



Seton Home Study School

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Resurrection

During the days after Easter, we still cannot forget the cross. Without the cross, there is no Easter. In season and out of season, the cross is always there. But in season and out of season, we must have a deep confidence that the Resurrection is coming.

Sometimes our crosses seem to last a long time. A sick child, a misunderstanding husband, a friend who needs to lean on us, a child who cannot or does not learn, a teen who cannot settle down to studies.

Discouragement can set in.

Almost two years ago now, my husband, a baseball player until fifty, and then a daily golfer, had a leg amputated. Those were days of shock and pain and intense focusing on the reality that, in the scheme of things, this was not a horrible evil which could not be borne.

But now after two years of living in daily discomfort, discouragement can set in. It is the discouragement of knowing that in this life, nothing can really be done to make things the way they used to be.

We have had, and now have, more than a couple of mothers who are dying of fatal diseases. They call and talk about their plans for their children, and about how things will be handled when they are gone.

Crosses. All kinds of crosses. But as Catholics, we can have peace knowing that God is all wise, and that He has chosen particular crosses for us. He often shows His strength as we struggle in our weakness. He gives us strength as we deeply, interiorly call for His help.

In moments of great distress, all we can sometimes manage is that Name of Names: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Some days, just saying that name over and over, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, gives us comfort. He knows our plight, He knows that a child needs extra help to overcome his temper tantrums, He knows the desperation of the situation.

Most of the time, we know intellectually this cross will pass, and the resurrection will come, but the emotions sometimes send discouragement. But the resurrection does come, sometimes in a dramatic change, sometimes in a change in ourselves, in our understanding of our cross, in our acceptance of our cross.

Many of our home schooling parents have accepted the burden of being in leadership or in counseling for other home schooling families. Besides their own personal struggles, many have generously decided to give their time and effort to other mothers or families.

At a recent leadership conference, I heard mothers talk about the tremendous demands of children, husbands, and of home schooling, along with the demands

of new mothers wanting to learn all about home schooling in an hour of phone conversation, usually while preparing dinner! Mothers were asking in desperation, “What can we do?” Most mothers are now learning to suggest a basic information packet from a support group, or to recommend a beginning book.

Let’s pray for each other. Let’s pray for our own family, the other home schooling families in our parish and support group, the home schooling families in our community and state, all Catholic home schooling families.

Most of all, let’s pray for all of us who bear crosses every day, that at the end of Calvary, we can see the resurrection.

“Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing.” [John 20:27]

- MKC

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Teaching Tenth and Eleventh

by Dr. Mary Kay Clark

Students should accomplish a substantial amount of academic work in the 10th and 11th grades. They have overcome the adjustment problems they may have encountered in 9th, and have not yet entered the final year when jobs and college are somewhat detracting from studies. It is a good time to really concentrate on the work at hand.

Religion

These two grades, unlike the 9th and 12th grades, use an older Catholic series once used in Catholic high schools. Written by Father Laux, and now reprinted by TAN publishers, we believe this is still an excellent high school series, teaching the content of the Baltimore Catechism but with more of an apologetic slant.

The 10th grade concentrates on the Sacraments in one semester, and Catholic Morality in the other semester. Introduction to the Bible is taught in 11th grade.

The lesson plans contain not only instructions in using the textbooks, but also supplemental material. The 1995 edition of the tenth grade course manual directs students to read an extra booklet on the Mass. A new edition will contain a supplement on changes in the Mass parallel with Father Laux's fine explanation on the Mass.

The eleventh grade course manual contains supplemental material on Old Testament prophecies and foreshadowings of the New Testament, and on the doctrines of the Incarnation, Redemption, and Resurrection of Christ.

Students often do much of the work on their own, which is fine, but there should be a discussion with parents after the reading and/or studying of each chapter. It is too easy for a young person to not quite understand a concept. In addition, students sometimes neglect the

supplemental information in the lesson plans, which is always asked for in the questions in the quarterly exams.

