from the University of Texas-El Paso. After deciding that "the best way to take care of us was by joining the service, Michael eventually joined the Navy."

Though she had little familiarity with homeschooling, as the time approached for David's formal education, Katelyn began exploring her options.

By then, the Lara family was living in Maryland. From Texas, Katelyn's mom put her in touch with a homeschooling family Katelyn had known in El Paso. That contact encouraged her to try Seton to see if it worked, and Michael and Katelyn did so,

vowing to reevaluate their decision every semester. One semester led to another with Seton, and today both Mom and Dad remain highly enthusiastic about homeschooling in general and Seton in particular.

Benefits & Family Life

When asked what she found valuable in Seton, Katelyn ran through a list of reasons for sticking with the program: its materials, the tracking of grades and transcripts, the lesson plans—"I couldn't do without those"—and the emphasis on the Catholic faith. "My dad is a deacon, ordained last year, and whenever we call him with some question regarding Seton's religious instruction, he's always impressed with the material."

As with many families in military service, the Lara family also appreciates the continuity homeschooling allows in their studies and curriculum. Katelyn and the children can use the same materials and follow their accustomed schedule wherever Michael is assigned.



A typical homeschooling day means getting up and eating breakfast around 7:30. Katelyn and the children may then watch some news of the day, listen to a talk by Bishop Robert Barron or Father Mike Schmitz discussing the Bible, or pray the rosary. Then they begin the school day, with David at a desk, Julia on the sofa, Dalis at the kitchen table, and Brandon at his mother's side.

The children are also involved in activities outside the home. David plays ultimate Frisbee and flag football; Julia participates in soccer and art classes; Dalis enjoys her baseball team; Brandon is on the soccer field like Julia.

The family are parishioners at San Diego's historic Mission Basilica, California's first mission church.

Challenges & Satisfaction

Though Katelyn sometimes doubts their decision to homeschool—"Are we spending enough time on academics?"—she receives encouragement from her husband and prayer. "Michael is so proud of how the children work independently," she says. "He's very pro-homeschooling." Of prayer, she remarks, "It helps me through my frustrating moments. I pray, and everything feels right again."



What makes all this effort so worthwhile are the children and their studies. "I love to see David work through problems on his own," Katelyn says, "to have the maturity to complete the work by himself. And of course, for my younger kids, I love seeing that ah-ha moment when they grasp a concept."

Near the end of the conversation, Katelyn says of those interested in home education, "People used to ask me, 'How do you do it?' Now many of them say, 'I want to do that.' If you're considering homeschooling, pray about it and see if it works for you and your family."

The Fruits of Their Labor

That it works for the Lara family is apparent. "Our life is very simple," Katelyn says. "We love spending time together, and by moving so often, we've developed a close bond."

Homeschooling is a big part of that bond. As for those trips to the library, a last word: Dr. Seuss once wrote, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

Thanks to the devotion of Mom and Dad, the Lara kids are off and running to the places they'll go.





Nurturing a Vocation in the Home

My parents' decision to homeschool us was about much more than an education. It was about my parents providing us with a culture and an environment of faith and prayer, a school of discipleship in Christ.

The lives of the saints and the teachings of the Church were part of everyday conversations at home, and somehow my parents accomplished it all without being preachy or making it feel forced. The fabric of the Faith was woven into the life and activities of the family.

Pictures and icons of Our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and the saints still hang throughout my family's home, something most first-time visitors remark upon when they walk around the house.

When I was growing up, my parents always encouraged questions, especially about the life of faith. It was a priority for them that each of us understood and appreciated the Church's union of faith and reason: "the two wings by which we fly to heaven," as Pope St. John Paul II once put it.

This attitude of intellectual curiosity, coupled with a strong emphasis on prayer, made it natural to take seriously the life and words of Christ passed down to us in Scripture and Tradition.

PREPARING THE SOIL

We were homeschooled in an environment open to a vocation. Mom had taken time to discern religious life when she was in college, and her brother, my uncle Father Stephen, was ordained a priest when I was ten years old.

My family's life and the examples I received gave God acres of room to work within my heart. He was free to cultivate the desires He had given me from the beginning of my life.

All this is not to say that life at home was perfect or always ideal. Every family is a family of sinners in need of the Divine Mercy of God and the forgiveness of one another. There were times when the *Baltimore Catechism* became the enemy of my waking mind (I know why God made me! Why are you asking me again, mom?!) and the alarm to wake up for daily Mass was worthy of nothing but detestation.

My mom was a good teacher, but sometimes we did not finish the school year because every twenty months or so, she was sacrificing her body and energy to bring another life into the world. Schooling in all the subjects which make up the curriculum was important but not prioritized over the family's sanity or life of faith.

The beauty and power of homeschooling are not found in the education itself. Rather, it is in placing the intellectual development of each child at the service of a deeper truth. The intellectual formation which parents cultivate in their children is at the service of formation in character, formation in prayer, and ultimately formation of disciples of Christ.

