

Seton MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

SETONMAGAZINE.COM | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022

IT'S YOUR SCHOOL!

*At Ours,
Great-Grandma
is the
Teacher!*

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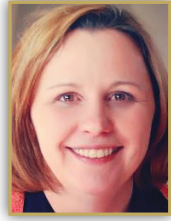
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MISSION STATEMENT

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,

For many of our families, this is a season of beginning. Even if you homeschool all year, as I do, this is a refreshing, restocking, and reviving time. It is exciting to contemplate a new start in your homeschool, and this issue is full of encouragement.

Deacon McGuirk shares his thoughts on how best to set our priorities for the coming year (hint, the goal is holiness). As an introduction, our new Director of Records and Guidance, John Thorp, gives us a quick take on the guidance department and a reflection on the Real Presence.

Sharing photos of our graduates gives us great pleasure. If starting your high school journey at Seton, please check it out and envision your student in that blue gown. In this issue, you can find photos of our recent commencement.

You parents are sacrificing and working hard to give your children the best education possible, and we are grateful to be part of that journey. Please know that we are here for you in prayer and at the other end of the phone.

Have a wonderful 2022-23 school year.

Editors note: Please see page 4 for an important announcement about continuing to receive the magazine by mail. Because of the increased cost of printing and mailing the *Seton Magazine*, we are reviewing options of providing it by mail or online.

Blessings,

Mary Ellen Barrett

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Pray for us!

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Seton MAGAZINE

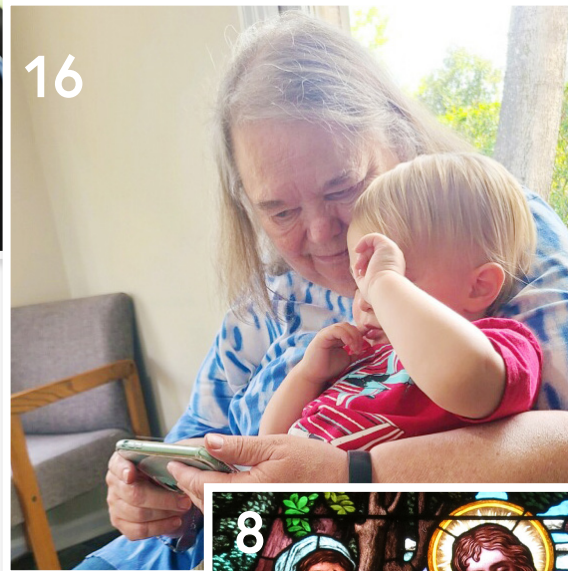
Over the past several years, we have seen a large increase in the cost of printing and mailing the *Seton Magazine* to our families. In 2019, before Covid, the total cost to print and mail each issue was around \$10,000. The total cost has now increased to about \$26,000 per issue. While some of these costs are explained by the increase in Seton's enrollment, a large part of the increase is due to the steeply rising costs of paper and printing.

For many years we have mailed the magazine to every family enrolled with Seton. Because of the high cost of mailing the magazine to all enrolled families, we are considering instituting a system of sending the magazine to every family who wants it, but only if the family **opts-in** to receive it. *If you do not opt-in to receive the Seton Magazine by mail, you will still be able to read the magazine online at SetonMagazine.com.*

**To continue receiving the Seton Magazine by mail,
please go to the following address to opt-in:**

WWW.SETONHOME.ORG/OPTIN

If you do not opt-in, you may stop receiving the Seton Magazine by mail, starting with the first issue in 2023.



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your Questions ANSWERED

FOR HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

Helpful Tip: When calling Seton for help, you will get answers more quickly if you have your Family Number handy.

I've received my curriculum. What do I do next?

Once you receive your curriculum, you are free to begin schooling. Each course will come with a printed lesson plan that will be your guide for the year and will lay out every assignment and school day.

The lesson plans will explain what work to submit for grading. If you or your students have questions about the curriculum throughout the year, the Seton academic counseling department is available Mon-Fri from 9 am - 5 pm EST. Contact counselors at counselors@setonhome.org or 866-280-1930.

Christina Nutt, Elementary Counselor

We have started our school year but realize one of my students would do better in a different course. Can I exchange the course?

We are happy to help you do that. You will find the exchange policy and the course exchange form in the "Introduction" for each grade.

Please fill out the form and include it with the materials you are returning and your payment for the exchange.

Once we receive it, we will make the changes, update the student's record, and send out the materials for the new course.

Please address your package "**Attn: Customer Service.**" We encourage you to get tracking on your package.

Esther Williams, Customer Service

How is the Pre-K and Kindergarten curriculum graded? Do I have to submit any work to Seton?

Pre-K and Kindergarten are completely parent-graded levels, so there are no tests or assignments to submit to Seton.

Parents have the freedom to assign a grade based on several factors. For example, you may consider the percentage of correct answers, the amount of effort the student has placed into the work, or the proper attitude. You might also consider engagement with and comprehension of the material, any additional work the student has done outside of the required assignments, and other factors that you want to include in the student's overall grade.

Christina Nutt, Elementary Counselor

A Note About Attending Seton's 2023 High School Graduation:

The in-person graduation eligibility requirements have been updated. In 2023, graduating students will need to meet the following criteria before registering for the in-person graduation:

- The student must have at least 15 high school credits. These can be Seton credits, transfer credits from another school, or independent study credits.
- The student must enroll with Seton for 12th grade and be taking sufficient credits to fulfill all Seton diploma requirements.
- In addition to 2023 graduates, any student who completed all high school diploma requirements in the 2022 or 2021 calendar year and has not already attended an in-person graduation is also eligible to participate.

**The 2023 Seton Graduation will be held on
June 17th in Front Royal, Virginia.**



Little Latin Readers

A Full Year of Instruction with Teacher's Guide!



Provides all the tools you need to start teaching your young students Latin while instilling a faith-based Catholic foundation.

Little Latin Readers: Primer A - Complete Set...\$95.00

www.SetonBooks.com

My elementary student is interested in Latin. Does Seton offer any Latin for younger students?

Yes! While Seton does not offer formal Latin classes for elementary or middle school students, we sell many books and book sets in our bookstore designed to acquaint younger students with Latin.

There are quite a few options, and each series is different. For example, Little Latin Readers (see ad above) and Prima Latina are great for elementary students and First Form Latin for middle school students. I encourage our families to explore what is there; not only will the student be learning the language of the Church, but it serves as an excellent springboard for taking Latin classes in high school.

Aidan Callegari, High School Counselor

How can I obtain a copy of a misplaced test or quiz?

Many tests and other materials are available online under the "Resources" tab. In your student's MySeton account, click on the gray "Resources" tab in the top center of the homepage.

