

Seton MAGAZINE



Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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Do Not Be Afraid***
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Building Futures on Strong Foundations

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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,

Sometimes, my job is a lot of fun. Seton's graduation is one of the best weekends of the year for me since I get to attend and meet so many families that I have only known online and share their joy on this momentous occasion. This year, I was able to be there not only as Chairman of Seton's board but also as the proud parent of a graduate. There may have been a few tears shed.

We have included a few short biographies of the 165 graduates who attended this year. This is an impressive group of young men and women who are, I am sure, going to be successful wherever God leads them. Parents, you have done a wonderful job!

Since many of our students follow a traditional school calendar and are just getting started, our counselors pulled together a "cheat sheet" of sorts to help you make the best use of the lesson plans and your MySeton page. These resources are invaluable to a Seton parent in order to have a homeschool that runs efficiently.

Our featured family this month is taught by a second-generation Seton mom. Helen was homeschooled with Seton back when very few people were homeschooling, and she is carrying on the tradition of excellent academics and faith formation. I hope you enjoy reading about the Vacchiano family as much as I did.

At this time of year, most of us are enthusiastic about the coming academic year; even after all these years, it is still exciting to begin again. I pray that all Seton families are finding their homeschool legs and settling into their routines. Should you need any help or advice, please feel free to reach out. It's our pleasure to be there for you.

Blessings,

Mary Ellen Barrett

Mary Ellen Barrett

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us!

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Seton Families

Outside of the Seton organization itself, there are several groups on Facebook that many parents have found helpful.

Parents often post questions about what courses their students enjoyed, which they found helpful, and which had difficult tests. The majority of the members of these groups are other Seton parents. These groups are:

- Enrolled Seton Families
- Seton Homeschool Families
- Enrolled Seton Home Study High School

Although Seton does not moderate these groups, they offer valuable first hand experiences of families like yours and there are usually several Seton employees who are also members of the group who provide information when they can.

Check them out!

**You are sure to get some
frank opinions!**





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My student's writing assignments are often the most difficult to complete. What advice can you give me?

Writing assignments can be time-consuming and frustrating for students and parents alike. However, learning formal writing is necessary to become a well-rounded student. Here are suggestions to make writing easier and less frustrating:

Elementary: Three Tips

1. Complete writing assignments when they are assigned. Many parents and students put off the writing assignments until the end of the school year. This can lead to even more frustration since Mom and student are often ready at this point for a summer break.

Instead, I suggest that students complete at least one Seton-Graded writing assignment during the first few weeks of each quarter, if possible. This may require some lesson plan adjustments, but the relief provided by knowing that at least one writing assignment has been completed is well worth it.

2. Consider putting all other coursework aside for a day or two to allow the student time to concentrate solely on the writing assignment. Some students work better when all their time and energy are put into one project.

3. Elementary students may still need a lot of help from their parents, especially when completing book reports. Seton has developed new book report handbooks that take the student step-by-step through the writing process. If your student struggles in this area, make sure he or she uses the handbook.

High School: This Will Help

Most Seton high school students should be able to complete their writing assignments by themselves. However, parents should still check over their work and make sure it is being completed in a timely manner. Before reading the assigned book, make sure your high school students read and understand the essay prompts.

Understanding the prompts will enable them to locate ideas for their essay more accurately as they read the book. Also, remind high school students to keep something handy to write notes on as they read the book. This way, as they read the book, they can easily jot down notes when they find something relevant to the essay prompt.

For both elementary and high school students, Seton often provides checklists for writing assignments to ensure the student follows the assignment guidelines.

We advise parents to check the student's work while it is being completed and after it is completed to ensure that it meets these guidelines. This can help both student and parent avoid the added frustration of "incompletes" and poor grades.

Finally, if your student still has problems putting pencil to paper, remember that our counselors are here to help. Feel free to contact us. We love to help students learn to love (or at least tolerate) writing!

Laura Fusto and Mary Connolly, Academic Counselors

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

Yes, we can help you with that. Changing a single subject, such as reading, to a Special Needs adapted curriculum can be the key to keeping the student progressing and succeeding. If you are fully enrolled, we are happy to exchange one standard course for the special needs version of that course for no added cost.

If you want to adapt more than one course, you may speak to the Seton Admissions Department and see what they can do for you. Special Services will then process the course changes. Contact them at 866-280-1930.

The Special Services Department provides curriculum for students with a wide range of disabilities, including dyslexia, pervasive developmental disorder, Down syndrome, Asperger's syndrome, and Attention Deficit Disorder. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact us at ssdept@setonhome.org or 540-622-5576.

Stephen Costanzo, Director of Special Services



Dictionaries & Thesauruses

It is highly recommended 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.

**See More
Homeschool
Essentials
on Page 28**

M-DICT-09 Elementary Dictionary.....\$19.95
M-DICT-05 Intermediate Dictionary.....\$19.95
M-DICT-07 School Dictionary.....\$19.95

www.SetonBooks.com

How is the 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 any factors they choose. For example, you may consider the percentage of correct answers, the student's effort in 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 you want to include in the student's overall grade.

Seton Staff

I'm concerned we won't keep up with the regular school system's schedule. Is this a problem?

This may ease your concern: when you enroll with Seton, you have fourteen months to finish everything. This year plus two months allows you breathing room to linger on subjects that may need more attention, take vacation or holiday time, and 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

Can students retake or resubmit a test or writing assignment to improve their grades for high school English or other high school courses?

Yes, Seton students are allowed one redo on any test or writing assignment in any course.

Students can upload the revised test responses or essays the same way they first uploaded them on MySeton. When a grade school assignment or test is submitted the redo grade replaces the original. In High School the assignment receives the average of the initial grade and the redo grade (for example, initial grade: 80, redo grade: 100, final grade: 90).

If the first submission is given an Incomplete, this does not count as a grade because an Incomplete is not a grade.

Details for Elementary & High School redos are on your MySeton Resources tab.

*Sean 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.



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CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



THOMAS AQUINAS
COLLEGE



THOMAS MORE
COLLEGE



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SEAT OF WISDOM
COLLEGE



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OF DALLAS



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UNIVERSITY
of MARY



WALSH
UNIVERSITY
A Catholic University of Distinction

setonhome.org/colleges

Keys to *Homeschooling Success* for New and Returning Families

BY SETON STAFF



YOUR LESSON PLANS

Please take time to read the introduction to each set of lesson plans. They vary with each grade level and offer much information for homeschooling a student in that grade.

Essential Pages in Your Lesson Plans:

- Grading scale pages
- Guidance about re-doing assignments
- Curriculum exchange forms
- Attendance sheets (for you; not to be submitted)
- Quarterly checklists to help keep you organized

Become familiar with these pages, and you will avoid confusion and save yourself time during the year.

On the quarterly report forms are spaces for parent grades to be entered on the top half of the sheet. Below that is a list of tests and assignments that need to be submitted to Seton. You also will find the percentage of the grade assigned to each test.