At the heart of my parents' heroic decision to homeschool their children was the conviction that an education is worthless when detached from the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Many parents, even good Catholic parents, are worried their children might be called to the priesthood or religious life. They want them to experience the thrill of being in love, the joys of marriage, the gift of children, and the reward of owning the land you raise your family on.

These things are so good that it is easy to understand why mothers and fathers would be saddened that their son or daughter will not experience them. But it is not any parent's job to be the architect of their children's happiness (praise God!). Such a responsibility is far too heavy. God alone can ensure our fulfillment, both in this life and in the next.

Any vocation to the priesthood or religious life grows deep in the heart and is carefully fanned into flame by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does this in His own time and in His own place, always for the good of the one in whom He is working. The role of parents, family, and friends is to encourage, to pray, and always to trust in God's infinite kindness and goodness.

My vocation was received with joy, both by myself and my family, because we trusted that God wanted me to be happy and fulfilled in my service to Him.

Homeschooling allows God and His interests to be the driving force in the education and formation of each child. The information learned and mastered was subordinate to this larger picture, so entering a good university was secondary to living a life of prayer and the Sacraments.

FINDING THE PEARL

On the day of my diaconal ordination, the bishop thanked my parents for their role in cultivating my vocation.

I find I can only do the same, though words hardly suffice: Thank you, mom and dad, thank you for educating me, thank you for laying down your lives for me, thank you for never wavering in your support for my vocation and for teaching me to follow Christ Jesus down all roads and at all costs.

I have found the pearl of great price because my guides were those who heard the word of God and kept it in their hearts.



Andrew Clark is the second of eight children. He was homeschooled before attending Christendom College, where he graduated in 2014 with a B.A. in History. He entered seminary formation for the diocese of Arlington in 2017 and was ordained a transitional deacon on April 23rd of this year. He will be ordained a priest, by the grace of God, on June 3rd 2023.



The Blank Family with Diocese of Arlington Bishop Michael Burbidge at the priestly ordination of eldest child Nicholas '13.

BY CHRISTENDOM STAFF

Homeschool Families Thrive at Christendom

Richard and Monica Blank wanted something different, something better, for their children than what they experienced in their college years. They had chosen to homeschool their nine children with Seton Home Study to ensure they received a solid Catholic foundation.

With an alarming 80% of Catholics leaving the Faith before turning 23 years old, the Blanks wanted to make sure that the college their children attended would meet their family's top goal of helping them continue to learn the Truth and live the Catholic Faith.

"We told our eldest child, Nicholas (and all of our children since), that college should be a place to make good, long-term friendships and grow in your Catholic faith," said Richard. "We

wanted his college experience to be a solid step out into the world in a truly Catholic environment. Christendom clearly exceeded all those requirements."

Christendom College was founded in 1977 in response to the cultural crisis that was taking place in which God was rejected, and truth and morality were called into question and actively opposed.

Christendom's unique mission of forming lay apostles who will transform the culture and "restore all things in Christ," is what draws most students and their families to the campus and keeps them sending child after child after child to the college.

The college provides an authentically and fully immersive 24/7 Catholic culture in which students learn the Truth, live the Faith, and thrive as Catholics.

Although the crisis in our culture and in higher education has only accelerated, Christendom's time-tested Catholic liberal arts education is now even more relevant and essential for students interested in growing their Faith in college.

It's not surprising, therefore, that Christendom has become the natural destination for homeschool families—with more than 60% of the student body coming from home education.

In addition to an unmatched Catholic identity, students receive personalized services, including academic support and hands-on career development assistance to help them succeed academically, spiritually, personally, and professionally and pursue the greatness to which God has called them.



AN AMAZING STATISTIC

In fact, over the last two years, an average of 98% of each graduating class has been employed or in grad school within six months – an amazing feat and statistic in this day and age!

Fast forward to 2022, and five of the nine Blank children have graduated from Christendom, with one more set to graduate next year—making Richard and Monica overjoyed with the results of their children's education.

"All have come out of Christendom more firmly rooted in their faith, with great friends, experiences, and confidence to succeed in life," Richard said. "Christendom provided a true, wholesome college experience where they were able to live and flourish. It allowed our children to play college athletics, participate in theatrical productions, gain valuable leadership experience, develop deep friendships, and actively practice their faith, all while obtaining an excellent education. Their interaction with professors, both in and out of the

(Continued on pg. 34)

CHRISTENDOM ALUMNI OUTCOMES

- **3900:** Total number of alumni
- **93%:** satisfied with their educational experience
- **97%:** agree that Christendom was worth the investment
- **97%:** agree that Christendom had a positive influence on their lives
- **\$44,000:** Average starting salary of new grads
- **97-98%** of Classes of 2019-2021 employed or in grad school within 6 months
- **103** alumni priests, 55+ religious, and many more in seminary
- **530+** alumnus-alumna marriages, with many children
- **Employed** in every field imaginable (no astronauts as of yet)



The Best Week Ever

CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE SUMMER PROGRAM

NEXT SUMMER HAVE FUN IN THE BEAUTIFUL
SHENANDOAH VALLEY OF VIRGINIA WITH
LIKE-MINDED CATHOLICS!