Surprisingly, students coming recently from Catholic or public schools think the religion material is something they can be selective about, accepting some teachings, rejecting others. We have been surprised that students actually argue with the teachings they are learning in the Bible. They don't seem to recognize, though our course teaches it, that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Dr. William Marra says that the schools today convince the students, even in the primary grade levels, that their opinion is just as good as anyone else's, even in the areas of morality and doctrine.

English

The English courses in these two grades concentrate on composition and critical analysis. The two literature selections in tenth are *Animal Farm* and *Tale of Two Cities*. We emphasize that students should be looking for the significance of events, or for the significance of a character's actions or words. Students are encouraged to give their own opinions but they must be backed up by examples from the text to prove their points.

Students write a term paper as well. While the content of the term paper is important, the structure is just as important, since students need to learn these skills for college papers. Sometimes papers come in without footnotes or a bibliography, which means the paper is seriously lacking. The purpose of the mini-term paper for one final exam is to test knowledge of the requirements of the term paper.

For the literature selections, the lesson plans present objective questions designed to establish basic comprehension as well as numerous discussion ques-

tions designed to encourage higher thinking skills. While we believe answering all the questions, either in writing or orally, is best for the student, it is up to the parents to decide if any of the questions may be omitted. The lesson plans present enough optional material so that the very bright student has plenty of material to be challenged.

Literature questions cover not only the usual plot, conflict, character, and theme topics, but also values and point of view. For instance, in concluding *Tale of Two Cities*, students are to consider: Are the moral values advanced in the book in harmony with Catholic morality? Does the author believe in free will, in human responsibility, rather than showing man as controlled by outside forces, or as not responsible for his actions?

The English 11 course is one of the best high school courses you will ever encounter. The selections include *Bridge of San Luis Rey*, *Song at the Scaffold*, *Man for all Seasons* and *Ballad of the White Horse*. These selections were chosen for their high literary quality as well as for their presentation of a Catholic view of reality, even if some of the authors are not Catholic, such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and C.S. Lewis.

The interpretive essays challenge the students to think, to look closely at what the author has said, what the character has said and done, and to support opinions with specific examples from the text. Sometimes answers can be different but they must be backed up by examples from the text.

Students should be reading the selections in the evening and working on the discussion questions or essays during the class time. It is worthwhile for students to look at the questions for a chapter before reading the chapter, and thinking about the questions as they read. It is necessary to take the time to think about the questions and think about the answers. Every minute should not be spent writing; time needs to be spent thinking first.

It is best if students can discuss the book with a parent; however, answering the questions into a tape recorder, and then checking the answers is sufficient. Many students will find that writing down the answers helps in retaining the ideas.

The answer key to the discussion questions on the literary selections also serves as a commentary, comparable to what a student would learn from the teacher in a classroom discussion. Work needs to be original, even though the concepts may have developed as a result of reading some helpful notes. Under no circumstances should material be copied from another writer.

These high school English courses, if done with honest effort, will prove to be an excellent preparation for college work.

Literature

While the English courses teach composition and thinking skills, the literature courses survey the field of world literature in tenth grade and American literature in eleventh grade.

Serving as an introduction to excellent literary quality on an adult level, both texts contain selections from authors well-recognized for their writings. Students are encouraged to read longer selections as well.

In addition to the discussion questions in the textbook, Dr. Mitch Kalpakgian, a former professor at Christendom College, wrote discussion questions on the literary selections relating to the Catholic perspective. For instance, in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, the student is asked, "How does the Ancient Mariner sin and experience guilt? How does he show contrition, confession, and penance? What are the consequences of sin in this poem? What are the consequences of penance?"

One of the problems we hear about in the colleges today is a lack of courses teaching authors whose writings were influenced by the immense legacy of Christianity in Western Culture. These

courses may be the only opportunity some students have to learn about the influence of Christian values and culture on Western Civilization.

We at Seton believe that every educated person should be familiar with the great literary classics of Western Culture. Every educated person should have read and studied the classics of European and American literature. We want to help our students begin their exposure to the great classics through survey courses in literature.