The next step is to review each subject and highlight assignments to be submitted to Seton for grading. Those assignments are necessary for a complete transcript; therefore, it is important to note them. They are also on your **MySeton** page.

Among the key elements for getting organized are the **Quarterly Report Forms**. You have four for each subject (except half-credit high school courses) and one for each quarter. These serve as cover sheets for your submitted work and grades.

Tip: Keeping a folder for each child and saving their work as they complete it makes uploading or organizing to mail quick and easy.

SUBMITTING YOUR STUDENT'S WORK

Families may submit work to be graded either by mail or electronically. Grading electronically submitted work is faster and easier for graders than grading mailed-in work. This is particularly the case with English classes in high school because of the essays and research reports.

If families submit work by mail we ask that elementary student work be submitted when the entire quarter is complete. For high school level courses, we suggest that the items for each individual course be sent when a quarter's work is completed, although you can send multiple courses at once.

Put each student's work in a separate envelope, and please include the quarterly report forms. Mark all of your papers with the student number and the student's name. (We suggest that you make copies of student papers submitted to guard against the possibility of items being lost in the mail.)

If you submit work electronically, which Seton highly recommends, each item can be submitted as it is completed. For example, when a student completes a book analysis, it can be submitted. Seton recommends electronic submission (or taking tests directly online when that is available) for several reasons:

- The work is received by Seton immediately and is returned immediately after grading, so no time is spent in transit.
- There is no chance of anything being lost in the mail.
- A copy of the graded work is stored online so that students can review graded work at any time.
- Faster grading means students can see and correct errors more quickly.

Sometimes, families wait to gather together multiple quarters—sometimes the whole year—and send in all the work at once. This is not a good idea because students can't learn from grader feedback if multiple quarters are sent in at once.

MySeton Page

Access it from the homepage: www.setonhome.org/myseton.

The **MySeton** page is part of the Seton Home Study School website exclusively for your family.

Use your family number, to log in for and many tools to help with your homeschooling. If you're logging in for the first time you'll be guided on setting up your account.

On the **Home Page** you can find articles from the *Seton Magazine*, a link to connect you with other Seton families in your area, advice about signing up for Seton emails, a link to the staff directory, and special announcements from Seton.

The purpose of the **MySeton** page is to save busy homeschool moms time by making it a one-stop shop for all for your Seton needs. It pays to be as familiar as possible with all the features, so we ask that you spend some time becoming acquainted with everything on the page.

5 USEFUL MYSETON TABS

COURSES is to the right of the Home tab. Select your student then click on "courses" to get to your student's personal page.

This is where you can enter parent grades, upload work, and access online tests and course resources. Hovering over the icons will tell you their meaning, and there is a key at the bottom if you scroll down.

RESOURCES is where you will find all the forms in your lesson plans and links to helpful information (independent study, how to redo assignments, etc.)

VIDEO TUTORIALS are helpful videos for many subjects.

HELP links you to informative FAQs.

RE-ENROLL - to easily re-enroll when you are ready.

Tip: If you use your **MySeton** page, make the time to update it weekly, inputting your grades and uploading any tests or essays that the graders need to see.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

The Seton counselors are available to help in any way they can. They are truly invested in your child's education and care deeply about all our families' successful homeschool experiences.

We want you to have the best educational year ever! To that end, if you need help or advice, we encourage you to contact us at counselors@setonhome.org.

Has Your High School Student?

- Read through the lesson plans to familiarize themselves with the workflow?
- Set up a quiet space for work?
- Submitted the approval form for any Independent Study Courses?
- Joined Catholic Harbor?
www.catholicarbor.com

Need Help Using Seton's Online Tools?

Go to setonhome.org/online-help for:

- Clear instructions for **MySeton** and **SetonOnline**
- Helpful video walk-throughs
- Easy contact form for tech support



Ask the Experts:

How Do You Get Motivated to Start Another Year of Homeschooling?

Three Veteran Homeschooling Moms Share Their Experience

Worthwhile Things are Often Hard...



How do I find motivation to start the new school year? After fourteen years, one graduate, one senior, a ninth, seventh, and fifth grader, and years to go, the short answer is, I do not. Homeschooling is hard, and Seton is one of the most challenging programs.

It is HARD to go from lazy summer days to school again, especially if other kids around you have not started. But. And there's always a but, isn't there? As I tell my kids, worthwhile things are often hard. Don't wait for the motivation to hit you. It might never come.

Some say there are, in general, two types of back-to-school moms. The first is one for whom the idea of going back brings tears and feelings of being overwhelmed. It all feels too much

for this mom. She can't figure out where to start. The other kind wants to plan out the WHOLE ENTIRE YEAR because there is less to be anxious about if there is a plan. Schedules and lesson plans bring comfort and stability.

If thinking about the whole school year overwhelms you, take it one week, one day at a time. If that is still too much, do a "soft start" with just the bare bones for a week first. Start with math, religion, and literature/English, and go from there.

On the other hand, if planning helps you, take a week over the summer and plan out the whole year. I always print my kids' lesson plans a quarter at a time, usually on a weekend. (Can you tell which mom I am?) Then, that's one less thing to do in the thick of homeschooling. And always ask God for the grace to help you.

Kristin Brown, Virginia

Planning, Organizing & Beautifying...



The start of a new homeschooling year was always my favorite time. Each new year brought new hopes, dreams, and supplies.

Of course, sometimes it also brought new challenges, like when a newborn was added to the mix or a balking child was dragging their feet. So, to stir up excitement and lessen anxiety, I would focus on planning, organizing, and beautifying in preparation.

My planning methods looked different at different stages in our homeschooling journey. Sometimes, I plan out our year one quarter at a time. Other times, I found it easier to lay out the entire year in advance.

Regardless of which method I employed, pre-planning was key to achieving our educational goals. Also, having the children's planners completed meant they always knew what lessons or exercises needed to be done. Therefore, if I was busy tending to a baby, my students couldn't claim they didn't know what to do!

Organization solves many problems. Unfortunately, family life frequently stirs a bit of chaos into even the most organized spaces. So, I would reorganize all of our learning spaces (for us, it was a school closet and dining room table) and book boxes. Before the first day back, I made sure everyone's supplies were in order and easy to locate.

“Organization Solves Many Problems.”

Beautifying our environment looked like shaking out the crumbs from book boxes, placing new religious stickers on their pencil cases, discarding old paper scraps, and opening up space for new artwork.

I look forward to each new homeschooling year, and I hope you do, too. With a little pre-planning, you can increase the joy and decrease the challenges.

Tara Brelinsky, North Carolina

Homeschooling Motivation...



What motivates me each year to start another new year of homeschooling is the heat.

Once we have exhausted our summer activities and find that we have a large part of our day stuck inside because of the heat, I know it's time to start thinking of the new school year.

I like to get started early with school, so when our other activities, such as co-op, youth group, and clubs, get started, we are well underway with school.

We live in a very homeschool-friendly area of NC, which offers homeschoolers many social, enrichment, and academic opportunities. I know that there will be a lot going on each year, and it is prudent to start schooling sooner rather than later.