The most popular, well-attended, and highly ranked pre-college summer program of its kind, the Best Week Ever, gives rising high school seniors an immersion into the academic, cultural, and spiritual life at Christendom College. Summer 2023 will mark the 25th year of this wildly popular program, which boasts more than 4,000 alumni since 1999. Each summer, hundreds of participants leave Christendom's lovely 200-acre campus with a new appreciation for the liberal arts, Catholic culture, true friendship, and the beauty of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

During the week, participants attend a variety of liberal arts classes, go to daily Mass and adoration, enjoy many recreational and social events—including canoeing on the Shenandoah River, hiking on Skyline Drive, dancing, participating in a parliamentary-style debate, and attending an Irish barn dance and sing-along.



“It truly WAS the best week, and I’ve never enjoyed myself more with a group of teenagers like I have at the program. Several things especially made it the best, which include but are not limited to the frequent availability of the Sacraments, the engaging teachers, the great counselors that are amazing role models and friends, and the fact that it’s a place where being a Catholic is not only respected—but fun. The Best Week Ever instilled in me the inspiration to truly ‘dare to be great’—to learn and study and grow in our friendships so that we may bring more to the Catholic Faith.”

—Tess Brons, Seton graduate and 2021 Best Week Ever participant



Mark your calendar! The online application for the 2023 Best Week Ever opens in January 2023. Seton students receive 50% OFF when using the promo code SETON50 when applying by February 15. Attendance is competitive, and with a waiting list each year, interested students should not delay!

www.thebestweekever.com



STAFF SERIES

A chat with those who serve you!

Heather Hibl - Elementary Counselor

"I've been involved with Seton homeschooling most of my life," says Heather Hibl, a homeschooling mom and now a part-time Elementary School Counselor at Seton.

Heather grew up spending half the year in Indiana and half in Massachusetts, where her parents, both artists, sold their work.

Her association with Seton began in the 7th grade when her parents enrolled her in the program. For the rest of her secondary education, Heather remained a Seton student.



She met her future husband, Andy, at Christendom College. They married in 1999, and Andy has worked at Seton for more than 20 years. As the mother of five girls and three boys, Heather has homeschooled her children for 18 years using the Seton curriculum. Her oldest three—Joseph, 21, Halina, 20, and Gretel, 19—are all graduates of Seton. Still enrolled are high schoolers Anna, 17, Nate, 16, and Mara, 14, followed by Drew, 12, and Paula, 10.

Heather joined the Seton staff when the pandemic brought thousands more families into the program. In counseling the moms who call for help with their children, she can often say to them, "I'm right there with you" because of her own homeschooling experiences. "Many moms feel like they're juggling so many things," she says, "which I can relate to."

Her many years of using Seton materials also add to her counseling expertise. Heather chuckles when she mentions that some of the people who used to grade her papers when she was a Seton student are still working here.

The Best of Both Worlds

She cites some of the advantages brought by her 12 hours a week of employment, such as working with a wonderful staff, living only five minutes away, and earning extra money for the family while being able to continue homeschooling her children.

Heather enjoys gardening, homemaking, and renovating their house in her spare time. This spring, she and the children living at home began a beekeeping operation. Heather enjoys reading history and writing historical fiction. In 2021, her historical novel, *Attercoppe Hall*, about the famous Bayeux Tapestry was published.

The family attends St. John the Baptist Church here in Front Royal, where several of the children just finished performing in the play, *Our Miss Brooks*.

Given her intimacy with the Seton resources and programs, her long and ongoing experience as a homeschooling mom, and her vibrant enthusiasm, Heather Hibl is a valuable member of the Seton team.



Impossible Odds: Why We Should Never Ever Give up

BY JEFF MINICK

June 3, 1781

On this night, one lone Virginian was on a mission.

On this same night, the daring but infamous British Colonel Banastre Tarleton and 200 dragoons were riding toward Charlottesville.

He, too, had a mission: to capture the state's governor, Thomas Jefferson, and the members of the legislature who had gathered in Charlottesville to escape the troops of General Cornwallis. Having driven his dragoons at a hard pace, Tarleton and his men paused to rest and refresh themselves near Louisa County Courthouse.

But Jack Jouett rode through the night.