Close to the bottom of the page is an underlined section entitled "Course Resources." When you click on this, the

resources available for each student's subject will appear.

These resources may include extra worksheets, unit and quarter tests, the book report handbook, chapter questions, and other helpful material. Scroll down to the subject you are looking for and check for your missing item.

If what you are looking for is not there, please get in touch with the counseling department at counseling@setonhome.org, and we will provide you with another copy.

Theresa English, Academic Counselor

I'm concerned about keeping up with the regular school system's schedule. Is this a problem?

When you enroll with Seton, you have fourteen months from your start date to finish everything.

This year plus two months allows you breathing room to linger on subjects that may need more attention, to take vacation or holiday time, to speed up or slow down depending on the needs of both you and your student. Feel free to make adjustments, throughout the year, for your family as you see fit. Flexibility is one of the best advantages of homeschooling.

Heather Hibl, 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



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WALSH UNIVERSITY
A Catholic University of Distinction

setonhome.org/colleges

Setting Priorities in the New School Year

Where should we set our priorities when the summer is over and the new school year begins?

The Church teaches that the purpose of marriage is the begetting and educating of children. That implies that the children should do their best to become as well educated as possible.

There are only Ten Commandments. The first three commandments center on our relationships with God. The fourth commands children to honor and obey their parents. When parents make educational decisions, their children should accept them, obey them, and do their best.

Educating for Eternal Life

However, the rule to educate the children has a more complete direction, which is to educate the children for eternal life. The students should be educated for Heaven, not Harvard. As the new school year begins, how do we set our priorities to be Heaven-centered?

When we get to Heaven, we will always be in God's presence. The trick now is always being in God's presence here on Earth. Being in God's presence requires a good prayer life and the consciousness to keep ourselves in that mind frame.

Many of the saints have proclaimed the necessity of prayer to obtain salvation. For example, St. John Chrysostom taught, "As moisture is necessary for the life of plants, to prevent them from drying up, so is prayer necessary for our salvation." He also said, "Prayer vivifies the soul, as the soul vivifies the body: As the body without the soul cannot live, so the soul without prayer is dead and emits an offensive odor."

One way to constantly remind ourselves that we are always in the presence of God would be to use the *Particular Examine*. This means developing a "trigger" that will be that reminder.

So, for example, every time you hear the phone ring (the particular examine is the ringing phone), you make an ejaculative prayer to let God know that you realize He is with you.

Your Particular Examine is something that you would choose. Perhaps, "Thank you, Lord, for always being with me." You could set your watch or computer to give off a ringing sound every hour, use the phone's ringing, or every time you see a tree.

You choose something in your life and that would be meaningful to you.

Each day should begin with morning prayers on our knees as we get out of bed. If practicable, we should go to Mass each day too. Each study session should begin with a prayer to offer this time to God for His honor and glory and prayer to your guardian angel and patron saints to help you do your best. You could also look up the patron saint for the subject you are studying and ask for his or her help.

To help keep everything that day in the presence of God, we should use all of the daily devotions that the Church offers. For example, grace before and after meals, the Angelus at noon and six P.M., the Divine Mercy chaplet at three P.M., family Rosary in the evening, and night prayers, on the knees, before going to bed.

It is also important to make good habits of the Virtues, Gifts, and Fruits of the Holy Ghost. Look up the definitions of these holy practices, and consciously try to develop these holy habits in your life.

Making Our Year Holy

Besides assisting at daily Mass, we should keep a regular schedule for Confession when possible. Once every two weeks for Confession is close to ideal. Many indulgences include a condition of having gone to Confession within eight days of the indulgenced practice. If we go to Confession every two weeks, we will always meet this condition. Confession's graces will help us advance in holiness by making us more able to resist temptation.

We should also keep up with the whole liturgical year. Develop devotions to certain saints, and be aware of their feast days, especially if there is a special novena to that saint. Be observant of the Catholic practices of each liturgical season, like fasting during Lent.

These prayerful habits will last you a lifetime and will serve you to grow in holy perfection until God calls you home to Himself.



Deacon Gene McGuirk directs the Academic Counseling Department at Seton Home Study School. Married for 45 years, he is the father of four children homeschooled through Seton. He was ordained a deacon in 1988. He has been a member of the Seton staff since 2002.





Ask the Experts:

How do you help your children find the lesson in their struggles and setbacks?

Three Veteran Homeschooling Moms Share Their Experience

Trusting in God's Plans...



Struggles and setbacks are natural occurrences in life. Everyone succeeds sometimes. Everyone fails occasionally. Plans progress as hoped, or they fall apart. The key to both successes and setbacks is to discover the lessons within.

The most effective way to teach children how to uncover the lessons veiled in struggles is to acknowledge your learned life lessons. For example, when we bought a restaurant more than six years ago, the whole venture was a real struggle. I realized my children were watching to see how my husband and I handled the stress.

One child was waiting to see if we were as trusting of God's Plans as we'd taught them to be. So, throughout that adventure, I made it my mission to talk with my children about the positive takeaways I garnered from each trial and setback.

Angry customers taught me to be more patient, inexperienced employees led me to be more compassionate, and financial struggles led me to pray more.

In addition to sharing your experiences, talk to your children about their difficulties. Ask them questions meant to help them evaluate hidden lessons for themselves. If they cannot see a positive takeaway, suggest some ideas. However, don't insist on telling them the lesson to be learned. Allow your children the freedom to discern for themselves.

“Allow your children the freedom to discern for themselves.”

Talk to your children about the big and little lessons you've learned throughout life, in times of success or failure. And most importantly, talk with them about their own experiences to lead them into uncovering the hidden gems of grace and wisdom concealed within.

Tara Brelinsky, North Carolina

We Are Each on Our Journey...



Acknowledge the hard.

Let your children know learning and life can be difficult, and hard things are worth doing.

I remind them of when they have done hard things in the past and succeeded.

Sometimes I just listen and offer no advice, as often they just need to know they are heard and understood. What I do not do is compare them with anyone else, especially their siblings. We are each on our journey; no one else can walk it for us.

Many days I take a page from Socrates' book and ask them questions. "What worked well here?" "How could you have prepared better for this?" "How can you learn from this mistake?" "What can you do differently next time?"

And then let them talk themselves through it, all the while affirming my love for them and my confidence that they are eminently capable of handling this but that I am always here for support.

As a literary and history nerd family, we usually have fair doses of stories of Frodo's journey with the Ring, Chamberlain's defense of Little Round Top, and the Continental Army at Valley Forge mixed in.

*"I am always here
for support."*

Last but not least, I remind them to take everything, struggles and successes, hopes and fears and dreams and even cool things that happened that day, to their Heavenly Father, who loves them far more than I ever could.