Susan Brock, North Carolina

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



“We were inspired to begin homeschooling because of the flexible schedule and chose Seton Home Study School because of its Catholic focus.”

What we love most about Seton is the counselors, graders, and curriculum development support. The rigor of the school and knowing it wasn't just a "mom grade" but that my student earned her grades from a "third party" is commendable.

The Wise Family — Henderson, NV



Thomas More College is proud to be a Seton College Partner.



BY DR. MICHAEL TAYLOR



THOMAS MORE
COLLEGE

The Integration of Curriculum and Student Life at Thomas More College

At Thomas More College of Liberal Arts, the integration of curriculum and student life is paramount. The college's mission is to cultivate wisdom and virtue in its students through a cohesive academic program deeply rooted in classical and Christian intellectual traditions.

This integration is evident in every aspect of the college experience, from the rigorous academic courses to the vibrant communal life, with special opportunities such as the Rome Semester enriching the educational journey.

A Unified Academic Program

The core curriculum at Thomas More College is designed to provide a comprehensive liberal arts education. Unlike many institutions where students choose specific majors, Thomas More College offers a unified program where all students engage in the same sequence



of courses. This curriculum spans a wide range of disciplines, including philosophy, theology, humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The goal is to foster a holistic understanding of human culture and divine wisdom, equipping students with the intellectual tools to navigate complex contemporary issues.

Living the Curriculum

The academic rigor of Thomas More College is complemented by a vibrant student life that reinforces the lessons learned in the classroom. The college's residential setting fosters a close-knit community where students and faculty interact formally and informally regularly.

This environment encourages ongoing dialogue about the great ideas and texts studied in class, allowing students to deepen their understanding through discussion and reflection.

Daily life at Thomas More College is structured to support the academic program. Students participate in communal meals, attend daily Mass, and engage in various cultural and social activities integrated into the curriculum.

For instance, the "Way of Beauty" program teaches students to appreciate and create art, reinforcing the aesthetic dimensions of their studies. Similarly, the college's emphasis on classical languages enhances students' reading of ancient texts and enriches their appreciation of linguistic beauty and precision.

The Rome Semester

One of the distinctive features of the Thomas More College experience is the Rome Semester. This program allows students to spend a term in Rome, immersing themselves in the historical and cultural heart of the Catholic Church.

The Rome Semester is a transformative experience, providing students with firsthand exposure to the art, architecture, and history they study in their courses.

The Rome Semester is a highlight of the Thomas More College experience, but not the sole focus. The program is designed to complement the broader educational goals of the college.

In Rome, students continue their studies in philosophy, theology, and the humanities, using the city as a living classroom. Visits to historical sites, churches, and museums are integrated into the curriculum, allowing students to engage directly with the subjects they are studying.

A Holistic Education

Integrating curriculum and student life at Thomas More College extends beyond the classroom and the Rome Semester. For example, the college's Guild Program offers students training in various crafts and trades, emphasizing the dignity of manual labor and the importance of useful skills. This program reflects the college's commitment to educating the whole person, fostering intellectual growth, practical competence, and ethical integrity.

Moreover, the college's commitment to communal living and shared experiences helps students develop strong interpersonal skills and a sense of responsibility toward others. The honor code, which all students pledge to uphold, reinforces a culture of trust and mutual respect. Students are encouraged to participate actively in the college community through student government, campus ministry, or various clubs and organizations.

Activating Natural Potential

Ultimately, Thomas More College's integrated approach to education is designed to activate each student's natural potential and guide them toward the fullness of their humanity.

The college's mission emphasizes the formation of young men and women who are intellectually capable, morally grounded, and spiritually mature. By uniting rigorous academics with a supportive and enriching community life, Thomas More College seeks to produce graduates who are knowledgeable, wise, compassionate, and committed to the common good.

Through this integrated curriculum, students are encouraged to achieve the fullness of their humanity in terms of virtue, wisdom, knowledge of God, and knowledge of the world. The Rome Semester exemplifies this mission, offering students a unique opportunity to deepen their faith and broaden their cultural horizons.

However, the daily integration of curriculum and student life on the New Hampshire campus truly defines the Thomas More College experience. Here, students learn to see the



world through the lens of faith and reason, preparing them to navigate the complexities of modern life with clarity, confidence, and a commitment to truth.

In conclusion, integrating curriculum and student life at Thomas More College of Liberal Arts creates a distinctive educational environment. The college fulfills its mission to educate the whole person through a unified academic program, vibrant community life, and transformative experiences like the Rome Semester.

This holistic approach ensures that graduates are well-prepared to lead lives of wisdom, virtue, and service, achieving their full potential in a world that desperately needs both.



Dr. Michael Taylor grew up in rural Connecticut, where he was an active outdoorsman. He has served as a missionary in Lima, Peru, with the Catholic Society of Apostolic Life, earned a B.A. from the Pontifical Gregorian University, has a Master's degree in Bioethics, and completed his doctoral studies while working as Executive Secretary of the Laudato Si' Institute. Dr. Taylor is married to Cassandra and loves sailing, hiking, camping, farmers' markets, and good conversation.



ALUMNUS PROFILE

Alex
Tapsak

How Seton Prepared Me for Writing in College



As I enter my senior year at Thomas More College of Liberal Arts, I reflect on my academic journey: where it has taken me, where it takes me now, and where I have come from. One thing that comes to mind is how my experience at Seton Home Study School prepared me for such an education.

I think Thomas More College stands out in many ways. One of those ways is because of its excellent writing program. If I had to guess, I have written about forty papers in my first three years here.



Now, as a senior, I am preparing to write my thesis—the culmination of all of the liberal arts that we have been taught here since freshman year.

But these college-level exercises were preceded by smaller, more basic, and simple ones: the Seton writing exercises. From the early lessons in grammar to the study of proper sentence structure to the paragraph to the five-paragraph essay, Seton's writing program used a careful, gradual approach to prepare me as a writer. Repetition was an important factor as well: *repetitio mater studiorum*.

I have come to appreciate this training the longer I have studied at college. Writing is a gift. It not only allows us to express ourselves and better communicate to others what we are thinking (which is already one of the most profound things of our existence if you think about it), but it is a useful tool for the simple reason that it helps us first understand ourselves.

The Beauty of Writing

Writing teaches us to articulate our thoughts and order them—efficiently and without error—a practice that benefits any worthwhile, intellectual, or practical pursuit.

Writing is also beautiful and worth doing for its own sake, which is an even better reason to practice it. Reason, by which we know the truth of reality and how we order things in such a way as to co-create with God, differentiates us from the other animals and makes us beloved to God. We were placed in the Garden to tend it and have dominion over it. Reason is what allows us to do this.

Writing is one of the best ways to train the faculty of reason, which is why I am so thankful for the writing programs at both Seton and TMC. Any college program that does not develop this skill ignores one of the most critical and human activities available to us. This skill should be at the foundation of any education that truly teaches the liberal arts, the skills and wisdom of free men and women.