By early morning, he had put forty miles behind him and was pounding on the door of Jefferson's home, Monticello. Having alerted the governor to the danger, and after drinking a glass of Madeira offered him by Jefferson, Jouett remounted his horse and rode to nearby Charlottesville, where his warnings saved most of the legislators from capture. Interestingly, among the handful apprehended by Tarleton later that day was American trailblazer Daniel Boone.

Jefferson himself barely escaped the British. Today, one wonders what he thought as he left Monticello just ahead of the approaching enemy cavalry. Would the British troops burn his estate to the ground?

Tough times, yes, but the Americans won the Revolution.

Murder Makes a Martyr

November 23, 1927

The 36-year-old priest stood erect after kneeling and saying his prayers. He refused a blindfold and, holding a rosary in one hand, and a crucifix in the other, squarely faced the firing squad assigned to shoot him and forgave them. As they lifted their rifles to fire, he spread his arms and cried, "Viva Christo Rey!" meaning "Long live Christ the King!" When the volley failed to kill him, a soldier approached the wounded priest and delivered the coup de grace.

The tyrannical Mexican government falsely accused Father Miguel Pro of participating in an assassination attempt. President Calles ordered him executed without trial. This same government had driven large parts of the Mexican Church underground and severely restricted all its functions, yet brave priests like Father Pro helped inspire the people and kept the faith alive.

And that faith remains very much alive today.

Standing in the Gap

February 22, 1943

A 21-year-old, scarcely more than a girl, her brother Hans, and their friend and father of three, Christoph Probst, were accused of treason for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets at the University of Munich and other nearby places. A kangaroo court ordered their execution by guillotine. Before the blade ended her life, Sophie Scholl is reputed to have said either "The sun still shines" or "God, my refuge into eternity."

Heavily influenced by Catholic friends and by writers like Cardinal John Henry Newman, Sophie Scholl and others, most of them students or artists, had founded the White Rose to resist Nazi totalitarianism. Sophie and Hans were raised as devout Lutherans but were drawn to Catholicism before their deaths. Christoph Probst was baptized as a Catholic minutes before his execution.

Evil times once again, but the thousand-year Reich predicted by the Nazis ended in destruction after only twelve years.

Examples to Emulate

All three of these heroes shared two character traits: they displayed courage in the face of adversity, and they opposed tyranny.

And now seems like the time to remember them and the untold thousands of others who have stood fast for the good, the true, and the beautiful.

In many countries around the globe, Seton families feel besieged by attacks on their faith and homeschooling and by what Pope John Paul II called “a culture of death.”

Totalitarian governments typically treat their people as no more significant than blades of grass, but now even our democracies view citizens as digits rather than souls.

All too often, these elected officials and bureaucrats treat us like statistics and numbers rather than as men, women, and children with hopes and dreams. Even worse, these earthly elites presume to know what’s best for us.

How do we take a stand for our faith and our freedom in such an age?

Living the Faith, Loving Our Families

Here are just a few suggestions:

1. Embrace the faith as Christ embraced his cross. Shortly after I joined the Church at age 40, someone said, “It’s not easy being Catholic.” I agree, but it’s even more challenging in an era when Christianity itself is under attack. We must look to the saints and the heroes of old for strength and inspiration.
2. Make your family a headquarters of hope. Totalitarian governments of all stripes despise the family because they know it supersedes the needs and demands of the state. The old axiom “An Englishman’s home is his castle” should apply to every home around the globe.
3. Parents serve many purposes in their children’s development, but surely one reason ranks at the top. Years ago, I interviewed a homeschool mom for our diocesan paper. When I asked why she was homeschooling, she answered without hesitation, “To help my children get into heaven.”
4. Remember, your soul belongs to God, not to a government or a political ideology.

Cynic, satirist, and at best an agnostic, American journalist Ambrose Bierce once wrote, “Christians and camels receive their burdens kneeling.” Bierce probably intended this comment sarcastically, but we Catholics should take it to heart. We do indeed receive our burdens kneeling.

I would go a step farther and declare that Christians and camels resemble each other in another way. Both dromedaries and Catholics possess the equipment for making their way across a desert.

When God lives in our hearts, when Mary and all the saints stand by our side, and when we avail ourselves of the sacraments bestowed on us by Christ, we can traverse any political and cultural wasteland, be it as vast as the Sahara.



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 works in Front Royal, VA.





Last Day Of School!