Kristin Brown, Virginia

Maintain a Hopeful Attitude...



When I find that my child is struggling with something, I first ask them questions about it to understand the situation and their perspective.

I try always to use a calm voice and maintain a hopeful attitude toward a problem. I do not want to encourage despair or despondency because that will crush the child's hope of overcoming their struggles.

I let them know that what is a challenge today will not be the same challenge in the future as they grow, mature, and experience more of life's situations. I do not want them to think that where they are today is where they will stay forever.

*"I try always to use a calm
voice and maintain a hopeful
attitude toward a problem."*

I find myself saying, "It's okay to make mistakes, as long as we learn from them."

Susan Brock, Virginia

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



We chose Seton Home Study School since the curriculum is God-centered, and we love how the Catholic faith is incorporated into every subject.

We love the idea that reading is greatly encouraged as we agree that teaching children to form the habit of reading is really beneficial for them.

*The Tan Family,
Dubai, United Arab Emirate*

We Love These Books!

Seton Counselors Share Their Favorites

BY SETON STAFF

“Reading is Fundamental.

So ran the theme of a series of television ads decades ago, sponsored by the organization Reading Is Fundamental (RIF).

We hope to send that message to our students at Seton Home Study School. Moreover, we believe that a key building block of education is not only to learn how to read but to give a student a love for books that will last a lifetime.

As a result, we offer a variety of extracurricular books—some chosen for their Catholic themes, some for their high literary quality, and all for the sheer pleasure of delving into a good story—to encourage students to take up literature for learning and enjoyment.

And we decided to ask staff members to select their favorites from the Seton bookstore. Here are some of their choices.

We Asked...They Answered

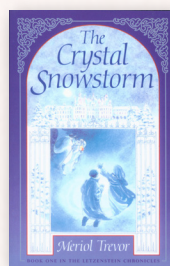


First up is Director of Academic Counseling Gene McGuirk, who endorsed *Angels in Iron*, *McCracken and the Lost Island*, and *Belisarius: The First Shall be Last*. Readers who enjoy *Belisarius* might want to continue that story in *Belisarius: Glory of the Romans*.

Academic Counselors Theresa English and Laura Clark are both C.S. Lewis fans. Laura recommends that students read all of the *Chronicles of Narnia* in the published order, not chronologically as some arrange them today.

She relates that *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* remains her favorite of the series.

She is also an admirer of Lewis's *Space Trilogy*, which she reads every couple of years—in fact, she's currently rereading *That Hideous Strength*. Her favorite of the three is *Perelandra*, but she points out that to get the most out of that story, “You really need to read *Out of the Silent Planet* first.”



Another cheerleader for Lewis, Theresa English, also recommends *The Crystal Snowstorm*, which is in the Seton bookstore, and its sequels, like *The Rose and the Crown*, which Seton does not sell yet. She also likes George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin*, which she hopes will be “joining our curriculum at some point.”

Sean O'Connor, High School English Counselor, selected eight titles as his favorites, among them *Captain Blood*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Giant*, which is Edna Ferber's tale of love, cattle barons, and Texas oil.

Sean is also a fan of *The Black Tulip*, Alexandre Dumas' novel set during the tulip mania in the Netherlands. The other titles on his list are *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Great Expectations*, *Ivanhoe*, and *The Bronze Bow*.



Daddy/Daughter Time

At the opposite end of the academic spectrum, Elementary School Counselor Laura Fusto chose Sets 1 and 2 of *Catholic Children's Treasure Box*, writing:

“These books were saved for special daddy/daughter time reading in the evenings. Geared toward three to six-year-olds, these sets of books are filled with Catholic-themed short stories, poems, and activities. Our girls are grown, and we have passed our set of books on to another young family. However, we will certainly gift a set of these books to each of our girls as grandchildren arrive.”



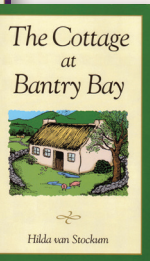
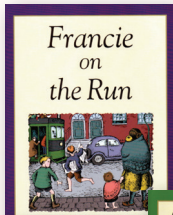


“*There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away.*”



-Emily Dickinson

Hooked on a Series

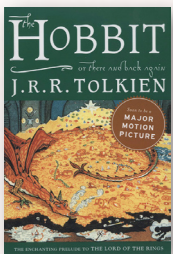


Seton Magazine Editor Mary Ellen Barrett rounds up the survey with her advice for young readers.

“I have always begun our school day with prayers, reading about the saint of the day, and then about twenty minutes of my

reading aloud a novel for us all to enjoy. It was my sneaky way of getting them hooked on a series such as the Bantry Bay Series. I started with *The Cottage at Bantry Bay*, and it became a favorite of my daughter Bridget, after

which she devoured the other two in the series, *Francie on the Run* and *Pegeen*.



“For my sons, reading *The Hobbit* turned them into Hobbits, Dwarves, and Gandalf for an entire year, which led to everyone reading the Lord of the Rings trilogy. These provide some of my happiest homeschool memories, and I’m grateful they still let me read to them most days.”

“There is no Frigate like a Book,” wrote poet Emily Dickinson, “To take us Lands away....”

True.

But that same frigate can sail straight into the heart, bearing a cargo of laughter, tears, and wisdom, broadening our souls and making us more fully human.

Let’s make this the year to board that ship of books and read, read, read.



The Seton Guidance & Records Department

The Seton Guidance & Records Department is here to offer advice on academic preparation recommendations, engage in brainstorming sessions with parents about college selection, and discuss possibilities in a career, trade, or religious vocation.

The Department also assists students with timing the application process, entrance exams, choosing a major, recommendation letters, and offering college scholarship and financial aid advice.

Philosophy and Promise

Department Head John Thorp puts it this way, “The philosophy of the Guidance & Records Department is simple: to serve and help our students with making lifelong decisions, and transitioning to life after Seton Home Study School.

“Many students and parents may feel a bit of trepidation in contacting Seton for advice on their student’s plans after graduation or a letter of recommendation. This apprehension is understandable because the process can be challenging, with a result that has lifelong consequences.”

John continues, “We want to make the process as smooth and pleasant as possible. We do that by being responsive, communicative, and thorough concerning your requests for guidance and direction. For example, one of the ways we can help you is to communicate directly with college admissions offices, military recruiters, and prospective employers, when necessary, to serve the best interest of a Seton student.”

The Goal

“The goal for Seton’s Guidance & Records office is to exceed your expectations. Feel free to contact us anytime; we are eager to walk with you on the journey!”

You can reach John Thorp at guidance@setonhome.org or call 540-636-2238.