So go on—keep writing. Keep churning out those five-paragraph essays. And while you're at it, apply to Thomas More College of Liberal Arts.

Catholic College Scholarship Winners



Congratulations!

On August 16, 2024, Seton awarded ten \$1,500 Scholarships to Seton high school students graduating in 2024. Application for the drawing was open to Seton grads who will attend Newman Guide recommended colleges. Thirty-six graduates entered the drawing, and the ten lucky winners were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Thomas Austin | Ave Maria University |
| 2. William Cassibry | Wyoming Catholic |
| 3. Lucille Flure | Belmont Abbey |
| 4. Liam Harkins | Franciscan University |
| 5. Richard Hazinski | Benedictine College |
| 6. Nicholas MacDonald | Franciscan University |
| 7. Catherine Nance | Benedictine College |
| 8. Jacinta Roddy | Franciscan University |
| 9. Luke Steinhaus | Benedictine College |
| 10. Anna Voynich | Christendom College |

The scholarship aims to encourage Seton graduates to continue their education at a faithful Catholic college.

Get Up, and Do Not Be Afraid

BY HELEN VACCHIANO



The homeschooling seed was planted about thirty-eight years ago when my mother, Mary Ann, courageously decided to homeschool her four children. It was not an easy decision in the 1980s, but she did it! Through prayer and God's guidance, she found Seton. Her unwavering example and my education in the Seton program led my husband Neal and me to choose the same path for our family.

Homeschooling with Seton has kept us grounded amidst the chaos of life, and the entire experience has molded us into the family we are today. We trust that God, in His awesome goodness and mercy, provides the grace we need daily and guides us through it all. We are the Vacchiano family!

Adele is entering 12th grade this fall, and Gabriel is entering 9th grade. It amazes us how far we have come and how both children have grown individually since the advent of our homeschooling journey by conquering their challenges and discovering their paths.

We have found that the greatest benefit of homeschooling with Seton is the ability for each child to discover their strengths through trial and error, manage their progress through each subject at a pace they set, and have the freedom to pursue and explore their interests.

In the three years we have lived in Maine, Adele competed on the YMCA Swim Team and became certified in lifeguarding, first aid, and CPR. Through Our Lady's Rosary Makers ministry in our parish, she made over 80 rosaries for the missions.



The Road Traveled

Neal and I (Helen) met twenty-five years ago while working for the Sherwin-Williams Company in Cleveland, OH. We married in 2002 and were blessed with Adele in 2007 and Gabriel in 2010. Since our marriage, we have lived in Ohio, Utah, and Maine.

Adele enjoys theater and dance and has performed various roles in *The Nutcracker* for two seasons with her ballet school. In addition, homeschooling with Seton has provided ample time to expand her love of creative writing, history, and art.

Art and Faith

Gabriel began serving Mass when we lived in Utah and continues to serve at our parish here in Maine.

He has played basketball and soccer through the YMCA for several seasons and currently plays soccer for the Acadia Fire FC. At home, Gabriel enjoys practicing on his guitars and electric drums. Due to Seton's flexibility, he has time to develop his interest in telescopes and learn as much as possible about the universe.



Homeschooling has yielded many opportunities that have nurtured our family life. Living in Utah for ten years afforded us numerous opportunities to explore many national and state parks within and in neighboring states. The list is long, but our excursions include Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Zion National Park, Arches National Park, Bryce Canyon, Grand Teton National Park, and Custer State Park.

Because of our love for these parks in Maine, it did not take long to venture out and hike together to drink in the spectacular views in and around Acadia National Park.

Our most recent and memorable road trip was this past September when we drove from Maine to Eddystone, PA so that Gabriel could receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Traditional Rite.

While there, we spent an entire day in Philadelphia, touring historic landmarks and museums. Seeing all the cool stuff we have been reading about in history for so long was neat!

My Favorite Part

The strengthening of our Catholic faith can be attributed to our many years of homeschooling with Seton. Prayer is critical in homeschooling. Do not let anything get in the way of this vital requirement!

We love that Seton ensures a solid foundation of the Catholic faith by incorporating it into each subject with religious art and short prayers to pray before beginning an assignment.

This daily practice strengthens the armor of faith and reminds us that it can be continued beyond the classroom. My favorite part of our day is our family Rosary after dinner. "Reciting the Rosary is the most important appointment of the day." ~ Blessed Carlo Acutis



For those prayerfully considering homeschooling, believe you can do it! God is in control - always. For those who find themselves overwhelmed in their first or tenth year of homeschooling, remember, you are never "behind" but always right where you should be.

Even after 12+ years of homeschooling my children, I must remind myself of this daily. There will be moments when you will want to give up. Instead, recall Jesus' words to His apostles at the Transfiguration, "Get up, and do not be afraid!"



Congratulations

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

Seton Graduates of 2024

Building Futures on
Strong Foundations

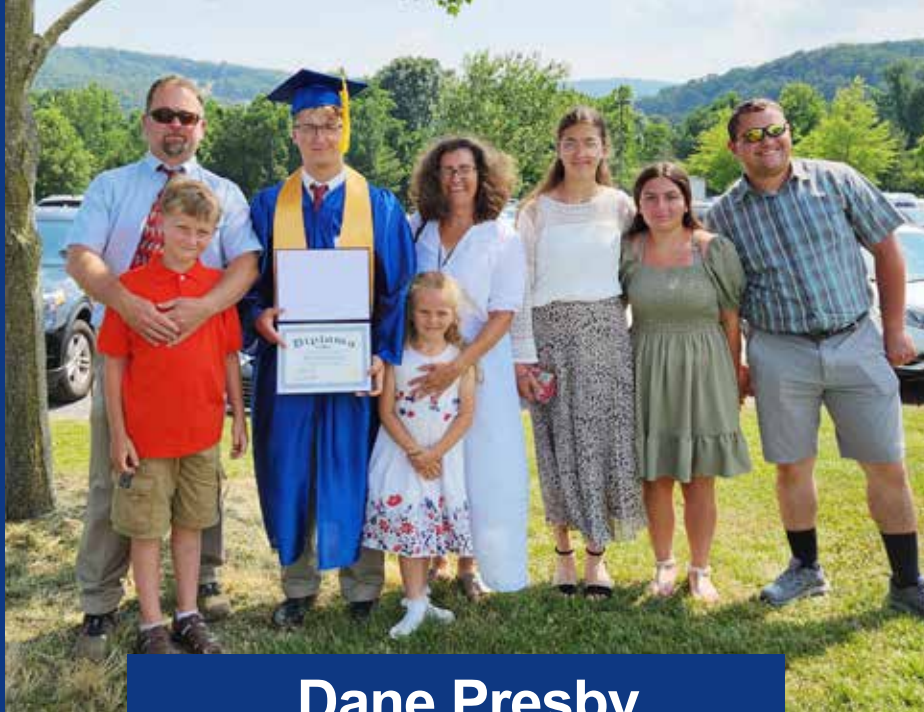


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When Seton held its first graduation, 35 graduates and their families attended. Graduations have grown ever larger, and this year, at our 18th graduation ceremony, we had

165 graduates and families representing 35 states, Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, Panama, and the Philippines. 27 graduates are from Virginia, 18 are from Texas, 12 are from New Jersey, eight are from Florida, Georgia, and Michigan, seven are from Maryland, North Carolina, and New York, and five are from Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.