A+



*We are so proud
of you, Seton
students, grads,
and parents as you
finish your school
year! Well Done!*

—Your Seton Staff



From the Jacob Family



From the Perez Family



From the Broussard Family



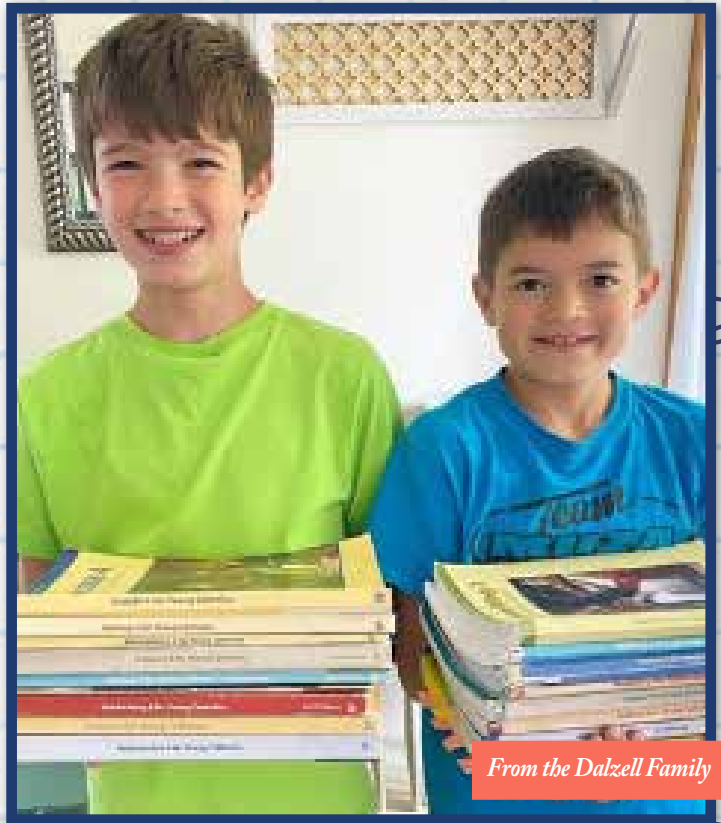
From the Murphy Family

1+1=2

222



From the Dawson Family



From the Dalzell Family



From the Whilden Family

'Tis A Gift to Be Simple Making This Summer the Best Ever!



BY JEFF MINICK

That headline will surely leave some readers shaking their heads and muttering, “Who is this Minick character? He’s either a deluded optimist living in la-la land or a complete fool.”

Innocent on both counts.

Yes, this summer looks as tough as some of the cheaper beef at my local grocery store. Skyrocketing food prices. Record high gas prices at the pump. Infant formula gone the way of the stegosaurus. Possible stagflation.

Not to mention the war in Ukraine, the high murder rate in our cities, the dismal online headlines that greet us every morning, and the possibility of more riots in our streets over *Roe v. Wade*.

Not a pretty picture, I admit.

So, what are we going to do?

We can give way to complaints and despair and spend July and August bemoaning our circumstances. Or we can take the lemons we’ve been given—expensive as they are—add some water and sweetener, and whip up that delectable summertime concoction, lemonade.

In other words, we can accept some givens of life in 2022 and seek out love and delight in spite of those circumstances.

Activities

Whatever the plans for the hothouse months, Mom, Dad, and the kids should join together as one and focus on a single goal in their activities: joy. Saint John Paul II once said, “God made us for joy. God made us for joy, and the joy of living reflects the original joy that God felt in creating us.”

*...the joy of living reflects
the original joy that
God felt in creating us.*

To find that joy, we don’t need to travel across the country, vacation in the forests of Maine, or sit on the beach at North Carolina’s Emerald Isle. No, we can find delights right in our backyard.

Recently, I talked by phone with Katelyn Lara, the Seton homeschool mom in this issue's "Featured Family." She and her family recently moved to San Diego, and, as we spoke, she mentioned that she, the children, and occasionally friends had spent some time together exploring that city: the zoo, Old Town, and the mission church where they now go to Mass.

Here in Front Royal, Virginia, where I live, when my grandkids visit this summer, I hope to take them hiking on the Skyline Drive to travel by canoe on a day trip down the Shenandoah River, and to tour several nearby Civil War battlefields.

The gas required for these trips is minimal, and the pleasure great.

At Home

We can also find summertime joys in our homes, yards, and neighborhoods. We can, for example, make this a season of board games, badminton, after supper strolls, and family read-alouds.

Whether it's a game of cards in the den—my grandkids love to play Spoons with their unofficial godfather Uncle John—building a fort in the woods, or climbing a tree in the front yard, our young people can discover pleasure and freedom in the simple things.

We might also invite friends and their children into our homes for a weekly evening of feast and festivity.

It's a perfect time for a game of charades, to pray together, or to sit on the back deck and share some thoughts and a bottle of wine while watching the kids chase after fireflies. If the budget is tight, we can make these events pot-luck, with the families sharing food and recipes.

It's What's Inside That Counts

However, making this a great summer depends far less on what we do and far more on our attitude. No matter how tough the times, we must strive to keep up our spirits, if for no other reason than the well-being of our children.

Kids these days, even the little ones, are already buffeted by this world's dire and ugly news. Whatever our opinions and attitudes, we should not infect our children with those worries.

Sometimes, when a friend tells me that we're finished as a culture, that there's no hope for America anymore, I rebuff that remark, telling him, "I have 22 grandchildren. I can't afford that sort of pessimism."

