

Seton MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

SETONMAGAZINE.COM | NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022



The Dirty Boot Band

PG 14

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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,

How can it be Advent time already? The old saying is true: “the days are long, but the years are short.”

In this issue, we are introducing a new writer. Alexandria DeRose shares advice and encouragement about the task of raising virtuous sons. Our sons are constantly assaulted in this culture with the unholy and sinful. Alexandria’s advice is so timely.

Do you have a student who is gifted in film, acting, or the visual arts? They might be interested in reading about John Paul the Great Catholic University, a Seton College Partner. Can you imagine a film industry populated by devout Catholics?

I am a big fan of country music, and now I am a big fan of the Dirty Boot Band. How could I not be? The name alone invites you to toe-tap along with them. I am sure you will enjoy the story of these two wonderful families as much as I did.

Lastly, we here at Seton wish all our families the most wonderful Advent and Christmas seasons. It is a privilege to be a part of your lives, and we pray every day that your hard work and sacrifices glorify Our Lord and bring all of your children closer to Him now and forever.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Ellen Barrett".

Mary Ellen Barrett

PS: Don’t forget to opt-in if you wish to continue to receive the *Seton Magazine* in the mail. Details on page 17.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Pray for us!

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MAGAZINE

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For many years we have mailed the magazine to every family enrolled with Seton. Because of the high cost of mailing we are considering 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, you may stop receiving the Seton Magazine by mail, starting with the first issue in 2023.



To Continue Receiving the Seton Magazine by Mail, Opt in at:

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your Questions ANSWERED

FOR HOMESCHOOLING FAMILIES

Can a new student join Seton halfway through the year?

Yes, new transfers only need to complete one or two quarters of the year (Grades 1-12) and can receive a \$100 discount by signing up for a Half-Year Enrollment. They receive all the books and lesson plans and still have a full year to complete the work, but they can only submit up to two quarters in each subject.

Half-year enrollment is a good option for students who want to finish the school year with Seton but have already completed half the year with another school.

You can enroll online for a Half-Year Enrollment at www.setonhome.org. When you enroll, it will be specified which two quarters to do for each subject. For questions, contact counselors at counselors@setonhome.org.

Amy Nutt, Admissions Counselor

How much time should we take off for the holidays?

That depends on how you homeschool. For example, if you teach year-round, you may take weeks off.

If, on the other hand, you are trying to follow the traditional school year, you

may stick to shorter breaks. It is typical to take off the Wednesday and Friday surrounding Thanksgiving and from the 23rd of December to the first Monday or Tuesday after New Year's.

Also, consider how on track your students are and how much time off they can afford. It may be a couple of weeks, or it may be that they need to work on that English assignment between Christmas and New Year's. It's up to you!

Theresa O'Connor, Academic Counselor

My kids really struggle with elementary reading and high school literature. Can you help us?

Elementary or high school English counselors can help you with specific assignments and overall course problems. For example, suppose the problem is a particular assignment. In that case, counselors can help your student work through any issue they have understanding the assignment or perhaps getting started on it. For overall issues, the counselors can help the student with tips on determining the most important points and focusing on those.

Counselors can also help parents decide how to proceed daily and how to pick out which exercises to do or skip.

Sometimes students need to do remedial work, and counselors can recommend materials. If the work is too difficult for a student, counselors can help parents decide whether to drop a grade level or make some other adjustment.

If the problems require something more, then the Special Services department can work to modify courses for students.

Modifications can include adjusting the format and reading level of the books and working with your child's strengths to adapt the writing portion of a course. Students incrementally develop their writing skills at the elementary level using adapted book reports with different levels: sentence writing, paragraph writing, and five-paragraph essay writing.

In high school, the Special Services department can offer more manageable assignments while giving students a solid literary foundation. If you're fully enrolled, there's no extra cost for a single course adaptation. (If a student needs to have a fully adapted curriculum, there is an additional fee.)

So, if a student is struggling, don't wait—call the counselors for help getting back on track.

Compiled by Seton Staff

Where can Seton students get help on a plan for life after high school?

The first step to making a plan is knowing where you want to go AND why. I typically recommend a student start with some self-assessment.

Identify the innate strengths that will help you succeed in specific environments. For example: What is important to you? Which career paths make the most sense for your unique interests and values?

Identify these and be better positioned to consider the different steps you can take. Those steps might be attending college first, starting a career right away, or discerning a religious vocation.



What are YOUR PLANS
after HIGH SCHOOL

FREE EVALUATION

The Jobzology questionnaire is available to all enrolled students in grade 8 or above. Simply log in to your MySeton page and click the icon on your homepage.

Seton Educational Media



*A Wonderful Gift Selection
Begins on Page 21*

www.SetonBooks.com

The Guidance Department has helpful articles about these topics: setonhome.org/college-career-guidance/ All enrolled students have access to a free self-assessing tool called Jobzology through their MySeton account. Please feel free to contact our guidance counselors at guidance@setonhome.org or by phone at 540-636-2238. They are here to help you start the journey well!

John Thorp, Guidance Director

How often should I check in with my high schooler?

It is a good idea to check in at the beginning or end of every week to discuss the work they've been doing.

What was the History chapter they read about? How did that Spanish quiz go? Can you look over the character sketch they wrote for English? Has every required assignment been uploaded to their MySeton account?

This check-in allows you to monitor your student's progress, note any particular difficulties they are having,

and remedy any issue before it worsens. For example, you don't want to arrive at the end of the year and discover that your student has not taken half their Algebra tests or failed multiple English assignments due to plagiarism.

Besides the comprehensive weekly review, a daily report from the student is ideal. This daily connection need only be a brief review of activities, but it provides accountability and builds responsibility.

It's also a time to encourage or congratulate your student on what they've done well.

You noticed they've been reading faithfully daily; let them know that's great. They finally spelled "Renaissance" correctly: way to go! They got an outline written: good start!

Teenagers are at a unique time when they often want to work independently, but it's to their benefit that you check in on them regularly to correct and encourage them.

*Theresa O'Connor,
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.



JOHN PAUL THE GREAT
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



MAGDALEN COLLEGE
OF THE LIBERAL ARTS



THOMAS AQUINAS
COLLEGE



THOMAS MORE
COLLEGE



OUR LADY
SEAT OF WISDOM
COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY
OF DALLAS



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OF ST. THOMAS
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setonhome.org/colleges



BY ALEXANDRIA DEROSE

How to Raise Virtuous Boys

One of the most important questions to answer as a homeschool mom is your “why” behind your decision to homeschool. Raised as the oldest daughter of eight children in a loving Catholic family by an attorney and an intensive care nurse, I’ve always highly valued faith and education.

As an adult, I achieved a Master’s Degree in Science as a Family Nurse Practitioner and entered motherhood with a desire for excellence in education.

As I began researching education options for my oldest son, I found homeschooling to be “the most academically advantageous” option and was sold! Freedom for hours of individual pursuit of interests and for me to hand pick classic texts, options for advanced classes, and afternoons spent filling my children’s minds with the truth, beauty, and goodness of knowledge!? Yes, yes, yes.

A New Beginning

I began homeschooling my oldest from the beginning, enthusiastically teaching him to read at three and searching for academically rigorous curriculums. Thankfully, my husband was on board, mainly because his faithful mom had coincidentally homeschooled him through Seton! He attributed his strong moral formation and passion for the Catholic faith to this experience. He voiced that his main goal for our sons was for them to become virtuous, faithful men and explained how a Catholic homeschool curriculum would play a big role.