Dane Presby

Dane Presby plans to study Mechanical Engineering at Benedictine College, which has awarded him their Saint Scholastica Merit Scholarship. After three years at a Legionaries of Christ minor seminary, he returned to Seton for his junior and senior years.

Homeschool highlights included 5:00 a.m. physics/calculus sessions, hurling erasers in class, soccer bench-sitting lessons in humility, raucous morning rosary walks, and eating chocolate chip pancakes on the last day of school. Dedicated to altar serving and youth ministry, he excelled in athletics, representing NH at the Eastern High School Alpine Ski Championships and receiving the Sportsmanship Award in varsity baseball.



Lori DeCesare

Lori DeCesare is the oldest of five girls. She lives on a small farm with pigs and chickens and likes to help with the gardening. She has three male guinea pigs that she's loved and cared for since birth.

During her years at Seton, she has developed a talent for allergy-free baking, through which she will continue to explore her culinary talents. She has also had time to explore her passion for riding in a BMX program. She will continue to work in a vocational job training program after graduation.

“ Graduates

and their families came from many different places but with the same goal -- to celebrate this day, this accomplishment, together.

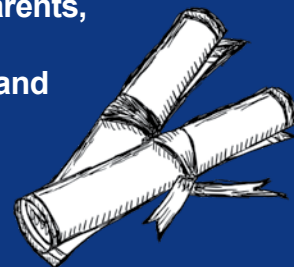
Graduation Day was truly a day of celebration for all of us associated with Seton Home Study School.

Homeschooling can feel like something of a solitary business.

It can seem that parents and students strive and work on their own, not feeling a connection to others who are similarly working and striving.

I have sometimes felt isolated as a longtime homeschooling mother, but that is not the reality.

All the students, parents, teachers, graders, and staff of Seton are connected.



“We are all working toward the same goal through the same means. We all understand the importance of a Catholic education for the individual, society, and the Church. What we each do in our homes has a cumulative effect on the Church and society, an effect that sometimes we do not see and sometimes we underestimate or even forget but which is real nonetheless.

With an enrollment of more than 15,000 students, Seton Home Study School is the largest Catholic high school and grade school in the United States. Over the last 35 years, more than 135,000 students have enrolled with Seton. The alumni of Seton would fill Yankee Stadium 3 times over.



Travis Rodriguez

Travis Rodriguez plans to attend Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas to study Biology. Due to his academic and extracurricular achievements in high school, he has received the TCU Merit Scholarship.

Travis is an active member of his home parish of Saint Andrew Catholic Church, serves as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and is a mentor to middle school students in the youth group. He is an active junior golfer, a member of the Youth On Course National Leadership Council, and a participant of the North Texas Junior PGA.



Vivian Ruiz

Vivian Ruiz plans to attend Texas A&M University to study Agricultural Communications and Journalism and Equine Science Certification. Her passion is working with horses through Natural Horsemanship and liberty training. She will pursue a career in the equine industry.

Vivian is grateful for the Seton Home Study program, which allowed her to live, study, and work on her family ranch and compete as an all-around cowgirl in the sport of rodeo. She has reached national finals in goat tying and barrel racing and is the current Mexico High School Rodeo Queen.

“ **As** we see the various troubles in our society, students enriched with a solid Catholic education are a reason for hope. Whatever college they attend or whatever field they labor in, they will bring this solid foundation with them.

Seton graduates are an inspiring group, as you can tell from this sampling of short biographies. These graduates have served their families and their Church. They have worked to improve the world through political action, volunteering, and helping others.

They have fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty. They have counseled the doubtful and comforted the afflicted. They have been active in society through participation in sports, scouting, youth groups, and church ministries. They have traveled on mission trips and pilgrimages.



Miriam Jilek

Miriam Jilek plans to attend the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota to pursue a Business Administration and Criminal Justice degree.

She hails from a large military family, has been active in her parish's pro-life and youth activities, and loves organizing events. She plans to pass on her training in Krav Maga to fellow students at the university to make it an overall safer and more secure environment.



Nicholas Kasuboski

Nicholas Kasuboski is a hardworking, Christ-centered young man who has displayed how one can do anything if one persevered. He loves to fish, serve at Mass, and do yard work around the house.

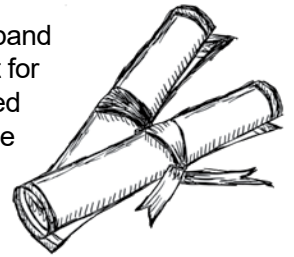
During his high school years, he has shown dedication to his schoolwork, even if he had to catch up through the better half of his high school career. He has loved working at the local hardware store. Although he is unsure of what he will do next, he will do great with God at the center!



Daniel Sendra

Daniel Sendra plans to attend the University of Navarre, Spain to pursue a career in Engineering in Artificial Intelligence. He has a talent for programming and has developed several projects to help the community. He has helped his local Catholic church improve its website and database as part of a Taekwondo project to earn his black belt.

He was part of an honors band where he played the trumpet for five years and has progressed to learning classical guitar. He has participated in various choirs at church and has been a youth group leader.



“

They have truly lived the corporal works of mercy. **St. John Paul II** said, "For we are at our best, we are most fully alive and human, when we give away freely and sacrificially our very selves in love for another." Reading the bios of these young people, you can see that they are already living these words.



Alexa Kamish

Alexa Kamish plans to attend the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, where she received a significant merit-based scholarship due to her 4.0 Seton GPA. At St. Thomas, she plans to pursue a dual major in Business and Catholic Theology with a minor in English.

She has been enrolled in post-secondary classes through her local technical college and graduated with an associate degree in Graphic Design. She is also a member of Phi Theta Kappa and made the President's List.



Isabel Guzman

Isabel Guzman plans to attend Saint Peter's University to major in Education. She has shown herself to be an excellent elementary and high school student. She tutors her siblings and other children, and, because of this, she found her vocation to become a teacher.

Even though she started high school during the Covid 19 pandemic, she persevered and continued to do her work. God has given her the grace to maintain a good attitude and patience. These virtues will help her in all her future endeavors, especially in becoming a teacher.



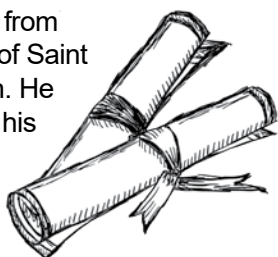
“

Many of these young people are continuing their education and have received numerous academic awards and scholarships to help them on their way. We are especially gratified that two young men here will enter the seminary after graduation. We have pilots, musicians and artists, writers and athletes, an equestrian, gamers, a goldsmith, a blacksmith, and champion dancers.