And who knows? If we try to keep some modicum of buoyancy, if only for the sake of the kids, we may find that "fake it till we make it" restores the joy of Christ in our own hearts.

Remembering the Good

Our greatest weapon in these interior battles against doubt and despair is gratitude.

Making this a great summer depends far less on what we do and far more on our attitude.

All too often we brood on the things we lack: money for a child's piano lessons, a new dress for our teenage daughter for a dance, or soccer cleats for our sixth-grader. If only we had more money and better opportunities, then all would be well.

Maybe so. But what about the good that already surrounds us?

Every day this summer, let's pause and remember the sweet gifts we already possess. Nearly every morning when I wake, for instance, having poured the first cup of coffee, I thank God for another day of life. I've arrived at that stage of life where each dawn is a blessing.

And if we open our eyes, we can see so many gifts. Our children, our spouse, a good friend or two, the sacraments of our faith, the redeeming love of Christ: that list grows longer and longer simply through contemplation.

Remembering Why We're Here

Seton families will recognize this question and its answer from the *Baltimore Catechism*:

Why did God make you?

God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him for ever in Heaven.

I'm by no means a theologian, but I suspect God also wants us to be happy with Him in this world as well.

This summer, let's aim to grow closer to our God, our faith, our families, and all those we love.

Life doesn't get any better than that.



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.

in the **Schoolroom**

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT



Keep on Track for Peace of Mind

Keeping on track is difficult when everyone is home every day, and the house never seems to get picked up.

It's easy to lose track of who did what for school, and kids are spread all over the house and in and out of the kitchen, looking for snacks all day. Add in a bout of bickering or two, and mom is overwhelmed. At least, that is what often happened to me.

...if I found myself off track, I would look at the clock, see where I was supposed to be, and start there.

My husband, at one point, had enough and asked me to come up with a schedule that made sense for the day. A schedule to help me get all the things done and keep the children busy most of the time.

I'm sharing with you the first schedule I ever made. At the time I was homeschooling five, had two-year-old twins, and was pregnant. It was crazy. This schedule gave me a framework to create a rhythm for our days.

All these things did not happen at their allotted times, but if I found myself off track, I would look at the clock, see where I was supposed to be, and start there. It helped a lot.

That schedule changed many times over the years, and now with only three big kids at home, I haven't any need for such a thing. It's just a table I made in Word (Pages in Mac) and colored it pretty because that's my way. Please take it and make it your own.



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*.

The Essential Cleaning Schedule ✓

The schedule most important to my peace of mind these days is the cleaning schedule. We still have a lot of people living here, and it is essential that everyone be responsible for the upkeep of the house. I cannot do it all by myself, nor should I expect to. I cribbed this from a friend years ago. Again, it's just a table in Word, and I fill it out every week or so, changing the jobs as I see fit.

Having an ordered household helps keep me from being completely overwhelmed, and it teaches the children how to keep a house. They can all cook, clean, and do laundry, essential life skills which, much like cursive handwriting, are not being taught anywhere. Call it Home Ec., and make sure the kids have time to do chores, preferably before their free time. You will all benefit from the experience.

Barrett Family Weekly Cleaning Plan	
Whose Job	Jobs
Mom/Dad	1. Manager (checks that all jobs are to standard)
	2. Pick Up and Vacuum Bedroom Floor (each his/her own)
	3. Strip and Remake Bed (each his/her own)
	3. Pick Up School Books
	4. Pick Up Dining Room
	5. Pick Up Living Room
	6. Wash Lunch Dishes
	7. Clean Kitchen After Dinner/Load Dishwasher/Wash Pots
	8. Wash All Kitchen Counters and Stovetop
	9. Clean Microwave
	10. Wipe Down Fridge, Oven, Dishwasher
	11. Wipe Down Wood Cabinets
	12. Wash Dining Table and Chairs
	13. Scrub Toilets and Wash Bathroom Floors
	14. Clean Upstairs Bathroom Sink, Tub, Mirror and Counters
	15. Clean Downstairs Sink, Tub, Mirror and Counters
	16. Clean Foyer
	17. Dust Living Room and Office
	18. Sweep/Blow off Deck
	19. Water Plants
	20. Sweep and Mop Kitchen/Family Room
	21. Sweep and Mop Dining Room
	24. Sweep Stairs and Vacuum Upstairs Hall
	25. Laundry

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classroom, also helped to form them into critical thinkers that are passionate and faith-based, able to excel at whatever they put their minds toward."

So what are the Blank children up to these days? Richard and Monica will happily tell you that Fr. Nicholas '13 is a Catholic priest serving at St. John the Evangelist in Warrenton, VA (one of 22 Christendom alumni priests serving in the Diocese of Arlington). Klarissa '14 is the director of religious education and youth ministry at St. Rita's Catholic Church in Alexandria, VA, and the religion teacher for 7th and 8th grade in their school.