The Records Office



Betty Showers

Working with the Guidance Department is the Records Office. Mrs. Betty Showers, the Seton Registrar, will assist you in ordering Seton transcripts, grade reports, diplomas, apostille and authentications, proof of enrollment letters, and records release requests.

You can reach Mrs. Showers at registrar@setonhome.org, or call 540-636-1324.



Seton and the Real Presence in My Life

BY SETON STAFF

“It wasn’t until my wife and I began using Seton’s curriculum that we became truly Catholic,” says John Thorp, homeschooling father and the new director of Seton’s Guidance and Records department.

“I remember the day vividly. My wife had been teaching our first-born son from Seton’s *Science 1 for Young Catholics* workbook when I returned from teaching at a local public school. (Yes, I was a public school teacher, and we had still decided that homeschooling was the best option for our family.) I had seen a video during lunch about Eucharistic miracles, and I wanted to share it with her.

“In the Eucharistic miracles video I shared, the bleeding host in Lanciano, Italy, caught my wife’s attention. Unbeknownst to me, while reading through the Seton text with our son, she had come across this same event, but, as she says, she ‘just turned the page’...not acknowledging that it could be true. However, seeing video footage of the bleeding host softened her heart and allowed God’s grace to open her beautiful eyes to His truth of the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist.

“It is my pleasure to serve families as the new director of Guidance and Records.”

“Tears began to flow with the realization of God’s mercy and love that He had given us at every Holy Communion we’ve received at Mass since my conversion. I thanked God for this grace and His subtle way of bringing Seton Home Study School into our lives. I have felt forever grateful and duty bound to repay the apostolate for the spur that helped convert my wife’s heart and change our lives forever.

“In 2015, we had the opportunity to thank Seton when visiting Front Royal, Virginia. We were able to thank Dr. Mary Kay Clark for all the work that benefited our family. I submitted a résumé to see if the Holy Spirit had a window open for me. Three months later, I received an offer and began working with Seton’s Admissions Department. And now it is my pleasure to serve families as the new director of Guidance and Records.”



John Thorp John has been working in education for the past two decades. He holds a Master’s degree in Education, a BA in Liberal Studies, an Associate’s in Science, and has been a credentialed teacher in California, Texas, and Hawaii. He lives with his lovely wife Janet and five wonderful children along the Shenandoah River in Front Royal, Virginia.



IT'S YOUR SCHOOL!

At Ours, Great-Grandma is the Teacher!

WITH JEFF MINICK

“When Kaley was born, I promised her mother I would help see them through.”

So says Sheila Dummer (pronounced Doom-er) of Beech Island, South Carolina.

Sheila Dummer is a woman of her word. For well over a decade, she helped care for Kaley, and for the last eight years, using Seton Home Study School, Sheila has homeschooled her granddaughter Christine's daughter Kaley, now 16 and entering the 11th grade this fall.

Pause a moment and reread that sentence. Got it? Sheila Dummer is the great-grandmother of Kaley.

Pardon the personal intrusion, but this was a first for me. Over the last three or four years, I've interviewed at least three dozen moms and sometimes dads who are part of the Seton community. Some of them have told me of help they've received outside of the home: participation in homeschooling coops, dual enrollment in community colleges, having grandparents, friends, or in at least one case, a priest step up and tutor their children in some difficult subject like math or Latin. As a grandpa myself, I once taught three of my daughter's children off and on for two years and, even today, occasionally tutor them in Latin.

But a great-grandparent as the principal teacher in a homeschool? Well, as the saying goes, that just about knocked my socks off.

SOME BACKGROUND

Kaley wasn't Sheila's first homeschooling student. That honor belongs to Kaley's mother, Christine Peterson.

While growing up, Christine and her parents lived in a house owned by Sheila. Later, when Christine was in public high school, and her parents moved to Arizona, they decided to allow Christine to remain with her grandmother and finish her high school education.

Because Christine was competing at the national and world levels in Irish step dancing, she was having trouble attending school on a regular basis. At that point, the family decided to move to a mix of homeschooling and public school, with Sheila serving as Christine's teacher.

As an adult, Christine again began living with her grandmother, this time with two-year-old Kaley. With her grandmother's help with the toddler, Christine was able to complete a college degree.

During this time, Christine's younger brother, Patric, joined them, and Sheila homeschooled him for part of his time in high school as well, enrolling him in Seton on the recommendation of a friend. Patric graduated from Seton in 2013. “I really feel that I helped him get where he wanted,” Sheila says.

Sheila began homeschooling Kaley in third grade, once again using Seton. Meanwhile, Christine had enlisted in the Army to serve her country and receive medical benefits for her daughter. Today she is still actively serving in the military and is assigned to Fort Gordon near Augusta, Georgia.

OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES

Christine sought those medical benefits in the military for Kaley's autism, OCD, ADHA, and growth hormone deficiency.

For the same reason, Sheila decided to teach her great-granddaughter at home. Kaley struggled in elementary school, unable to manage her behavior and to receive sufficient help along the way. Sheila brought her home, enrolled her with Seton, and together they began their journey in learning.



Because of Christine's military service, the family, including Sheila, have moved many times from base to base. "I tell people I enlisted when I was 65," Sheila says with a laugh. These moves exposed her to different parishes and different ways of practicing the faith, which is a major reason she's grateful for the Seton religious program. Seton, she contends, acts as "a guidepost in faith."

Sheila also has high praise for Seton's Special Services Department. "I love Stephen," she says of Stephen Costanzo, director of this department. "He's my best buddy." She credits him with making many good suggestions for Kaley and her battles with books, adding, "I don't know how we would have gotten through high school without him."

When asked her advice for new homeschoolers, Sheila replied, "It's not public school. It's not private school. It's your school. Let go of believing that you have to copy a classroom. When we were moving, following Christine to different bases, we sometimes did school in hotel rooms."

SCHOOL DAYS

Heeding her own advice, every year or so, Sheila has reevaluated their approach to education and schedules. These days, she and Kaley tackle one subject at a time. "We start the school year with one subject, finish it, and move on to the next one," she says.

Compositions and writing are particularly demanding for many autistic students. Sheila relates that it took Kaley eight days to complete a Seton essay exam on *A Tale of Two Cities*. "But she stuck with it," she says proudly, "and she got an A at the end."

"My grandmother has supported me all the way through my journey of motherhood."

Kaley and her great-grandmother follow a fairly rigid daily school schedule. Kaley begins at 9:00 every morning—she does much of the work herself these days—and they break at noon for lunch, chores, and relaxation. From 1:30 to 4:30 in the afternoon, school resumes, and unless Kaley is spending the night with Sheila, her mother arrives from work and takes her home. They spend four days a week on schoolwork, with Thursdays for therapy and medical appointments.