We deplore the fact that many colleges today are ignoring or belittling the literary legacy of the West in favor of contemporary literature and literature from non-western cultures. It is not that the latter are not worthwhile, but they do not generally reflect the cultural heritage and Christian faith in which we live.

History

Tenth graders study world history with the text *Christ the King, Lord of History* and eleventh graders study American History with *Christ and the Americas*. Both of these texts, by Dr. Anne Carroll, are written from the viewpoint that the most important event in history is the Incarnation.

We are also happy to report that our high school history teacher, Mr. Bruce Clark, was recently named for inclusion in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*.

We believe the history courses are excellent. While dates and events and people must be learned, it is important for students to see the broad picture as societies move closer or farther away from the laws of God. Ultimately, we hope that students learn the lessons of the past, and apply them in their own lives as they become involved in the political and civic activities of their own community.

The text material in the lesson plans are important, not only for directions in answering questions in regard to the "significance" questions, but also in additional supplemental remarks.

In the eleventh grade, two historical persuasive essays are required. Mr. Clark advises students to quote and identify sources, and to "reinforce your position by illustrating how history would have been negatively affected if your ideas had not been followed, or positively if they had been followed."

Many students have told us that history has come alive for them after taking these two courses, and several have decided to make history their major in college.

Mathematics

In the tenth and eleventh grades, students take Geometry and Algebra II. Geometry is required, while Algebra II is highly recommended. We continue to use the Saxon series for Algebra, but use a Harcourt and a Houghton-Mifflin series for Geometry.

The SAT or ACT tests, which may be taken in the tenth grade for practice, and in the eleventh grade to send to colleges, include mainly first year algebra and geometry. It is vital for students to purchase one of the available SAT preparation books (*How to Prepare for the SAT* is available from Seton Educational Media for \$12.95 plus \$4 shipping). These books give actual problems from previous tests, have helpful tips on thinking out the problems, and give the answer key with explanations. These might even be helpful to study along with the Algebra and Geometry courses.

We encourage parents to monitor the math courses closely. A wrong concept learned early and practiced often could lead to serious frustrations. Our math counselor is available during regular business hours to help out.



Knowledge of Good and Evil

John Salvi was recently convicted for two killings at abortion clinics in Massachusetts. His lawyers tried to argue that he was insane, because he did not have the ability to tell right from wrong. Oddly enough, that's the legal definition of insanity—not being able to tell right from wrong. So, would that make everyone in the clinics insane, since they maintain that evil is good? In fact, since our whole society denies on principle that we can tell right from wrong, do we live in a country that is legally insane?

Life, Death, and Madness

Meanwhile, in Michigan, Dr. Jack Kevorkian was acquitted again of assisting in the suicide of two people. Dr. Jack has quite a lot of notches in his gun so far, and he seems primed for more action. He does have another trial in Michigan next month, but apparently juries tend to decide such questions on emotional issues rather than hard facts. Expect another acquittal, unless the prosecutors can impress upon the jury that Dr. Kevorkian has a list of people to kill, and their names are all on it.

In fact, every one of us is on Dr. Kevorkian's list. The good doctor has stated that he simply is trying to alleviate human suffering. Now most people would think that you ought to get rid of the suffering, but Dr. Kevorkian says you ought to get rid of the human. People like Dr. Kevorkian simply cannot abide the thought that someone, somewhere is in pain. He means to stop it. Only trouble is, every one of us is in pain—it's the human condition. If we really want to do away with all human suffering, we simply must get rid of all the humans.

Meanwhile, federal court judge Stephen Reinhardt has found that the right to assisted suicide has actually been enshrined in the Constitution, so these many years, while the uninitiated thought that it protected free speech and various other activities. The right to assisted suicide is indeed a strange right. Does it

mean that others have an obligation to help you kill yourself? Does it mean that taxpayers are obligated to pay someone to help you kill yourself? Do you have the right to pick the place and the means? If you want to shoot yourself in the head, is society obligated to pay for a gun and a bullet (two bullets if you have the



shakes)? And if you are really so far gone that you can't pull the trigger yourself, is someone obligated to do it for you?