Peter '16 is a commercial property manager in Manassas, VA, and is married to Bridget (née McMahon) '16, an accounts payable manager. Richard '18 is a firefighter/EMT in Prince William County, VA, and is married to Danielle (née Corcoran) '18 – a full-time mother who cares for their two daughters, Zelig and Frances.

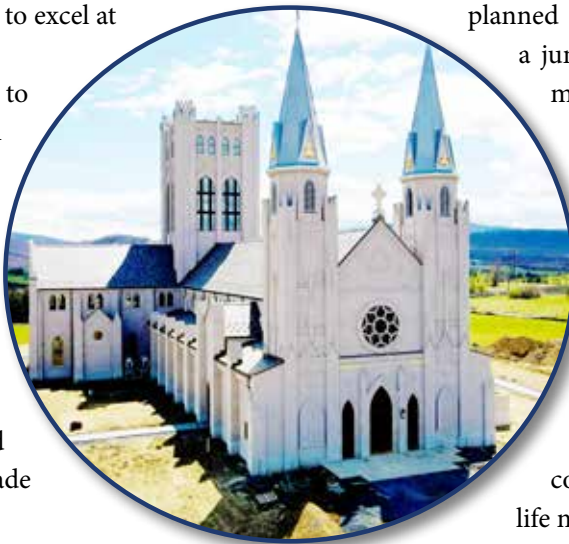
Martha '21 works as a farmhand at a working bed and breakfast, gaining life experience in Lancaster, PA, and is

engaged to classmate Sam Bratt '21 with a wedding planned for this summer. Michael '23 is a junior and had the lead role in the musical *The Music Man* on campus this past spring.

The Blanks were involved in many campus activities while students. They played on the soccer, baseball, basketball, and rugby teams, participated in theatrical productions, and held numerous leadership positions, including summer program counselors, resident assistants, pro-life ministry, and so much more.

The Blank Family is just one example of many homeschool families who have chosen Christendom to continue the important work begun at home.

They have witnessed the joyous results as their children grow into faithful and articulate Roman Catholics who are well-rounded and successful in their vocations and career and are involved in the larger mission of rebuilding a Christian society.



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Join us for our Homeschool Visit Day to learn how Christendom helps homeschool students learn the Truth, live the Faith, and thrive as Catholics.

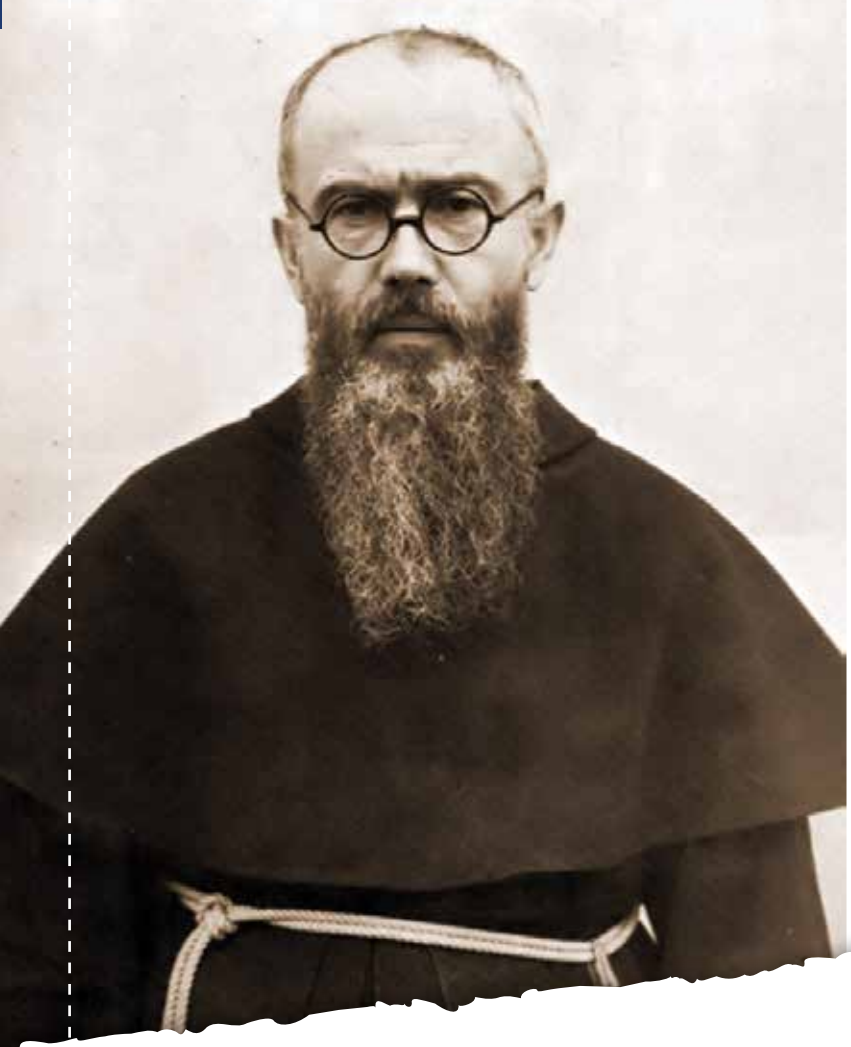
Learn more about Homeschool Visit Day and our other fall open house events.