Kaley also participates in an Equine Assisted Therapy program on Mondays. When COVID shut down the equine program, Kaley attended aerial silks training, learning trapeze, hoops, and silks. She also participates in the youth group at St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church in Aiken, South Carolina.

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER (EMPHASIS ON GREAT)

"My grandmother has supported me all the way through my journey of motherhood" says Christine. "When Kaley had to go to a medical appointment, when I was going through basic, when I had to deploy for six months, she was always there. I'll never be able to repay her, and no words can capture how blessed we are."



And now Sheila is again a great-grandmother, this time to the lively 20-month-old Billy, the son of Christine and her husband, Forrest Wilkerson. Will he be Sheila's next homeschooling student? Only time will tell.

But there's a more profound lesson here than homeschooling. The story of Sheila, Christine, and Kaley should remind us of the strength, comfort, and consolation we can find in family.

In this case, Sheila's especially grateful and happy that they've worked out a way for Kaley to succeed:

"As a family, we're all succeeding when we can do something like this. Kaley has a kind of maturity and growth that would never have happened in school."

She adds, "My mom is 96 and, until recently, was always active. I want to be 96 like her and not have wasted my life."



BY ALLISON FITZGERALD



UNIVERSITY
of MARY

Singing with One Voice



**To lead another person to an experience of Christ
and to a rich understanding of the beauty of the liturgy
is the deepest form of service a person can provide.**

Nearly every time a student at the University of Mary is asked what they love most about their experience, they say something about the community. The rich community we have here at Mary is one of the ways that our Benedictine heritage shines through most clearly.

Our founding Sisters have taught us that the only way we can accomplish anything truly great is by doing it together, serving one another in love along the way. Our small class sizes, 24/7 dining center, student activities and organizations, and study abroad programs are all meant to foster friendship.

What students find here, what I found as a student here, is that the purpose of education is friendship. We become friends with one another, with our professors, with Jesus.

It is because community is so important to us that the liturgy, too, is important to us. Our weekly all-university Masses are some of the most potent experiences of community for our students.

The longest-standing University of Mary tradition is our Wednesday 10 am Mass. No one ever has class or meetings at that time to allow us the chance to all worship together. We have always had beautiful music at these Masses, with many students and faculty members from the music program contributing. This past year the sacred music at our Masses reached a new level.

A Remarkable Gift

In the spring of 2021, the University of Mary received the biggest single scholarship gift we have received in our history. You might guess that the scholarships are for our student-athletes, nurses, or engineers.

However, this gift was specifically given to support scholarships for the students who sing at Mass. Cappella is the name given to our new scholarshiped, sacred music choir at the University of Mary.



The choir's mission is, through their music, to "give thanks to our Creator for the gifts that He has given us and seek only to offer them back to Him in humble praise." This attitude of adoration leads to the most beautiful liturgical music I have ever heard.

And, through it, one of the most beautiful communities I've ever experienced.

To lead another person to an experience of Christ and to a rich understanding of the beauty of the liturgy is the deepest form of service a person can provide.

To have these students, week in and week out, giving everything they have not only to the Lord but to our whole community has only strengthened our desire to serve each other in community.



Allison Fitzgerald is an admissions representative at the University of Mary. She is a Mary alumna and most recently earned her Master of Arts in Catholic Studies in May 2022. She is also currently in formation with the Benedictine Oblates of Mary, a religious community of women serving the intellectual apostolate at the university.



THE CHOIR'S MISSION

The choir's mission is to, through their music, "give thanks to our Creator for the gifts that He has given us and seek only to offer them back to Him in humble praise."



UNIVERSITY
of MARY

ALUMNI PROFILE: Mary Storick

Hi! I'm Mary, a student at the University of Mary majoring in music.

When I graduated from Seton Home Study School, I decided to come to Mary because it was affordable and had many opportunities for scholarships, as well as being close to home.

Another significant reason was its great Catholic environment; the university does all it can to help foster the Catholic faith of its students.

Being part of Cappella for its first two semesters has been an amazing experience, and I am grateful for it.

One day during my freshman year, I was walking through the Music Department and saw a poster on the wall announcing auditions for a new chapel choir starting the following fall.

The choir would be called Cappella, which is Italian for chapel, and sizable scholarships would be offered to students willing and able to participate in its vision. I auditioned and was excited to be accepted into the new chapel choir.

Being part of Cappella for its first two semesters has been an amazing experience, and I am grateful for it.

Our mission as a choir is to provide beautiful sacred music to the students at Mary through Mass and sung evening prayer, and to others as well. We travel several times a year to sing at Mass and allow others to experience beautiful sacred music.

In many of the other choirs I have been part of, we would often only learn a few pieces of music at a time. In Cappella,



however, because of the high level of musicianship within each one of its members, we have been able to learn and perform almost 60 different pieces over the course of the year.

It is an amazing feeling to sing such a vast amount of difficult choral works from various composers and perform many of them again and again for the glory of God.

Cappella has also led me to forge new relationships with many wonderful people. I would say that the most important part of any group is the people you share it with, and the same is true with Cappella. Everyone in the group knows, loves, and serves God in one of the best ways they can: with beautiful sacred music.

As a graduate of Seton Home Study School, I was used to incorporating the Catholic faith into every subject, not just our religion books. This helped me to realize that my Catholic faith is something that can and should be included in every part of my life.

My time at Mary has given me an even deeper experience of this. The University of Mary is an amazing Catholic school, vibrant with wonderful students and professors, all striving to live out and grow in their Catholic faith.



Mary Storick is a junior at University of Mary, studying music. Her primary instrument is violin, and she also is a part of the university's concert choir as well as Cappella. In her free time, she likes to hang out with friends, spend time outdoors, and visit her family as well as the three pets at home: a fish, a parakeet, and a rabbit.



Seton Student Achievements

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY



4-H Blue Ribbon to Dixie

Dixie credits her 4-H ribbon to homeschooling and her writing ability to writing paragraphs in English and her Reading book reports.



Dwight Promoted to Civil Air Patrol Sargent

As a Civil Air Patrol Sargent, Dwight can take on more responsibilities and he looks forward to enlisting in the Air Force after graduation.

setonmagazine.com/students



JOYFUL

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UNIVERSITY
of MARY | *for Life.*

in the *Schoolroom*

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT



Take a Hike!

exposure to sunlight increases Vitamin D levels, supporting a healthy immune system. Outdoor exploration just makes sense for growing minds and bodies.

In my homeschool, I have always preferred our outdoor activities in the autumn. It is less humid, buggy, crowded, and generally less stressful.