Will we need to shut down all government-run suicide hot lines? If someone is threatening to jump off a tall building, will police or firemen be allowed to try to talk them out of it? Will it be a federal crime to prevent someone from committing suicide?

And let's remember that the terminally ill do not have any rights the rest of us don't have. Just as abortion moved from extreme cases of deformity to anytime for any reason, assisted suicide will soon cease to be reserved to the terminally ill. Indeed, any day now we will hear about assisted suicide for those with difficult but not life-threatening ailments. Then we will get to assisted suicide for the clinically depressed. And we will end up with assisted suicide for teenagers with a bad case of acne. And, of course, to give the kids their due, it all has to be without parental notification or consent.

In fact, this has already happened in

Holland, where assisted suicide is a venerated tradition. According to John Leo in *US News*, the Dutch Supreme Court has already said that patients do not need to be terminal, or even be in physical pain to be killed. It okayed euthanasia in a case where a woman was depressed due to the death of two of her sons. And a Dutch doctor was recently acquitted of charges after he killed, at the parents' request, a baby born with spina bifida. We may not need the Americans with Disabilities Act in a few years—we won't have any more disabled people.

We used to talk about these life issues as a slippery slope. Once you started down, you kept going on until you finally reached the bottom. But it's not a slippery slope, it's more like the sheer face of cliff. And we're in free fall without a parachute.

The Old College Try

The National Association of Scholars is set to release a report this month documenting the decline of higher education, according to an article in the *Wall Street Journal*. According to the report, standard curriculums have fallen quite out of favor in academia. For instance, in 1964 mandatory, core curriculum courses made up 47% of the requirements for graduation. In 1993, core curriculum requirements had fallen to only 21%. Such past requirements, such as study of a foreign language, have been dropped at many institutions. In 1964, 36% of schools had a math requirement, while in 1993 only 13% of schools had this requirement.

Even such mundane things as the amount of time spent in the classroom has fallen substantially. For example, the number of days spent in classes per year has fallen from 191 in 1964 to only 156 in 1993, a drop of approximately 18%. And the length of classes in minutes has fallen as well.

It is interesting that as college prices have continually climbed over the past 30 years, the product being offered by colleges has continually slipped.

Upbringing

by James Stenson

Reviewed by Dr. Mary Kay Clark

Not too many books are available presenting the basics for good disciplining of children from a Catholic perspective. *Upbringing*, however, with the subheading "A Discussion Handbook for Parents of Young Children," is just such a book.

James Stenson, the author, though unmarried, has had more than twenty years of experience in disciplining children and teens in Catholic schools as a principal. He is also active in the Catholic lay group known as Opus Dei.

Mr. Stenson has become a popular author and speaker among Catholics, especially home schooling parents, because he is practical from a Catholic viewpoint. Not only does Mr. Stenson rely on his own experience, but he has interviewed many Catholic parents who have been successful in the disciplining of their children.

His first point is that parents must be determined to raise their children toward responsible adulthood. The fact is that many parents today are listening to the secular society telling us that our children have "rights." Parents become anxious about disciplining their children in fear of trampling on their individuality or personality development.

However, through Biblical admonitions as well as through the teachings of the Catholic Church, we are required to "train up our children in the way they should go," namely in the way of being obedient to the commandments of God.

✦ Mr. Stenson writes that parents must teach their children by telling them again and again if necessary what they must do, by giving good example themselves, and by insisting that the children practice what they should do. Parents must make a "conscious effort to teach the children through word, example, and practice."

✦ Specifically, we must teach certain virtues, such as the virtue of prudence, the understanding that there is objective truth, and that everything is not simply a matter of opinion. We must teach justice, that people are owed things as a matter of right. We must teach fortitude, the ability to endure for the sake of a greater good. We must teach temperance or self-control, mastery over the temptation to be lazy.

✦ Children need to feel that they are needed in the family. They need to be given jobs or chores that are really necessary to be done. Parents, but especially fathers, need to give good example to children regarding work responsibilities, such as being on time, doing things in the right way, being accurate, and so on.