www.christendom.edu/visits

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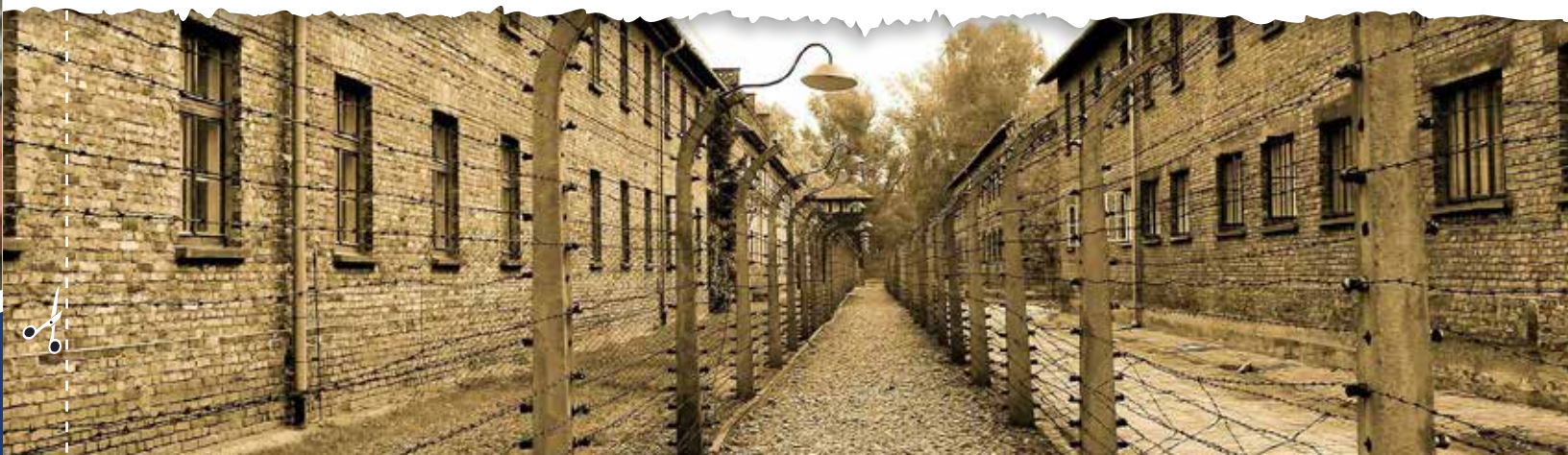
"LET US REMEMBER
THAT LOVE LIVES
THROUGH SACRIFICE
AND IS NOURISHED
BY GIVING. WITHOUT
SACRIFICE, THERE IS
NO **LOVE**."

AUGUST 14

SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

MARTYR OF CHARITY

PATRON SAINT OF PRISONERS, FAMILIES, AND THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT



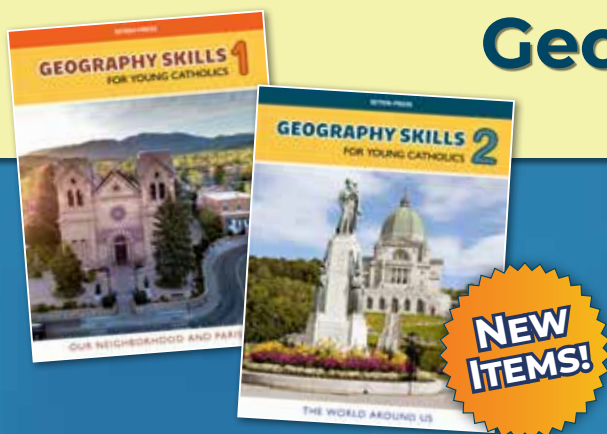
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Vocation of Love

We have all seen, during World Youth Days, the joy that young people show in their faith and their desire for an ever more solid and generous life of faith. Young people want to live life to the fullest.

Encountering Christ, letting themselves be caught up in and guided by his love, enlarges the horizons of existence, gives it a firm hope which will not disappoint. Faith is no refuge for the fainthearted, but something which enhances our lives.

It makes us aware of a magnificent calling, the vocation of love. It assures us that this love is trustworthy and worth embracing, for it is based on God's faithfulness which is stronger than our every weakness.

Lumen Fidei: The Light of Faith
Pope Francis, June 29, 2013