Tomas Carrillo

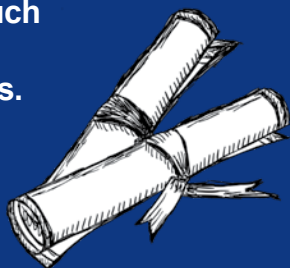
Tomas Carrillo was born in Georgetown, Texas and lives in Carlsbad, New Mexico, where he works for his family's BBQ business. He plans to work in the oil and gas industry.

He started his homeschool studies with Seton in fifth grade. He is the third in his family to graduate from Seton. He is a member of Saint Edward Catholic Church. He enjoys hanging out with his friends, playing video games, fishing, and kayaking.



This class has future teachers, doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers, farmers, hair stylists, actors, and novelists. Most importantly, many of them will become mothers and fathers. The biographies we have printed only touch the surface, and if we could know each of these accomplished young people as their friends and families know them, their lives and accomplishments would seem even more impressive.

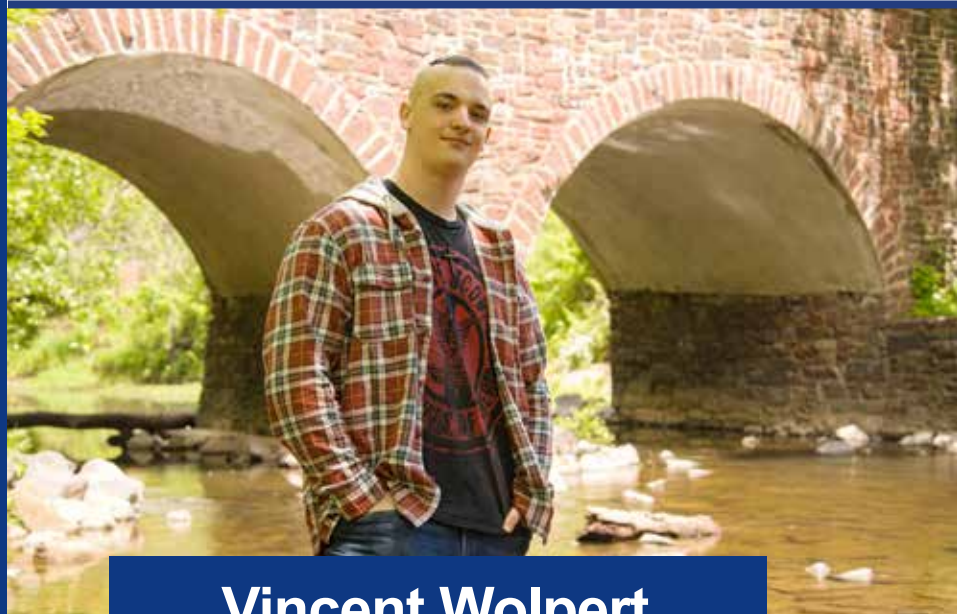
These remarkable graduates have reached this day through much hard work and commitment. But it was not that alone that brought them to this place. Through the grace of God and their parents' hard work and sacrifice, they had the opportunity to accomplish such impressive things.



Itzel Cruz

Itzel Cruz plans to graduate from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas with a master's in Business Administration. She is the first in her family to graduate high school. While her parents work, she helps take care of her younger sisters and is a great example for them.

She has participated in piano and singing lessons and has been part of her church choir. Itzel helps out in her parish as an assistant catechist and takes part in perpetual adoration.



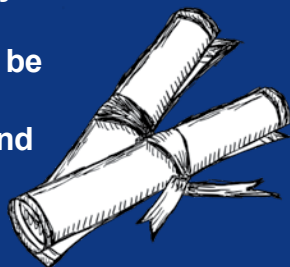
Vincent Wolpert

Vincent Wolpert plans to attend Northern Virginia Community College. He is an Eagle Scout, a member of the National Society of Homeschool Scholars, and a member of Students for Life—the regalia of each he wears with pride.

In his high school career, he excelled at his studies, was active in his Scout troop, maintained steady employment, and participated to a great extent in his church community, including leading his parish's pro-life group, St. Gianna's Club. The oldest of four siblings, he sets a stellar example for them and those around him.

Their parents decided to protect them from the damaging agendas of secular society to preserve the innocence of their minds and bodies while feeding them a diet of beautiful music, art, and literature. They exposed their children to the glory of God's creation through math and science, and they taught them to love their country and to know the rights and responsibilities of citizenship through the Christian values of our Founding Fathers. Most importantly, they taught them the Faith, to know God, and how best to serve Him.

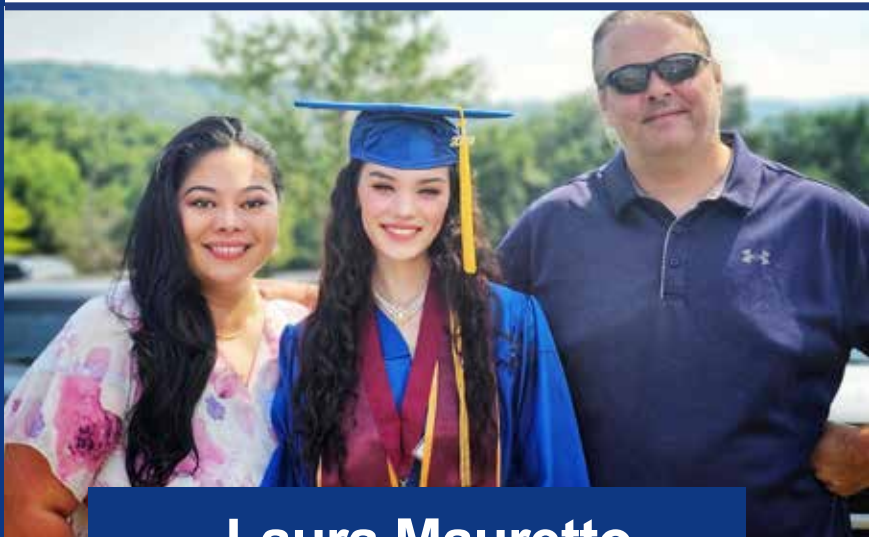
The one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith has been the foundation of everything they have achieved here. New Seton graduates, I call upon you to go forth open to the Holy Spirit's call to spread the Faith by how you live your lives and raise your own families. That would be how to honor God and your parents best.



Ryan Kerver

Ryan Kerver plans to pursue his education in Horticulture and Landscaping and ultimately begin his own company. Living in Florida is undoubtedly a benefit in this field.

After graduation, he will continue to work in the landscape industry while learning all he can about horticulture in Florida. Aside from his career goals, he loves the Catholic Faith and is active in his parish as an altar server. He also loves the Philadelphia Eagles, fishing, and spending time with family.



Laura Mauretto

Laura Mauretto plans to attend the University of Hawaii at Manoa to pursue a BS in Nursing and continue with a postgraduate degree.

She is a member of the National Society of High School Scholars. She has been actively involved in church and community services, such as collecting donations for Syrian refugees and animal rescue. She is also active in modeling, film, and the performing arts.