✦ It is vitally important for children to form strong will power and the willingness to sacrifice for a greater good, such as for the family. Children need to be taught that they will often need to forego their own wants and comforts in order to carry out their duties and responsibilities.

✦ Mr. Stenson writes that the television has replaced good conver-

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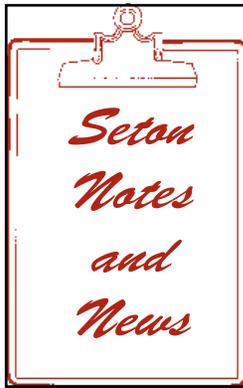
sation. Television sells a make-believe world of power and glamor and joy. Parents need to teach their children about the real world of the people they see on television. Parents need to point out that these people on television are often leading morally bankrupt lives, and are people we would certainly never invite to our dinner table. Even sports "heroes" are not usually good role models for children.

✦ Basic concepts our children need to accept must include that happiness comes from a simple lifestyle. Mr. Stenson says that poorer families turn out stronger children, people not tied down to possessions. When difficult times come, strong character and will power, and the habitual virtuous life will carry our children through.

✦ "Happiness comes from self-sacrificing love." After all, this is what Jesus taught us from His death on the cross. He was willing to sacrifice His life to bring us the happiness of heaven.

✦ "The happiest people you will meet are those who devote their powers generously to the service of others." Our children need to meet the Mother Teresas of our parish and community, and join them in volunteer work.

✦ Christian discipline is based on a Christian value system. It is not simply a matter of rules and regulations and punishments. Disciplining children becomes a matter of very little disciplining when children listen to the word of God, when they see good examples of the virtues practiced by their parents, and when they themselves are trained to practice good virtuous habits.



CONFERENCES

Phoenix, AZ: April 20, 1996. Seton Conference. Father Charles Fiore on *Church Teachings on Home Schooling*, Dr. William Marra on *The Rebirth of Catholic Faith and Culture Through Home Schooling*, Dr. Mary Kay Clark on *How to Avoid Burnout*, Dr. Mark Lowery on *The Home Schooling Father*, Mrs. Ginny Seuffert on *Home Schooling in the Large Family*.

Raleigh, NC: May 4, 1996. Father Robert Hermley on *Church Teachings on Home Schooling*, Dr. William Marra on *The Rebirth of Catholic Faith and Culture Through Home Schooling*, Dr. Mary Kay Clark on *How to Avoid Burnout*, Mrs. Ginny Seuffert on *Home Schooling in the Large Family*, Hugh Owen on *The Home Schooling Father*.

Toronto, Canada: May 27, 28, & 29: Pan-American Conference on Family and Education. Dr. Clark speaking.

Milwaukee, WI: June 8, 1996. Father Charles Fiore, Dr. William Marra, Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Mrs. Ginny Seuffert, another speaker TBA.

Riverside/Pasadena, CA: June 15, 1996. Conference sponsored by Seton and Christ the King Home Schoolers Association.

Manassas, VA: July 12, 13. NACHE Conference. Seton exhibiting.

Syracuse, NY: August 2, 3: Conference by Syracuse Catholic Home Schoolers. Seton exhibit, Dr. Clark speaking.

Pen Pals

Would you like to get to know another Catholic home school student through the mail? If so, why not join the Sacred Heart Pen Pal Club? Send a business-sized SASE and a letter about yourself (name, age, grade, favorite subject, hobbies, etc.) to: Sacred Heart Pen Pal Club, c/o Dara Vishnefske, 516 Moy Lane, Mulvane, KS 67110.

Catholic Family's Magnificat

We would like to encourage all of our readers to subscribe to *Catholic Family's Magnificat*. Currently, *Magnificat* is the only general Catholic home schooling magazine available in the United States and Canada. It is consistently worth reading and is sure to be of interest to all Catholic home schooling families. We think it is especially important that such a vital resource not be lost through lack of support.