As I continued my research, the Lord worked on my prideful heart. I soon came to re-evaluate my goals as a homeschool mom and agree with my husband.

What good was all of the knowledge in the world if not formed to live the virtuous life God intends for us? Like the popular Christian homeschool tagline goes, "Our goal is heaven, not Harvard!"

A Growing Family

As our family grew and we were blessed with more sons, my research shifted specifically to parenting boys. If my goal was now to "raise virtuous boys," what must I prioritize in education? How would this change my approach? I learned that a virtue is a habit of character toward choosing the good and saw how Jesus is, of course, the model of virtue.

My desire led me to enroll our boys in Seton Home Study School, with my prayer prioritizing rigorous education, primarily in faith and virtue formation.

Opportunities to weave Jesus' teachings, saintly heroes, and teachings of our Catholic faith in every subject was exactly the kind of education I desired in helping me raise virtuous boys!

Raising Virtuous Boys

In addition to the Seton curriculum, here are some of my top tips for you to try as you also journey to "Raise Virtuous Boys." The world certainly needs them.

1. Call them virtuous! Name the virtue you see in them, including self-discipline, compassion, responsibility, friendship, work, courage, perseverance, honesty, loyalty, and faith. Compliment them behind the scenes: "That was very courageous of you!" "I noticed how hard you persevered through that!"

2. Provide virtuous male examples. Give them a male leader they know to aspire to. For example, "I hope you are faithful, honest, and loyal just like your dad!"

3. Read and tell them virtuous stories. Fill their heart and mind with heroes, holy Saints, and underdog men who overcame obstacles and pursued virtue. Many of these are woven into the Seton curriculum! The Bible, *The Book of Virtues* by William Bennet, and authors like C.S. Lewis are on the homeschool book lists.

4. Show physical and verbal affection. Boys need hugs and kisses from their mothers and need to hear, "I love you so much." "I am so happy you're my son." "I love the way God made you."

5. Model your mama apology and forgiveness as an example. Apologize as soon as possible for your unvirtuous behavior. "I'm sorry I said or did that. Can you forgive me?" "I'm trying to be better about losing my patience and working on self-control."

6. Learn their unique God-given temperament. This helps us understand why some virtues come easier or harder than others. It allows us to continue tailoring education to their nature and become their "first spiritual director of their soul."

7. Let them be boys! Encourage their desire for physical activity, play, and work. Give them space, freedom, and tools to run, wrestle, build, create, be loud, dirty, and learn healthy and natural ways to help them express their testosterone. The world might call this toxic, but we know it's an honor to foster their God-given masculinity.

8. Give them boundaries. Help them become virtuous by setting clear and consistent rules and consequences. Hang them on your fridge and read them aloud to the family.

9. Teach them about Jesus, their ultimate model of virtue. Use curriculums like Seton, which easily help place this as a priority.

10. Pray for and over them daily! Remember the power of a mother's prayer for her sons.

God's Blessings

As I prepare to welcome my fifth son this Christmas and continue our fifth year of homeschooling, I want all sons' mothers to be encouraged! Try these steps and remember your "why" as the goal of raising holy, virtuous sons for heaven.

May God continue to bless your efforts in education and faith as you pray to our Mother Mary, the ultimate boy mom. And turn to her Son as the model of virtue for our sons. All the best!



Alexandria DeRose is a Catholic wife and homeschooling mom of soon to be five sons who is passionate about spreading the joys of motherhood and family life. A former Family Nurse Practitioner and Fertility Awareness Educator, she endeavors to raise virtuous sons of God. Her husband, also a talented artist, uses his camera to capture the beautiful moments of their growing family." @alexandriaderose





JOHN PAUL THE GREAT
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Let's Make a Movie! JPCatholic's Feature Film Program

BY ELEAZAR PALMA



There is nothing quite like a film set. The production days can be exhausting, and there are always bound to be (many) things that go wrong, but there is nothing like the reward of seeing your creative work—your team's collaborative effort—up on the big screen.

There's a special adrenaline that comes from collaborating with such a large team of creatives to bring an even larger vision to life, each person bringing their unique strengths to contribute to the project's success.

Hands-on Education

At John Paul the Great Catholic University, my time as a film student was filled with many such experiences.

The education here is hands-on from freshman year, and the culture at JPCatholic is filled with devout Catholics who are serious about honing their creative craft. On any given weekend, multiple film shoots are happening for class or passion projects—one of my classmates ended up on over 120 film sets during her three years.

I graduated in 2021, just as the university introduced its Feature Film Program which took the hands-on experience to a new tier. It was a simple but ambitious idea: create a full-length movie as a university community, integrate that into the film curriculum, and do that every single year.

There hasn't been anything like it. Students would be earning not only class credit but IMDB credit. They would gain hands-on experience on a feature film set and exposure to alumni who are industry professionals. They would be able to produce and distribute content commercially, reaching more audiences with Truth, Beauty, and Goodness through the power of storytelling.



One year later, production on our inaugural film, *O, Brawling Love!* has wrapped. It's a Shakespearean rom-com about two rival students starring opposite each other in their high school production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Dreams Come True

How was I involved? After graduation, I was blessed to continue as a part of this community as staff in the film department.

My new role came with the opportunity and responsibility of co-producing the feature with Prof. George Simon.

It was a dream come true for me to work on a movie in this capacity,

especially one that wove together humor and entertainment with Catholic themes like sacrificial love.

From watching screenwriting senior Bella Lake present her concept at the Pitch Night last fall to the months of pre-production, the intense (and fun) days on set, and now editing the film, I have been incredibly proud of my classmates and fellow alumni on the level of quality and professionalism we achieved.

The production lasted nearly four weeks in June, and we shot the project here in the Escondido area. Over 50 students of various majors and several alumni were involved on and off set, including several acting students with major roles.



Over the Summer Quarter, students in the Post-Production course got to work on editing *O, Brawling Love!*, and we already have an initial cut. The coming months will involve further musical scoring and post-production by one of our alumni. Finally, we will shop the film to film markets through Prof. Jeff Deverett's Distribution and Marketing class.

And that's just year one! We have already received 50 pitches from students and alumni for our 2023 project and look forward to yet another Pitch Night this fall.

Student Body Talent

I think this Feature Film Program is a reflection of the drive and talent that exist within our student body. Whether acting, illustration, creative writing, animation, business, or theology, JPCatholic students are dedicated to cultivating their God-given gifts to prepare for a career that glorifies Christ.

Before even graduating, they create and publish video games on Steam. They work on real client projects for their graphic design classes. They start their own companies in our LaunchPad. We don't need to wait until graduation to begin the work of impacting culture for Christ.

As our patron, Pope Saint John Paul II, said, "Humanity in every age, and even today, looks to works of art to shed light upon its path and its destiny."

If you find that spark of creativity and innovation within you, I encourage you to explore and cultivate that spark. Our society needs faith-filled, talented Catholics contributing to the cultural conversation, unafraid to stand for truth and beauty in the marketplace of ideas and entertainment.

And who knows—maybe you'll even find yourself at a small Catholic university in Southern California, surrounded by a vibrant community of Catholics who share that spark.



Eleazar Palma studied film at John Paul the Great Catholic University after discerning the priesthood for four years. He graduated in 2021 and now lives with his wife (a fellow alum) in Escondido, working for the University.



CULTIVATING My CREATIVITY AT JP CATHOLIC

ALUMNI PROFILE: NICHOLAS HAREN

The initial appeal of John Paul the Great Catholic University came from the authentically Catholic community and the industry experience of the professors.