From long beach walks to camping at Gettysburg, I have scheduled it all from mid-October to early November and have never been disappointed.

It can be easy to be overwhelmed with the idea of taking a walk or a hike with a larger family or many small children. If that is the situation, I would suggest starting with a short trail or path near home.

Keep it short and simple, and spend a little time pointing out any birds, squirrels, bugs, trees, and plants you see. A field guide for your area is a worthwhile investment to keep in your bag for these outings.

As everyone becomes more able, increase the length and breadth of your walks. I live on an island, so much of our hiking is near the beach or marshes.

We've hiked from Long Island to Fire Island to the lighthouse, across the Island on the Greenbelt Trail, and the trails in the woods surrounding Our Lady of the Island Shrine.

I have a conflicted relationship with nature. On the one hand, it is extraordinarily beautiful. God's creation constantly reflects perfection in how creatures and plants evolve and adapt independently and symbiotically. On the other hand, often something is mucking up your shoes or going splat on the top of your head.

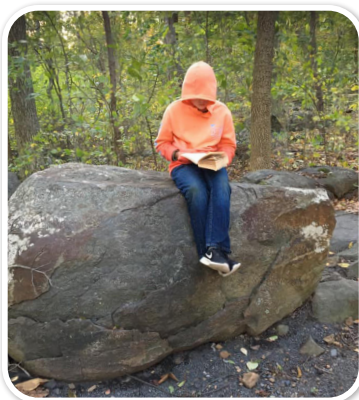
I was raised by a wonderful mother who experienced a case of the vapors whenever she was more than fifteen miles from a Lord & Taylor or a four-star restaurant, so my reluctance to dive deeply into the outdoors is understandable.

I was perfectly happy staying indoors and enjoying the air conditioning, heating, and comfortable chairs until I married an outdoorsy person and gave birth to a bunch of outdoorsy children.

Being outdoors is extremely beneficial to children. For one thing, it means they are not staring at a screen; for another, it requires some physical exertion, improving muscle tone and motor skills. Safe



On these hikes, we've seen a variety of wildlife, birds, insects, and reptiles and met many nice people. Most hikers are courteous, friendly people, and it is always fun to make a new friend.























A scavenger hunt is always fun and will keep young children interested.

You can easily find these bingo-type boards online, and I have made my own to share with you. The competition to see who finds everything first can add a lot to the day's excitement. It reminds me of scavenging for states on license plates during my childhood road trips.

Scheduling a few outdoor days in your homeschool this fall is something I encourage all families to try. Whether a short walk around the neighborhood or a long hike, take the time to explore God's creation and enjoy some wonderful family time together.



Nature Walk Checklist

Acorn 	Green Leaf 	Feather 	Tree stump 
Spider 	Mushroom 	Pinecone 	Rabbit 
Squirrel 	Brown Leaf 	Worm 	Pine needles 
Seed pods 	Flat rock 	Animal prints 	Sparrow 
Ants 	Bare Tree 	Butterfly 	Wild Berries 

Quick Start Guide to Getting Outdoors

- Take a short walk around the block. Wave to your neighbors, and look at the plants and trees growing around your block. Count how many squirrels or birds you see.
- Get to know your yard. Spend a few minutes daily walking in your backyard and observing changes. Let a small patch of lawn go wild (don't mow) and see what wildflowers spring up. Put up a bird feeder and keep a list of the birds that visit.
- Plant something. Start a few seeds inside, and plant them in your garden when the time is right.
- Take a few pictures of the same plant or tree every week, and compare the changes each month.
- Keep a family nature journal. Keep it open in a convenient spot and take turns jotting down observations about the weather, the front yard, the back yard, and the critters.

- Invest in some field guides for your area, and take them with you when you explore.
- Visit a state park. They have great programs for kids to learn about and explore local environments.
- Visit a national park. You can become a junior ranger at any national park in the country. You do not even have to visit to participate. Details here: <https://www.nps.gov/kids/become-a-junior-ranger.htm>



Mary Ellen Barrett is 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 amount of books. She is editor of the *Seton Magazine* and also a contributor to *The Long Island Catholic*.

Hope and Expectations

BY JEFF MINICK



Seton Grads Share Future Plans

On the day before the 2022 Seton Graduation, families gathered in Front Royal, Virginia for a day of fun, games, and sharing experiences. Here were pony rides for the younger crew, sports equipment for the older students, 170 pizzas, bottled drinks and popcorn, and great weather despite the high temperatures.

Seton staff members conducted tours of the building, taking families from the chapel to the counselors' cubicles to Dr. Mary Kay Clark's office. Meanwhile, graduates and their parents mingled on the grounds, introducing themselves and comparing notes about their homeschooling experiences.

Catholic Harbor Conclave

Much in evidence were those students wearing large "Catholic Harbor" buttons on their blouses and shirts along with their nametags. These students had met one another online at that popular Seton site, but only now were many of them greeting their friends in the flesh. The joy and laughter of these encounters shone like the sun on their faces.

Over the past years, I have covered several of these celebrations. As usual, my greatest pleasure came from listening to the dreams and ambitions of some of the graduates. On the day before and then at graduation, they stand poised between their past accomplishments and their aspirations for the future.

Owen Evans, for example, will join the inaugural class at Thales College in Wake Forest, North Carolina, where he will study entrepreneurship. Two of his favorite Seton courses—he's been enrolled since kindergarten—were economics and personal finance. He hopes to become a developer of video games and movies as well as a part-time youth minister.

Like Owen and several other students, **Catherine Libertella** from Rome, New York, enjoyed her 12th-grade personal finance course and her religion courses. A Seton student for 11 years, she wants to study the liberal arts and pursue her love of dance. She especially likes jazz and ballet and hopes someday to become a dance teacher.

Aden Presby is off to study history at New Hampshire's Magdalen College, where he has received two scholarships. A humorous highlight of his Seton education was rising at 4:45 a.m.

many mornings to study physics and calculus with his mom, taking advantage, as he says, of “the quiet time” in his house.

Lucia Pierlot and some family members flew from Bedfordshire, England, to attend her graduation. Following graduation, she plans to stay with a Seton friend in Boston for several weeks. She’s studied with Seton for five years, has danced since she was six, and will soon enter the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, after which she hopes to become a professional dancer.

Catholic Harbor friends **Faith Molino** and **Felicity Norton** praised Seton’s religion courses. Faith, who loves writing, painting, and drawing and who helped direct the student-run Seton Writers’ Club, will major in English and minor in theology at Franciscan University. At the same time, Felicity will enter Ferris State University in Michigan. She has played piano since the third grade and has been a part of the National Federation of Music for the past five years, where she has won three gold cups.