Ready to Write Life's Next Chapter



For months before it actually happened, I lay awake at night wondering about the graduation. Who would be there? Would I trip going up onto the stage?

How am I supposed to get my hat back when I throw it up in the air along with hundreds of others just like it? Would people like me? Would I forget my ID at the airport and never get home?

To answer it all simply, graduation was everything I could have hoped for.

There was the Seton Family Fest picnic and then Mass at Christendom College. At Seton, we explored where all our tortures were devised. The graduation ceremony at Warren County High School was perhaps the most exciting part, and the speeches were highly enjoyable.

The dance was so much fun, though I asked the DJ to play “Never Gonna Give You Up,” I don’t think he did. I’ve never shaken so many hands and seen so many new faces in one weekend (I bet Deacon Gene McGuirk can agree!).

Catholic Harbor Friends

But my favorite part was seeing people from Catholic Harbor and knowing that hundreds of my brothers and sisters in Christ surrounded me. Though I had never met anyone there or spoken with them face-to-face before (with a few exceptions), I knew I belonged.

We were made alike before we even met by shared knowledge and faith. I knew that if I spoke of Christ, history, science, ancient philosophers, or anything I had learned about in my four years at Seton, 90% of the people in that building could sympathize and agree. “I know, right? I enjoyed that course too—except for the tests!”



Common Ground

We'd walked on common ground long before we'd walked the same stage. It was pretty thrilling.

I'm not a very confident person by nature, but looking at what I know now and everything that has encouraged me so far, I feel prepared for adult life. There is much I don't know yet, of course, but Seton has taught me many lessons on how to teach myself and the need for self-discipline. Big nod to Catholic Harbor for that last one!

Knowing how to learn is an important tool for a happier and easier life. You'll have more to learn after school, and it helps



to know how to learn in more ways than one. To be successful with Seton, I had to adapt and improvise my schedule to make it work out. I think it's a great life skill.

Not only that, but Seton has taught me so much that I wouldn't want to go without knowing! History, biology, math, and literature are all invaluable things to know, but above these, I loved the religion courses. All of them.

My parents were my catechists before Seton, so I already knew a respectable amount, but it was refreshing to learn more about my Faith and the reasons why I believe. Even if I remembered nothing from Seton but what I learned in its religion courses, I'd still be glad to have done it.

If we are truly on this earth to know, love, and serve God, wouldn't religion be the most important thing down here?



Thankful for Opportunity

Yet, the fact remains that everything I am and have, I owe to God and my parents. Of course, there are other people in my life, but it's safe to say I never would have met them if my mom and dad hadn't given me the opportunity.

My Seton experience is due to their sacrificial love and wisdom, and as I thank Seton Home Study School for its gifts, I couldn't go without recognizing them.

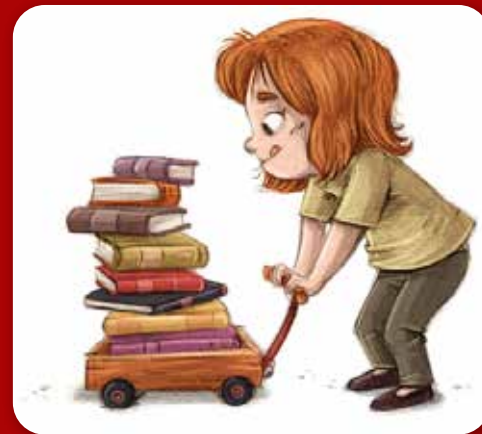


Maria Cronk is a 2024 Seton Home Study School graduate. She was raised in Deming, Washington along with her eight siblings. Since April, she has been the Administrator of Seton Writers Club, a student-run forum for young Catholic writers. She greatly enjoys reading, writing, art, and music. Maria is discerning the call to religious life with the Benedictines of Our Lady Of The Rock.

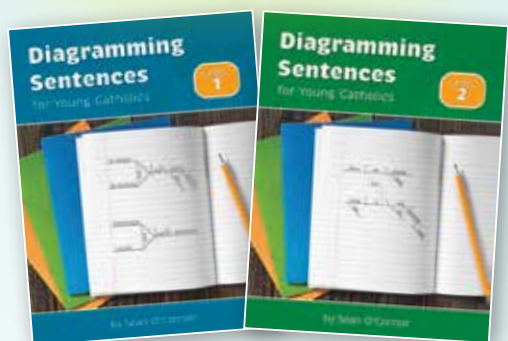
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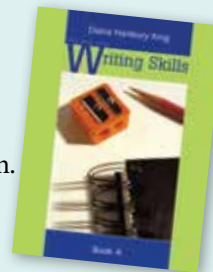
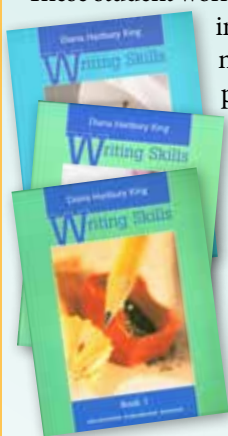
Writing Skills: Teacher's Handbook

An excellent resource, the Writing Skills Teacher's Handbook explains how to teach writing through explicit instruction, models, and samples of student writing at various stages. Can be used without the student books as an excellent professional resource or with Writing Skills student books to practice the skills addressed in Books A, 1-3 below.

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These student workbooks provide integrated writing instruction and opportunities to apply new skills. Reflecting research and best practices, instruction alternates between grammar, mechanics, and composition. Each concept is illustrated by rules, examples, and model sentences, paragraphs, and essays.



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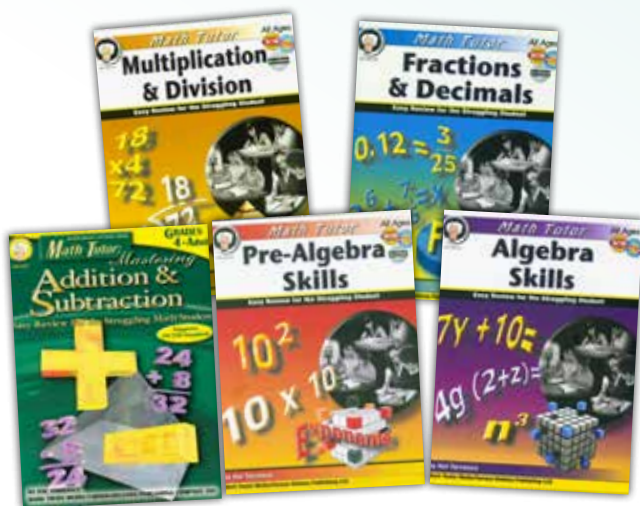
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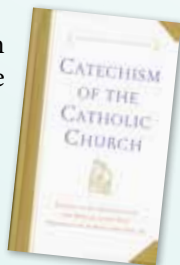
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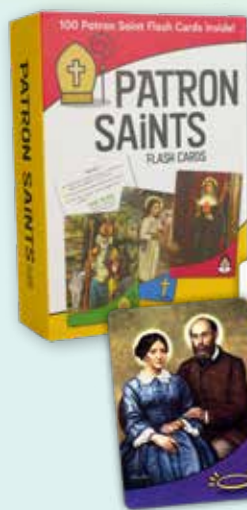