From my professors, I have learned that filmmaking is about capturing the essence of humanity, good and bad, and revealing where grace is present.

As an actor, I have learned the importance of capturing each character's humanity, whether the noble hero or the ruthless villain. I, the actor, must understand the character's objective throughout the story, why he has that objective, and why he uses particular means to achieve that objective.

Besides honing my craft through the lessons based on the great acting teachers Stanislavski, Chekov, Meisner, Stella Adler, and more, the industry-experienced professors have been instrumental in preparing me to enter the competitive field of Acting. I have been given an inside look at the business and have a leg up on the competition to book jobs as soon as I graduate.

Beyond being taught in the classroom, I have worked on many film projects that have given me valuable experience on the inner workings of a film set.

At JPCatholic there are an incredible number of dedicated filmmakers with whom I have had the pleasure of working, making films that range from starting an underground fight club

in a high school bathroom to being separated from my squad after the battle of Normandy. I have developed strong, deep-rooted friendships based on a love for creating art that glorifies the grace of God present in human stories.

This kind of community is built on the teaching of our professors, who care to cultivate a culture where "we" is greater than "me." We supported each other and worked on each other's projects, even if we weren't receiving any class credit for our role in the project.

I have confidence that even after graduation, the creatives I have the pleasure of calling my friends will continue to support each other creatively, professionally, and spiritually.

A little about myself; I was born in Portland, Oregon, aspire to be an actor, and graduated from JPCatholic with a bachelor's in Communications Media, with an emphasis in Acting, in August of 2022.

I developed a love for performing through our local Christian Children's Community Theater and discovered a passion for the screen. My family often put on plays and filmed small, homemade productions in which I acted as a child. My favorite part of the craft is learning more about myself with every character I play."

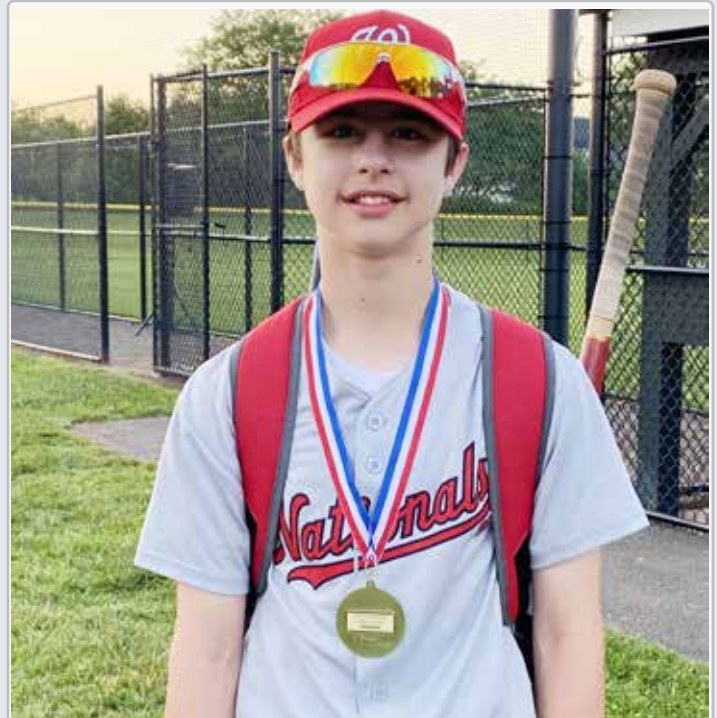
Among my other enjoyments are parkour and freerunning, which I have used in theater productions and film projects, performing flips and short fight sequences. My plans after graduation are to marry fellow JPCatholic student Maria Gajdosik on May 20, 2023, and move to LA to pursue acting and stunt performing.





4-H Grand Champion in Dog Obedience to Samantha

Her flexible schedule allowed her to attend the State Fair and hard work and perseverance made Samantha 4-H Grand Champion.



John is Little League Home Run Derby Champ

John is interested in baseball and reading and would like to earn a baseball scholarship to attend college and one day play in the MLB.

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The Dirty Boot Band

WITH JEFF MINICK

Now there's a grand name for a country music band.

That alliteration of boot and band blend together like coffee and cream, and the dirty boot summons up images of hard work on a farm or a Western ranch.

Which, in the case of South Dakota's Nickolas and Weinheimer families, is a description that fits like a glove, or if you prefer, like a good old comfortable dirty boot.

On one side of the Missouri River near Onida, the Weinheimer clan make their home: husband and wife, Alan and Cori, and their children, Jacob, grade 12, Sam, grade 10, and Simon, grade 8.

Their oldest son, Josh, just graduated from law school, and their daughter Grace, having earned her undergraduate degree, is working in agricultural marketing risk management.

Cross the Missouri, and we meet the Nickolas family of Fort Pierre (pronounced "Peer" by the natives), linked to the Weinheimers by the marriage of Aimee to Cori's brother Cody Nickolas.

Their children, cousins to the young Weinheimers, are Sheridan, grade 12, Adelynn, grade 11, Jace, grade 8, and Ty, grade 5.

Ties That Bind


More than blood unites these two families. The Weinheimers farm while the Nickolas family focuses more on ranching.

In addition to raising cattle, milk cows, sheep, and chickens, between them, the two families cultivate hay, spring and winter wheat, corn, millet, and sunflowers. Land and farming are a centerpiece of their lives.

Music also acts as a bond. All the seven cousins still living at home play musical instruments, and from these interests and talents, the Dirty Boot Band was born during the winter of 2020.

For the first year, the band mostly played in such venues as nursing homes and senior centers, arranging these gigs themselves, but now, as Jacob Weinheimer says, "After that, people started calling us."





This past summer, the band often publicly appeared once or twice weekly. Recently, the South Dakota Short Grass Arts Council invited Dirty Boot to their *Tales on the River*, where the cousins had a chance to tell people about their music and why they chose some of the songs they like to sing.

They've also played at a Canaries baseball game in Sioux Falls, SD, and twice at the South Dakota State Fair.

Their common faith has also kept the cousins close. The Weinheimers are parishioners at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Pierre, while the Nickolas family attends Saint John Catholic Church in Fort Pierre.

The Homeschool Advantage

In addition, homeschooling has provided yet another bridge between the families. For the past eight years, all the cousins have been enrolled with Seton Home Study School.

When asked what first attracted them to Seton, Cori Weinheimer says, "It was accredited, plus we knew we wouldn't miss teaching anything. That was especially important."

Moreover, learning at home for the cousins has extended beyond the classroom in other ways, allowing them to develop an impressive array of talents other than those learned in their studies.

Farm Life

On the day I spoke with Cori by phone, I also had the good fortune to talk with her son Jacob and Seton senior Sheridan Nickolas.

Though I usually ask the mom to describe a typical school day, Jacob and Sheridan offered their insights. Sheridan told me that the Nickolases' school routine often depends on the time of year.

"During hunting season," she said, "we do chores on the farm and school, but we also clean pheasants at the lodge," a hunting lodge, preserve, and skeet range operated over several generations by her side of the family.

"And in the spring," Sheridan added, "it's calving season, so we're always checking on the cows." In addition, she and her siblings do the milking and often make cheese and butter.

Jacob tells me, "I try to get done with school around noon so I can help Dad around the farm, planting, spraying, and combining, that sort of thing."