Like Felicity, **Thomas Rossi** of Annandale, Virginia, a Seton student from grades K-12, enjoys playing the piano along with fencing, ice skating, and other sports. Thomas’s favorite subjects were the math and science courses. He intends to study bioengineering at George Mason University and hopes someday to work as a prosthetics developer.

Second Generation Seton

From Wausau, Wisconsin, **Michaela Cochran** attended Seton grades K-12. Interestingly, her parents, Angela and Cy, are also Seton graduates. She sings in her choir at St. Mary’s Oratory, enjoys dancing and reading, has traveled throughout the United States, and is currently working at a maple syrup company. In the immediate future, she hopes to give more of her time volunteering for her local pregnancy center.

Robert Rowe of Midlothian, Virginia, will enroll at his local community college to study mechanical engineering before seeking a degree from a university. His favorite subject was economics, a course that surprised him because “they managed to put God even into economics.”

A brisk run through the graduation program’s short biographies reveals a glittering array of talents and interests among these young people. **Ivan Hicks** has worked in the construction industry throughout high school and plans to become a sheriff’s deputy after graduation. Two of the three Caughrons present, **Isabella** and her cousin **Mary Clare**, will attend Thomas Aquinas College, East Coast campus, while Isabella’s sister, **Sophia**, heads off to Benedictine College. **John Paul Nadarajan** plans to join the School of Nazareth, while **Katherine Kuchta** will pursue a nursing degree at the University of North Florida.

These young men and women harbor different dreams, yet one thread binds them together: their love for Christ and their Catholic faith. As in years past, I left this festival of joy buoyed up, a smile on my face and hope for the future in my heart.



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.



“Poised Between Accomplishments and Aspirations”





On Saturday, June 18th, the gymnasium at Warren Country High School was almost literally packed to the rafters as friends and family gathered to watch 145 cap-and-gowned Seton graduates march across the stage to receive their diplomas.

After the entrance procession of the graduates into the gym, Seton's Deacon Gene McGuirk opened the ceremonies with an invocation. He reminded the graduates and the audience about the recent feast of Saint Barnabas, how this apostle had defended Saint Paul, and that we, too, should always stick up for our faith.

Dr. Ray Guarendi, a clinical psychologist well-known to many Catholics for his radio and television shows and his wit and humor as a speaker, then offered welcoming remarks.



Leaven of the Culture

Fifteen years ago, he remarked, 35 graduates had attended the first Seton commencement ceremony. Today the 145 young people who had come here on this occasion had traveled from 36 different states, Canada, the Philippines, Costa Rica, and the United Kingdom.

He then congratulated the graduates for all their hard work, remarking that they were often more mature and more civilly active than their peers and were the "leaven of the culture."

Dr. Mary Kay Clark, whom Dr. Guarendi introduced as "one of the great pioneers in the homeschooling movement," addressed the gathering by video, congratulating the students on their hard work and love for the Faith. She praised their parents for all their effort and passion for their children's education.

**"No Matter What Problems
You Face, God has the Answer."**

Near the end of her address, Dr. Clark told the students, "Whatever you face, remember what you have learned. Hold tight with all your strength to Christ and your Church...No matter what



problems you face, God has the answer.” She cited Saint Paul’s words from his letter to Timothy, in which he spoke of fighting the good fight and running a race, and said, “Never lose track of that finish line.”

Strive for Greatness

Up next at the podium was Mr. Stephen Minnis, president of Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, since 2004, and an attorney and educator with a long list of honors. Mr. Minnis urged the students to “strive for greatness,” reminding them of Pope Benedict’s words, “the world promises you comfort,” but we were made for greatness. Someday, Mr. Minnis said, you’ll be faced with tough choices. Choose greatness over comfort.

"Never Lose Track of the Finish Line."

In his second point, Mr. Minnis brought up one of Benedictine College’s slogans: “Forward, always forward, everywhere forward.” He told the graduates that when faced with adversity, don’t look back. Move forward.

His final advice was to have faith and rely on God. He compared this faith journey to a tandem bicycle, telling the students they should occupy the bike’s back seat, working and striving as hard as they can, but always putting God in the front seat.

Following this talk were addresses by two Seton students, Lexie Gibson and Peter Young. Miss Gibson began by thanking her parents for all their gifts of time and work in her education.

She then broadened that appreciation to the other graduates by saying, “Our parents fought hard to give us a strong Catholic foundation, but now it’s our turn.”

She concluded her remarks by reminding the audience, “Whatever your call is, let it be your journey to heaven.”

Mr. Young used an axiom he’d found online as the central point of his talk: “There’s no such thing as bad weather. Only bad clothing.” He used this metaphor to explain that his fellow graduates may face hard times but will pass through those storms if they live in the Faith and surround themselves with family and friends.

Graduate Thérèse Brons then offered a special remembrance for Seton student Isabella Auer, a member of the Writer’s Club and Catholic Harbor, who died of cancer in 2020. Sharing her warm memories of her friend, Miss Brons said, “She lived and loved, and gave from her whole self.”

Before calling each student by name to the stage, where Deacon McGuirk presented them with a diploma, Dr. Guarendi offered recognition to the parents, reminding them that they were the number one factor in their students’ achievement.



Then came the conferral of diplomas, followed by a virtual presentation of several dozen graduates unable to attend this ceremony and the closing benediction by Deacon McGuirk.

After the graduates had gathered outside for a class picture—a professional photographer was also available for individual and family photos—all the attendees headed to the cafeteria for a delicious spread of food provided by Front Royal’s Downtown Catering. This day of festivities ended with a dance that evening in the school gymnasium.

"Whatever your call is, let it be your journey to heaven."

Given the accomplishments of these students—the graduation program contained mini-biographies of many—and their reverence for Christ and his Holy Church, these young men and women will surely become, as Dr. Guarendi predicted, “leaven of the culture.”

Congratulations, then, to all these hard-working graduates and their devoted parents!



SETON GRAD GUIDES OTHERS TO MOTHER SETON

ALUMNI PROFILE:



KELLY SMITH



Seton Graduate Kelly Smith credits Seton Home Study School with introducing her to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Now her mission is to introduce others to the life and work of the great American saint.

I was homeschooled through Seton Home Study all of High School (Grades 9-12). I loved the curriculum, the opportunity to learn self-paced, have a personalized schedule that worked best for me, have freedom of learning,

and gain more knowledge of the Catholic faith through my studies. I just loved diving in and working at my own pace.

After graduating from Seton, I went to Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Maryland, graduating in 2017 with a Bachelor's degree in Communication Studies.

My Seton education helped me navigate college tremendously! I came out of High School a self-starter, able to teach myself and plan my school days in an organized manner.