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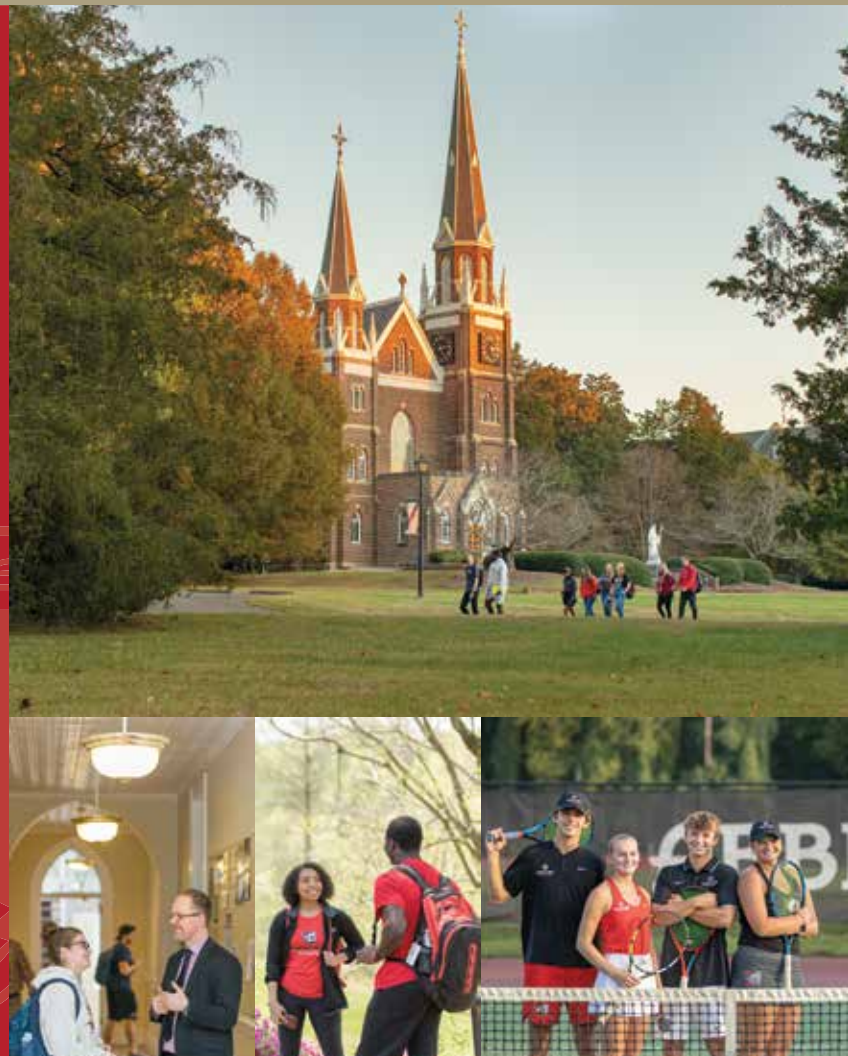
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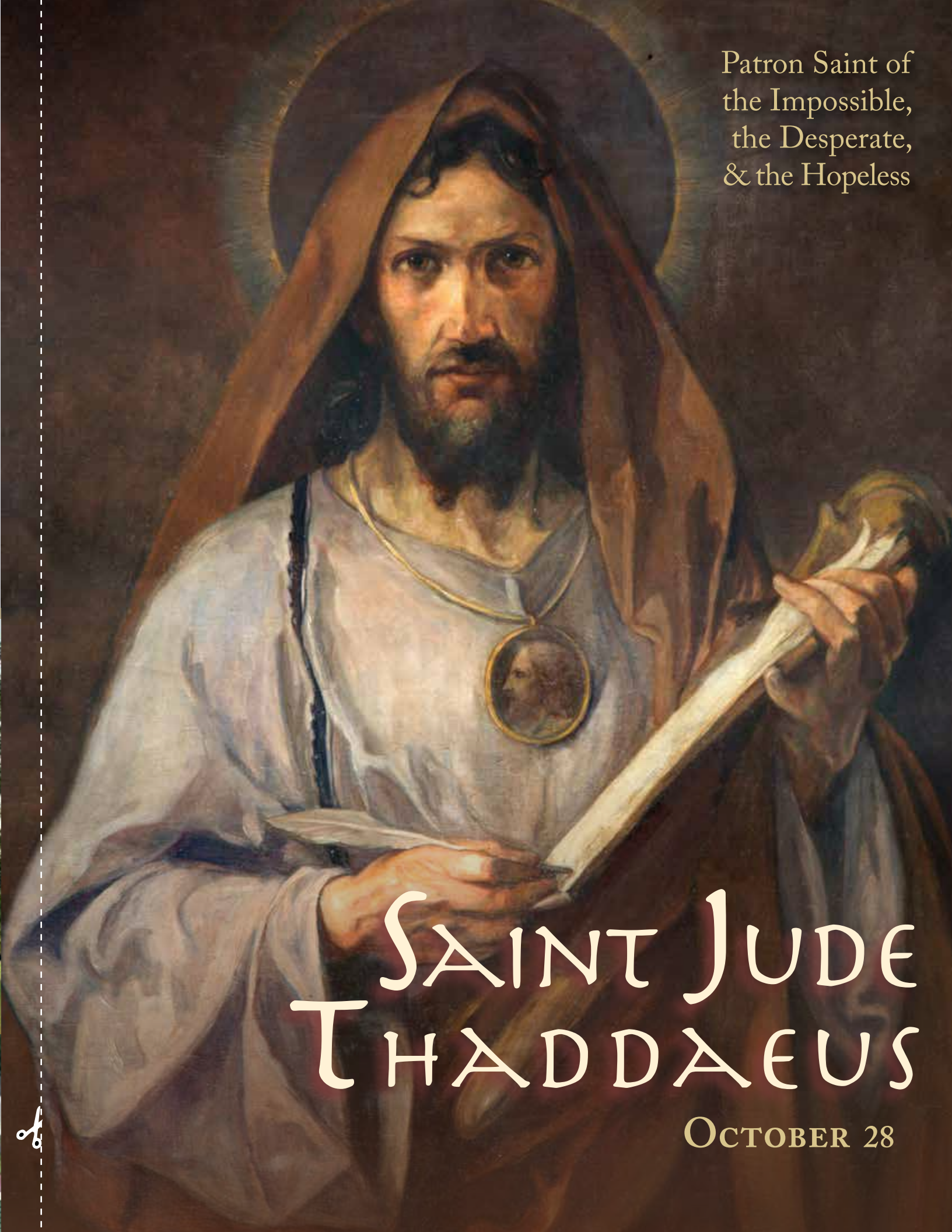
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Pope St. John Paul II

November 22, 1981

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