In addition to all these activities, the cousins have pursued other interests over the years. The Nickolas children, for example, are keen on shooting sports and tournaments, and Sheridan is an outstanding pitcher in fastpitch softball. The girls have a "little baking business" that supplies hunters with homemade cookies and sells handmade jewelry and hats.



God's Blossoms

When asked what advice she might offer new homeschoolers, Cori pauses a moment, then says, "I think the hardest part at the beginning for us was just getting organized. That comes with practice. But my advice now to new homeschooling parents would be, 'Don't hit the panic button even if you have babies. Just relax and teach your kids.' I do think we're better teachers if we're not so stressed out."

As to her greatest satisfaction as a homeschool mom, Cori says, "It's being able to see kids blossom in a way God planned. They know their talents aren't just based on their abilities but are gifts from God. Just to find our purpose from God is wonderful. It's satisfying to find that hope in our own family."

Decades ago, Father Patrick Peyton made famous the saying, "The family that prays together stays together." As the Weinheimer and Nickolas cousins demonstrate, sharing common interests—education, work, music, love of place, and family—make those bonds of prayer even stronger.



And Two Pesky Parakeets... How Can I Balance All of This?



While sitting in my teensy cubicle at Seton, anticipating the next counseling call and fantasizing about the instant my eighth and youngest child would graduate from school, a call came bleating in.

"I have five children enrolled in Seton," a mom whispered to me in a way that sounded as if she could hardly believe what she'd done to herself. "They're in second grade," she went on to say, "fifth grade, seventh grade, ninth grade, and eleventh grade. Plus, I have an eight-month-old baby, two annoying parakeets, a leaky dishwasher, and no sleep. How am I supposed to balance all this?"

I thought a moment, and then I told her my answer.

"You're not."

Balancing implies that you're doing everything at the same time. This is impossible.

The life of a homeschooling mom is an unfurling ribbon of tiny, stunning performances, witnessed by God, your family, friends, and even, perhaps, those pesky parakeets, if they're paying attention. The trick is to avoid getting tangled into knots.

Next week, assess the natural sway of your day and then lay out your schedule with that in mind. For example, if nobody gets going until ten, set eleven as the time school should begin.

This way, you're not fighting your family's natural rhythm. Assess your children's skills and abilities and delegate.

Dole out chores, so all the household duties do not fall exclusively on you. When you see a job that needs to

be done, give it to the youngest kid who can carry it out. Otherwise, the tendency is to give everything to the oldest.

Children can help each other with school, listening to reading lessons, or multiplication flash cards, for instance.

As in a brick-and-mortar school, your children may have to wait for the teacher's attention. They will be more patient and cooperative if they know this in advance and believe that you will get to them when you are free.

Make sure you are using Seton's lesson plans as a tool. If you find them overwhelming, pare back, look at what needs to be done, and set aside the extras.

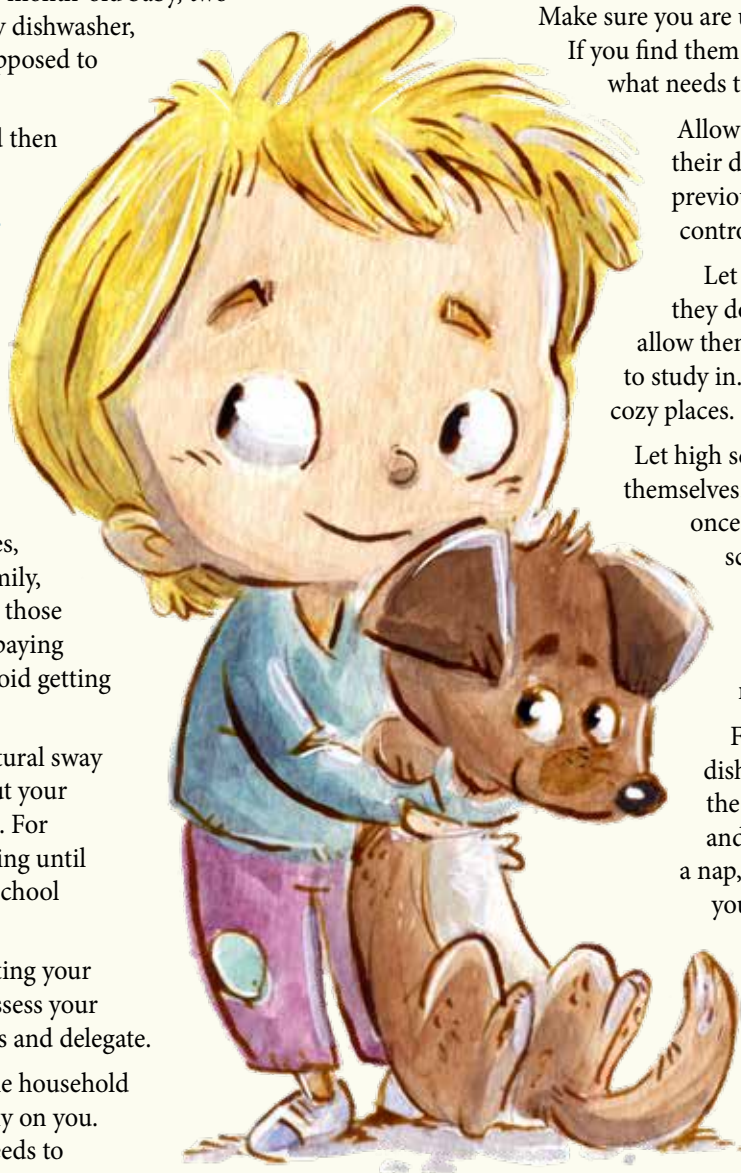
Allow your kids the freedom to schedule their day within parameters you have previously set. This gives them a sense of control.

Let them choose the order in which they do their subjects and, if possible, allow them a pocket of space that is theirs to study in. Little kids like to study in little, cozy places.

Let high schoolers be responsible for themselves. Have them check in with you once a week to ensure they stay on schedule and advance confidently.

This is good training for the future. You're learning to let go, and they're learning to be responsible adults.

Finally, put a towel under the dishwasher, set the parakeets' cage at the farthest possible end of the house, and when your eight-month-old takes a nap, you take one too. I give you permission.



Heather Hibl, Seton Elementary Counselor, lives in the Blue Ridge mountains of Virginia with her blue-eyed husband and her eight blue-eyed children. She is always missing the ocean and nearly always craving blueberry muffins. Obviously, her favorite color is blue. Oh, and she also likes to write.

Act Fast!

Don't Forget To Opt-In!

 **Seton**
MAGAZINE

This Might be Your Last Printed Issue!

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.

Your Choice: By Mail or Online

For many years we have mailed the magazine to every family enrolled with Seton. Because of the high cost of mailing, we are considering mailing **only if the family opts-in to receive it.** (*The magazine will still be available to read online.*)

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

To Continue Receiving the *Seton Magazine* by Mail, Please opt-in at:

www.setonhome.org/optin





Ask the Experts: — How Does Your Family Keep Advent Holy?

Three Veteran Homeschooling Moms Share Their Experience

I Started By Keeping it Simple...



Keeping Advent penitential has presented challenges every year. Yet, I'd dare say the challenges continually increase as the culture moves further and further away from the season's true meaning. So, my first step in keeping Advent penitential is to release myself from the anxiety of trying to "do all the things."

There is a real temptation to try on all the beautiful, holy, inspired, and new Advent traditions hawked on social media and Catholic blogs; therefore, I start by keeping it simple. I may follow one or two inspirations to create a novel Advent wreath or pray an extra novena, but I will not overwhelm myself or my family with fifteen Advent craft projects.