Magnificat will soon be mailing its issue on "Home Schooling through High School." To order an issue or subscribe (\$20 in the US, \$28 Canada or ground delivery overseas, \$40 airmail), write: *Magnificat*, PO Box 43-1015, Dept. S, Pontiac, MI 48343-1015. Visa/MC accepted at 800-627-9236 (in the US and Canada) or at the information line at 810-412-1959 (all other countries). Please note that the 800 number is for orders only.

College Opportunity

Recently we have been contacted by the Erasmus Institute of Lausanne, Switzerland. The Institute offers a first-year college program in the setting of historic Europe. At least one Seton graduate has enrolled in the Institute, and they are actively seeking other home schooled students. From their brochure, looks like it may be a good way for a young person to see Europe while earning college credit. Its location in a beautiful chateau in the heart of Europe makes it an ideal place from which to explore Switzerland and Europe. The Institute lists an impressive array of supporters of their program, including Dr. James Hitchcock, Fr. Richard Neuhaus, and Fr. James Schall

For more information, write to Dr. Michael Aeschliman, Erasmus Institute, Le Château de Vennes, Praz-Berthoud 29, CH 1010 Lausanne, Switzerland. Or, you can call their US contact at 804-973-7960.

Summer Camps

The Franciscan Friars of Mary Immaculate are running summer camps for young people this summer. They will have a boy's camp and a girl's camp in Alberta, Canada in May and June. They will have a girl's camp in Wisconsin in June, and a boy's camp in Ontario in July. Older Seton students might also like to inquire about being camp counselors at these camps. At least one Seton student acted as a counselor last year. For more information, contact the Friars at 360 Main St., Cromwell, CT 06416.

Magdalen College in New Hampshire is offering a summer camp program for teens aged 14-18. Three two-week sessions throughout the summer are available. The camps mix classes in catechetics, music, and drama with recreational activities such as swimming and volleyball. Also included are trips to the Atlantic Ocean and to Boston, Massachusetts. For more information, contact Mr. Paul Sullivan, Magdalen College, 511 Kearsarge Mtn Rd, Warner, NH 03278, or call (603) 456-2656.

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Defending Life

2. Man is called to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of his earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the very life of God. The loftiness of this supernatural vocation reveals the greatness and the inestimable value of human life even in its temporal phase. Life in time, in fact, is the fundamental condition, the initial stage and an integral part of the entire unified process of human existence. It is a process which, unexpectedly and undeservedly, is enlightened by the promise and renewed by the gift of divine life, which will reach its full realization in eternity (cf. 1 Jn 3:1-2). At the same time, it is precisely this supernatural calling which highlights the relative character of each individual's earthly life. After all, life on earth is not an ultimate but a penultimate reality; even so, it remains a sacred reality entrusted to us, to be preserved with a sense of responsibility and brought to perfection in love and in the gift of ourselves to God and to our brothers and sisters.

The Church knows that this Gospel of life, which she has received from her Lord, has a profound and persuasive echo in the heart of every person, believer and non-believer alike, because it marvellously fulfills all the heart's expectations while infinitely surpassing them. Even in the midst of difficulties and uncertainties, every person sincerely open to truth and goodness can, by the light of reason and the

hidden action of grace, come to recognize in the natural law written in the heart (cf. Rom 2:14-15) the sacred value of human life from its very beginning until its end, and can affirm the right of every human being to have this primary good respected to the highest degree. Upon the recognition of this right, every human community and the political community itself are founded.

In a special way, believers in Christ must defend and promote this right, aware as they are of the wonderful truth recalled by the Second Vatican Council: By his incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every human being. This saving event reveals to humanity not only the boundless love of God who so loved the world that he gave his only Son (Jn 3:16), but also the incomparable value of every human person.

The Church, faithfully contemplating the mystery of the Redemption, acknowledges this value with ever new wonder. She feels called to proclaim to the people of all times this Gospel, the source of invincible hope and true joy for every period of history. The Gospel of God's love for man, the Gospel of the dignity of the person and the Gospel of life are a single and indivisible Gospel.

John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*