Helping Hands

I also learned writing skills while doing Seton. My college classmates would ask me for advice on how to study and prepare for projects.

The Religion classes with Seton helped me with my Theology and other college courses and gave me a deeper knowledge of Catholicism. By the grace of God, I was given the tools (and continue to learn) to know, love, and serve God daily.

Seton Home Study first introduced me to Mother Seton, and now I am the Group Visits Coordinator at the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland! I love how Mother Seton guides me on this path to Heaven beside her!

I feel truly blessed to work at such a holy place where the first American-born Saint lived, worked, walked, and prayed!

Through my faith, I am inspired by the Holy Spirit to be motivated and passionate about spreading the word about the Seton Shrine, St. Elizabeth's mission to serve others and help those who desire to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Seton Shrine's mission is to promote the life and legacy of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton by providing inspiration and encouragement to all people. I truly love this ministry and am blessed to be a part of evangelization!

Being a resource for visitors and groups to seek out and grow in their faith and providing opportunities for them to do this motivates me every day.



Get it Done!

My advice for current Seton High Schoolers is to just get it done! Work hard, persevere, say your prayers, and all will be okay!

Kelly Smith graduated from Seton Home Study School in 2013.

Homeschool Essentials



Seton educational media
Everything For Your Homeschooling Needs



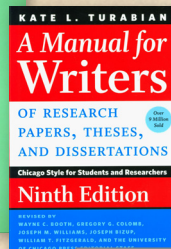
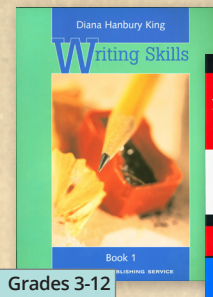
Dictionaries & Thesauruses

We recommend that students have a good dictionary and thesaurus.

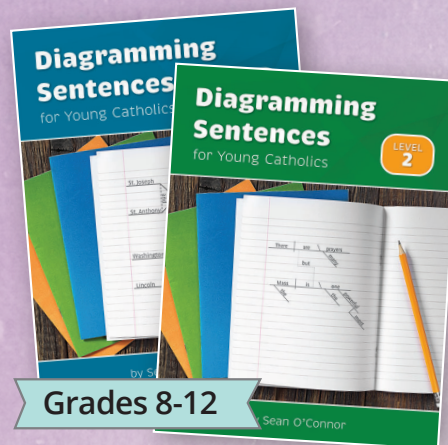


The dictionary is the biggest secret of excellent spellers, and the thesaurus is the best friend of competent writers.

A Manual for Writers & Writing Skills



These easy-to-use guides are highly recommended by our English counselors and will improve success in school and on standardized tests.



Diagramming Sentences for Young Catholics

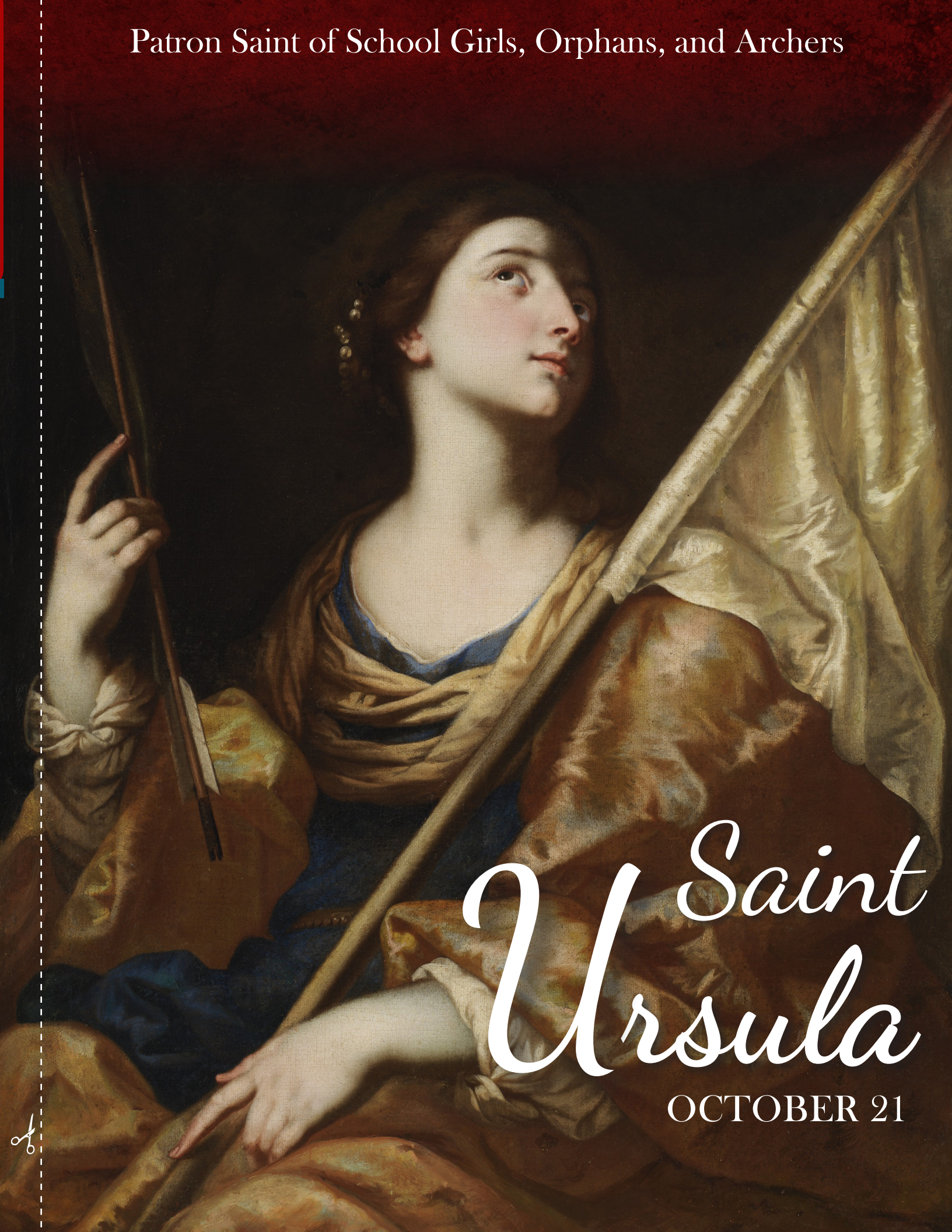
Provides students a way to master English through building sentence diagrams.

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In this way a moral universe is built up, rooted in the will of God, where the child grows in the human and Christian values that give life its full meaning.”

Pope Benedict XVI
*Letter to the Participants in the
Fifth World Meeting of Families
May 17, 2005*