Years ago, our parish priest encouraged us to postpone decorating our homes until Christmas Eve. His instruction was wise; however, leaving everything for the day before Christmas isn't practical for our family. But, we wait a little longer to begin decorating and leave the Christmas tree outside until a few days before Christmas.

Lastly, we make going to confession a priority during Advent. To that end, we typically choose to attend one of our diocesan Penance Services.

While we go to confession regularly throughout the year, the Advent Penance Service provides a powerful witness to all of us. Seeing the long lines of penitents reminds us that this season is one of preparation and anticipation and that we are part of a community of believers.

“We make going to confession a priority during Advent.”

Keeping it simple, not rushing to decorate, and making the Sacrament of Reconciliation a priority helps my family to retain the penitential spirit of the Advent season.

Tara Brelinzsky, North Carolina

Don't Try To Do Everything...



To keep Advent holy, I do two things: I start early, and I don't try to do every single thing. I will try to have the shopping done by Thanksgiving. Then I can focus my heart on what matters in the season. We do an Advent wreath but have a complicated relationship with the Jesse tree. I love it, and it's beautiful.

It's just by December 9th or 10th I start getting behind. We can't do every devotion every time.

I am also not the cookie baking queen. My kids are lucky if we get a package of store-bought gingerbread men. And that's ok.

But one thing we do that is important to me is what we call Epiphany Buddies, or EB. We put all our names in a hat, and each of us draws on the first Sunday of Advent. That person is your EB.

We have little mailboxes from the dollar store, and through Advent, you write little notes, say extra prayers, perform sacrifices, and do extra chores for your EB. Was your bed made for you? Your EB has struck.

“Focus your heart on what matters in the season.”

You are also expected to save money and buy a small gift for your EB. On Epiphany, all is revealed, and the gifts are exchanged after the house blessing and a special dinner. The reveal and the gift exchange focus on what you can do for others in the season and not on what you get. It also keeps the festivities going past December 26, which is unheard of in our culture.

Kristin Brown, Virginia

Keep Advent Penitential...



My husband grew up with Advent being a penitential season similar to that of Lent.

We carried this over into our engagement period and our marriage.

Our family always gives up sweets and treats for the season, except for feast days, birthdays, Sundays, or a rare early Christmas party.

We also give up something of our choosing that is specific to us individually.

When our children were younger, we had them put yarn or hay in a manger anytime they did something penitential or merciful to make Baby Jesus' bed a little softer.

In recent years I've also included reading St. Alphonsus de Liguori's book, *The Incarnation, Birth, and Infancy of Jesus Christ*, as my spiritual reading for the season.

Susan Brock, Virginia

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



“The greatest benefit of homeschooling is being able to help each child individually and give them the time they need to develop their God-given talents.”

We chose Seton for its deeply Catholic teachings, seen consistently through their books and the support system that Seton has developed so well.

We love the flexibility that Seton provides for each student and the family.

The Barnard Family, Rogers, AR

in the **Schoolroom** *Gratitude*



The Thanksgiving holiday (in the U.S., November 24th), followed so quickly by the Advent season, gives us a perfect opportunity to help our children reflect on gratitude.

In 2021 Harvard Medical School published results from a study on gratitude by two psychologists. The participants were asked to write a few sentences weekly on specific topics.

The Harvard Study on Gratitude

One group wrote about things they were grateful for that had happened during the week, the second wrote about things that irritated or upset them during the week, and the third just wrote about the events that had affected them with no comment on whether it was positive or negative.

After ten weeks, guess which group was happier with their lives? The gratitude reflecting group was not only happier, but they were also healthier, having fewer ailments and doctor visits.

The results are hardly big news (nor is it the first study indicating grateful people are happier); however, it is worth noting because as the world becomes more divisive and intrusive, it becomes harder to feel gratitude. The nonstop (bad) news cycle robs us of our peace by never showing the goodness around us.

Learning to Observe is Essential

Saint Paul wrote to the Colossians, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." Col 2:6-7

Gratitude requires the habit of observation, to be aware of what God has given.

Having children keep a log or journal of things they are grateful for helps them focus and develop this habit of observation.

I have said many times, "thoughtful people write down their thoughts," and this act of writing helps us to be thoughtful.

A quick crafty journal that children can personalize will make the whole experience more enjoyable.

A Crafty Gratitude Journal

MATERIALS

- 3-5 brown paper lunch bags
- Glue stick
- Pencil
- Hole punch
- Yarn/twine/ribbon (about a 12-inch length should be enough)
- White paper

Optional - stickers, pretty papers, photos

DIRECTIONS

Lay your bags horizontally on top of each other and fold them in half.

Punch three holes on each side of the fold, starting about an inch from the edge.

Cut your yarn into three equal lengths and thread one length through each pair of holes horizontally and tie.

Snip any long ends.

Fold your journal in half, and using it as a guide, cut out a piece of white paper to glue on as a cover. You can glue more white squares on the pages, use scrapbook paper, or write on brown paper.

Use whatever you like to decorate your journal.

Each day, write something for which you are grateful. For young children, it might be fun to glue a photo of something to get them started, for example, a picture of grandma or your swing set.

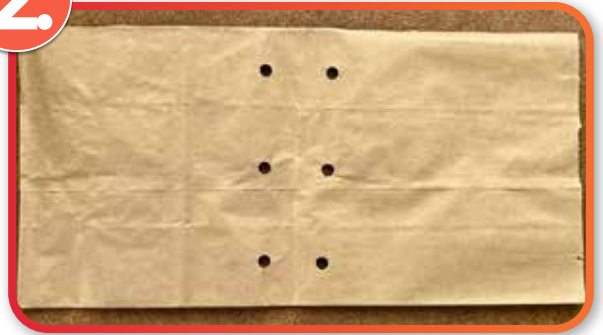
Make a few journals as gifts for the family. I think your gifts will be treasured!



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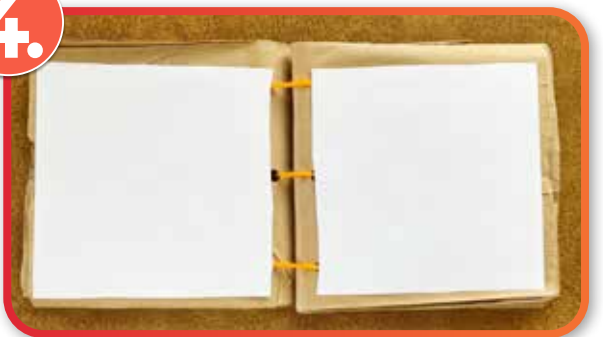
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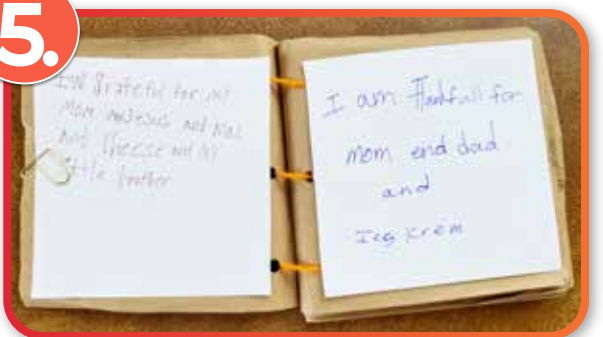
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Mary Ellen Barrett is a mother of seven children and two in heaven, wife to David, and a lifelong New Yorker. She has homeschooled her children for eleven years using Seton and an enormous number of books. She is the editor of *Seton Magazine* and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

STAFF SERIES

A chat with those who serve you!

Christina Nutt - Elementary Counselor



A native of Greensboro, North Carolina, Christina Nutt attended Catholic and public schools as a child. In high school, she and her family again shifted direction, and she enrolled with the Seton Home Study School, where today she works as an academic counselor for Grades 1-8.

Prepared for College

On graduating from high school, Christina entered Christendom College—"Seton definitely prepared me well for college," she says—and graduated with a degree in English literature. Hoping to become an elementary school teacher, she also took Christendom's teacher training and practicum.

As with so many others, COVID changed her plans. Though she and her classmates celebrated in-person graduation in August 2020, she spent her last semester at Christendom doing classes remotely. During this time, she also began working for Memoria Press in their online academy.

In July of that year, Christina heard of an opening at Seton, applied, was hired, and has spent the last two years counseling students and parents by phone, email, and, most recently, chat.

Granting course approvals for students transferring from other schools is another of her assignments. Along with Seton's Laura Fusto and Theresa O'Connor, Christina also helped rewrite and produce the new edition of Seton's *Book Report Handbook*.

When asked what brought her the greatest satisfaction in her role as counselor, Christina paused a moment and then said,

"I think it comes during a phone call when a student says, 'I've got it. I understand!'" She smiled. "Once a student even told me, 'Wow! I really like diagramming now.' I never thought I'd hear that one."

In her time away from her office, Christina enjoys hiking, particularly in the Shenandoah National Park, traveling, and trying out new recipes in the kitchen.



She is a parishioner at Front Royal's St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church. In college, she spent time in Italy and Ireland—"A beautiful country!"—and hopes to travel even more in the future.

She also counts reading as a favorite pastime. Among the books carried by Seton, she especially recommends the *Anne of Green Gables* novels, C.S. Lewis's *Narnia* series, and Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars*.

Ready to Help

Christina has two more recommendations. She urges students not to be afraid to call Seton when they need help.

For example, if they're writing a paper, she says, "Don't wait till the last minute. We can brainstorm the paper together."

She also advises parents, "If your child struggles with reading or math, let us know when you call. We're on the same side and want what's best for your child."

Whether by phone or in a face-to-face meeting, Christina Nutt is a bright, enthusiastic young woman ready to assist her students in whatever way she can.

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SHIPPING
ON ANY ORDER OVER \$35

Seton

Educational Media

CHRISTMAS CATALOG 2022

Advent Activities for Catholic Homeschoolers



By Mary Ellen Barrett
200 Ideas, Crafts and Activities
for your Advent Calendar!

M-RLCH-60 | \$7.95

Christmas Activity Book Set



Need a fun way to help children learn about the true meaning of Christmas?

These activity books are designed to teach children all about Our Lord's nativity using puzzles and activities to reinforce the reason for the season—the birth of Christ. **Recommended ages 4-10.**



\$19.95 | Christmas Activity Book Set | M-RLCH-24

\$8.95 | Christmas Fun Bible Activity Book | M-RLCH-17

\$2.95 | Christmas A-Z Activity Book | M-RLCH-22

\$8.95 | The Story of Christmas Sticker Book | M-RLCH-23

My Nativity Pop-out Advent Calendar

Lovely Advent calendar to use each day to help prepare your family for the coming of the Savior.



\$11.95 | My Nativity Pop-out Calendar | M-RLCH-15



Jesse Tree Kit

Each of the 28 pre-drawn paper ornaments can be colored by the children for their own personal touch. This kit also includes a short history of the Jesse Tree and a Jesse Tree prayer service. The Jesse Tree is a wonderful reflection on salvation history as a preparation for the celebration of Christmas.

\$12.95 | Jesse Tree Kit | M-RLCH-12

Nativity Magnet and Sticker Sets

These nativity magnet and sticker sets are great fun for kids of all ages to learn about the birth of our Savior. Each magnet set comes on a lift out sheet and includes 11 pieces for recreating a full nativity scene. The sticker sheets have 16 separate images. They make great stocking stuffers or Christmas gifts!



\$2.95 | Nativity Magnet Set | M-RLCH-44

\$1.50 | Nativity Sticker Sheet | M-RLCH-45

\$5.00 | Nativity Sticker Sheet 5 Pack | M-RLCH-46

Baby Jesus in a Manger & Kneeling Santa

A wonderful way to teach the true meaning of Christmas! These resin figurines help refocus our celebrations on God's greatest gift to us - His Son, Jesus.



\$14.95 | Kneeling Santa 5 inch Figurine | M-RLCH-19

\$4.95 | Kneeling Santa 3 inch Ornament | M-RLCH-20

\$11.95 | 5 inch Baby Jesus in a Manger | M-RLCH-29





**2021
Best
Sellers**

Nativity Stable Christmas Auto Magnet

\$2.95 | M-RLCH-43



Christmas/Advent Coloring Book Set

\$4.00 | P-RLPK-42



Saint Memory Card Game

\$3.95 | M-RLSS-20



Catholic Songs for Children

\$12.00 | P-MU01-12 | CD

\$19.95 | P-MU01-21 | DVD



Chem C1000 Beginner Chemistry Set

62.95 | P-SCKT-32

Little Catholics First Rosary Set



\$14.95 | INDIVIDUALLY

\$53.95 | FOUR BOOK SET | M-RLBK-G0

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14 Titles at
SetonBooks.com**

\$12.95 | Individually

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Glory Stories

These professionally produced dramatizations are the true stories of the lives of holy people of God. Saints set inspiring examples for youngsters to emulate in their early walk of Faith.

Now 17 CDs with 25 Saints and Blesseds!



\$15.95 | INDIVIDUAL CDS

\$215.00 | 17 CD Set | M-RLCD-20

**SAVE
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CCC Saints & Heroes DVDs

Catholic, inspiring, and entertaining! This classic video collection from CCC features high quality animated films about inspiring and heroic figures. Each 30 minutes.



**SAVE
\$20.00**

\$79.95 | SET OF 9 | M-RLDV-40

\$11.95 | INDIVIDUALLY



Magnetic Wooden Numbers & Alphabet

Numbers: Enough numerals to count from zero through twenty AND five math signs in a convenient wooden case. 37 colorful magnetic pieces.

\$12.95 | P-MDPK-13

Alphabet: 52 brightly colored magnetic upper AND lowercase letters in a handy divided wooden case. Ideal for letter recognition, matching, and stenciling.

\$12.95 | P-MDPK-14



Cat Dog

Alphabet Express Floor Puzzle

All aboard the Alphabet Train! Familiar objects are featured in each car to illustrate the letter, all pulled by a beautifully detailed engine! Ten feet long when assembled, 28 extra-thick cardboard pieces. It's easy-clean surface keeps puzzle looking new.

\$14.95 | P-MDPK-18

See & Spell

Complete a puzzle to spell a word, while developing a sight-reading vocabulary or use the letters for stenciling. Recommended for ages 4 and up. Contains small parts.

\$19.95 | P-MD02-11



Play Money Set

With fifty of each denomination, this set includes familiar-looking paper bills and plastic coins in a handy wooden "cash drawer" box.

\$24.95 | P-MD02-10



Shape-Sorting Clock

\$15.95 | P-MDPK-42

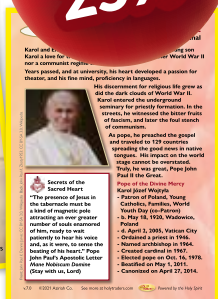


Pattern Blocks and Boards

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184 CARDS – INCLUDES 14 REVISED TRADING CARDS – WERE BEATIFIED, NOW CANONIZED –



\$44.20 | Holy Traders All 184 Cards | M-RLXX-16

\$59.25 | Activity Kit – All the cards PLUS activity pages | M-RLXX-22

\$7.46 | Individual Sets

- Glossy finished trading cards
- Have short biographies and statistics
- Inspire children to their call to holiness

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Saints Biographies

The Life of a Saint Series

Their fascinating life stories will help children discover the great adventure of holiness. Hard cover. 32 pp. **Recommended for Grades Pre-K-K-4.**



- \$82.00 | Six Book Set | P-RD03-60**
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- \$14.95 | Bernadette: The Little Girl from Lourdes | P-RD03-64**
- \$14.95 | John Mary Vianney: The Holy Cure of Ars | P-RD03-65**
- \$14.95 | Mother Teresa: The Smile of Calcutta | P-RD03-66**

Encounter the Saints: Saint Biographies



In the *Encounter the Saints* readers, children experience the challenges, heroism, and holiness of some of the greatest friends of God! Collect them all and meet the saints! These make great stocking stuffers for the young reader! See available titles at SetonBooks.com **Grades 4 and up.**

- \$200.00 | Set of 26 | M-RDB4-09**
- \$8.95 | Individually**

Saints for Boys and Girls Sticker Books

Each of these wonderful activity books for Catholic children feature 25 reusable, easy-peel stickers. Children can read the names and brief biographies of the Saints in the book and choose the stickers that fit in the appropriate spaces. They can also use these stickers to make holy cards, greeting cards, or to decorate their own books.



- \$16.00 | Saints for Boys and Girls Set | M-RLBK-E5**
- \$8.95 | Saints for Boys Sticker Book | M-RLBK-E6**
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Mary Fabyan Windeatt Saint Biographies

Beautiful and detailed stories of the saints appropriate for **grades 4-8** but enjoyable for older readers as well. The whole family will enjoy reading these popular stories of the saints.

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Vision Books: Saint Biographies

The Vision Books are one of the most popular and well-written series of saints' lives ever produced for young people. **Recommended for Grades 4-8.**

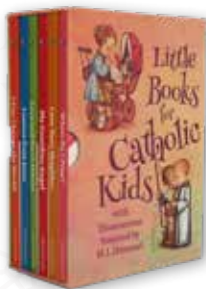
Entire 24-book set on sale for \$174! Save \$90! (Sold individually \$11 each)

- \$174.00 | Set of 24 | M-RDST-02**
- \$11.00 | Individually**

Catholic Gifts

Little Books for Catholic Kids

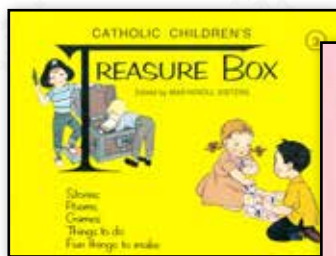
These delightful board books with illustrations inspired by Sister M.I. Hummel® feature life lessons for children, including when to pray, how to help others, being a good example, and more. Ideal for teaching moments. Recommended for Grades Pre-K-3.



\$24.95 | Little Books for Catholic Kids | P-RDPK-40

Catholic Children's Treasure Box

Presents a wonderful combination of fun and the Catholic Faith. Filled with stories, poems, games, things to do, and fun things to make. Charming full-color illustrations. Grades K-2. Each 32 pp.



SAVE \$10.00

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A great decoration for Children's Bedrooms or around the Family Altar! Helps foster love for our favorite saints and devotions. See all our titles at SetonBooks.com!



- Removable, reusable
- For use on painted walls
- Laminated vinyl to prevent fading

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\$14.95 | St. Michael Set | M-RLCL-80

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100

Full Color Cards!

4 x 5.75 inch



A fun way to help disciples of all ages learn more about the Saints. Each full color card includes a short biography on the back and three "Fun Facts" prompts to help in the identification of each Saint. Cards come in a sturdy gift box.

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Prayer Pillowcases are a delightful new way to learn Catholic prayers, remember to begin and end each day with a prayerful heart!

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Flexible Saint Magnets



These **Saint Magnets** capture the imagination as they teach Saints to the children. Each pack of magnets features 10 different Saints, and there are two of each Saint in each set. These magnets are fun, educational, and spiritual.

Each Flexible Magnet is 2-1/4 x 3."

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Children's Literature

The Adventures of Nick & Sam



Easy-to-read series with simple vocabulary and large print. Perfect read-aloud experiences.

Great way to talk to kids about the Faith. **Recommended for Grades 3-6.** 129-167 pp.

\$49.00 | Set of 6 | P-RD04-70
\$8.95 | Individually

Gospel Time Trekkers



Perfect for Christmas! In Volume One, meet three siblings as they travel through time and find the stable where Jesus was born.

True to Biblical culture and scholarship, *Time Trekkers* are bound to become treasured additions to your family library! **Recommended for Grade K-5.** 70-80 pp. each.

\$33.00 | Set of 6 | P-RD03-50
\$6.90 | Individually



Childhood of Famous Americans

Lively, inspiring, fictionalized biographies sweep kids into the early lives of these great Americans. **Recommended for Grades 3-6.**



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\$21.90 | Frontier Adventurer 3 Book Set | M-RDB5-40
\$29.65 | American President 4 Book Set | M-RDB5-20
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Fairchild Family Series



This set of 4 books present the fun and amusing lives of the members of the Fairchild family who live in the Kentucky hills during the early 1900s. **Recommended for Grade 3-5.**

\$45.00 | Set of 4 | P-RD04-50
\$12.10 | Individually



Latch Valley Farm Series



Immersed in the vigorous life of their American-Polish community the world for young Anna and her friends is filled with adventures and fun, as the children begin to realize what warm security is to be found in a hardworking family rooted in faith and love. **Recommended for Grade 4 and up.**

\$64.90 | Set of 5 | P-RD05-49
\$14.30 | Individually

Alvin Fernald Book Set



In this adventuresome series of books, Alvin Fernald is not only looking for new adventures but, along with "Shoie," his sports-hero pal, and Alvin's little sister Daphne, loves to solve mysteries. Fun and laughter for readers of all ages. **Recommended for Grade 6-8.**

\$25.00 | Set of 3 | P-RD05-81
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Children's Literature

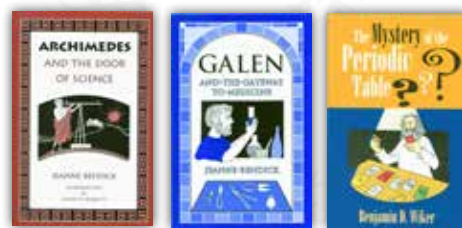
The Mitchell Series



These humorous, delightful stories of family life in U.S. during and after WWII emphasize sacrifice, and having fun despite having little money. **Recommended for Grade 5.**

\$46.20 | Set of 3 | P-RD05-54
\$16.50 | Individually

Bethlehem Science Set



With witty and solidly instructive stories, these books bring to life stories of the ancient Greek mathematician and Roman physician, as well as a delightfully absorbing journey on the trail of the elements of the periodic table. **Recommended for Grade 6-9.**

\$39.60 | Set of 3 | P-SCBK-27
\$14.30 | Individually

Bantry Bay Series



These charming, wholesome, and fun-filled tales chronicle Catholic family life in 1940s Ireland with humorous and heartwarming accounts.

These books are ideal to read aloud to children eight or nine years old and most appropriate as good literature for children in junior high school or older. **Recommended for Grade 6-8.**

\$46.20 | Set of 3 | P-RD05-57
\$16.50 | Individually

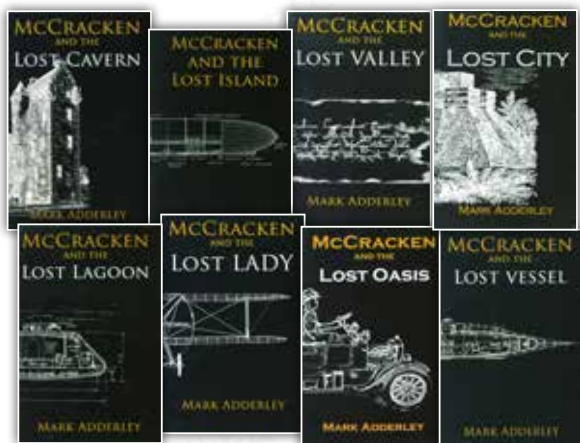
Young Adventurer's 5 Book Set

This *Young Adventurer's Set* is sure to keep your young reader turning pages! Hand-picked for their action and suspense, these novels give an authentic account of history, while teaching Christian virtues. **Recommended for Grade 6 and up.**



\$65.00 | 5-Book Set | P-RD07-50
\$14.30 | Red Falcons of Tremoine | P-RD06-50
\$14.30 | Big John's Secret | P-RD05-23
\$14.30 | The Reb and the Redcoats | P-RD07-23
\$15.40 | Enemy Brothers | P-RD08-22
\$14.30 | Son of Charlemagne | P-RD06-19

The McCracken Adventures

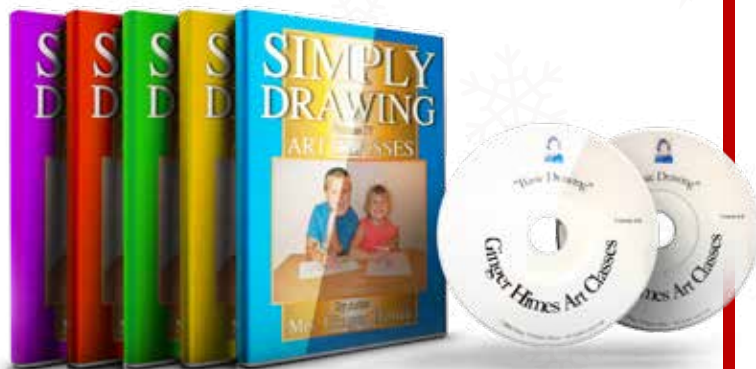


If you weren't aware of McCracken, you should know that he's been described as "Indiana Jones with a Rosary."

The McCracken books are written so that you can read each one as a stand-alone. But if you really want to read them in the order that they happen, this is the chronology. **Recommended for Grades 6-10.**

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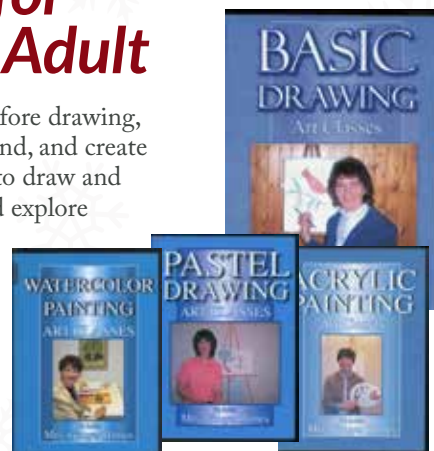
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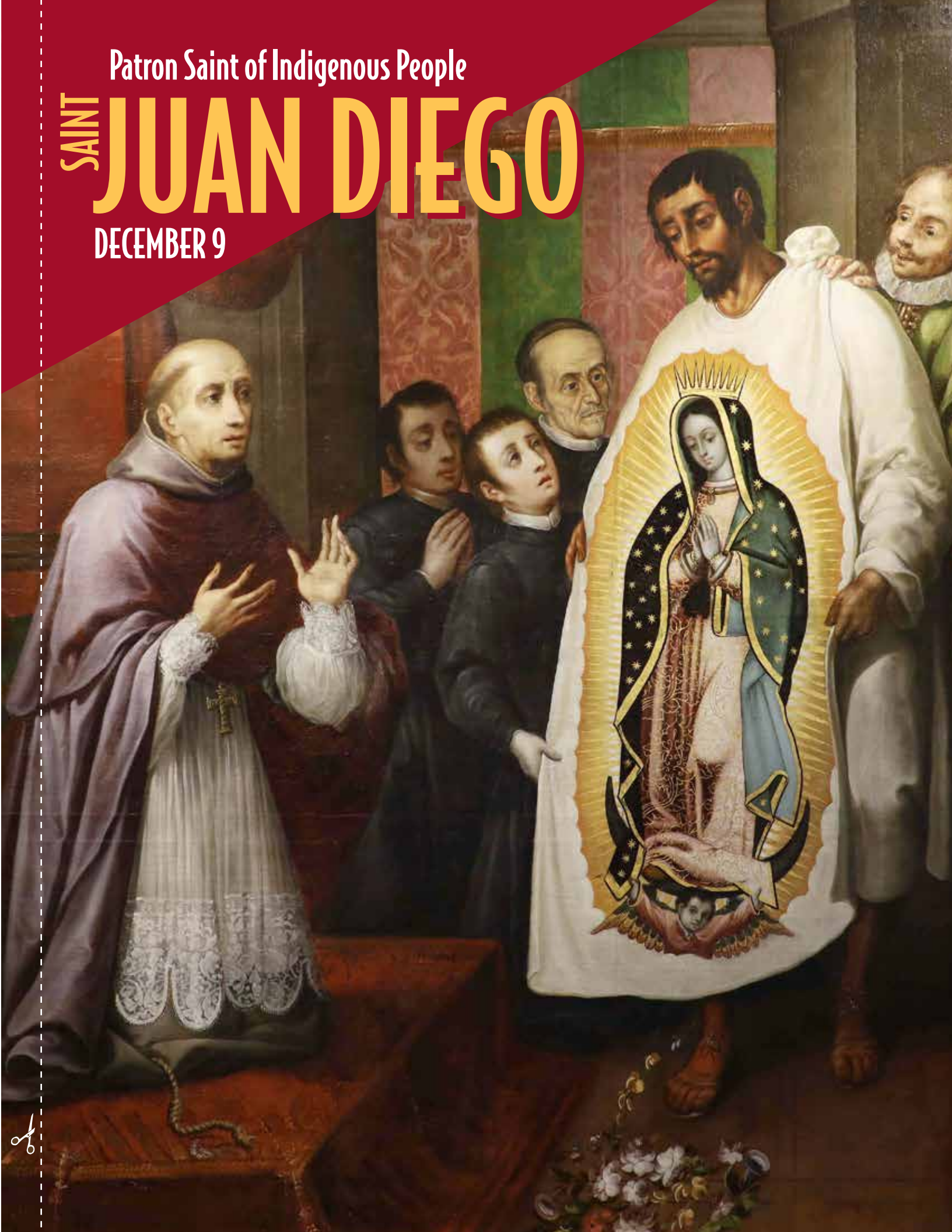
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Pope Benedict XVI
Fifth World Meeting of Families
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