



Seton Home Study School

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Most Precious Blood

The hot temperatures of July, and the profusion of blood-red rose bushes, remind me throughout this month of the Feast of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, which we once celebrated on the first day of July. The whole month is traditionally connected with devotion to the Precious Blood.

His Most Precious Blood can be a special consolation to home schooling mothers. We home schooling mothers sometimes experience a “crucifixion” as we suffer the unkind remarks of relatives, friends, fellow parishioners, or even our own pastor.

As we encounter these sufferings, let us think of the Most Precious Blood shed by Jesus for us. Let us think of the Precious Blood that came from Jesus as He sweat blood in His Agony in the Garden. Let us think of the Precious Blood from the piercing cuts of His scourging and crowning with thorns. Let us think of His Precious Blood from the gashes in His hands, feet, and side as He hung on the cross.

His Most Precious Blood, flowing through His Sacred Heart, brings us in Holy Communion His deep and penetrating love. His Most Precious Blood, flowing as a river of Life and Love, enriches us as we work to give Life and Love to others. And we must start giving in our own family, with our own husband or wife, with our own children, with our own parents and brothers and sisters.

We home schooling parents, along with our children, need to start each day receiving Him, receiving His Most Precious Body and Blood in Holy Communion, His Gift of Himself, His Gift of Love and Life, His Gift of Self.

We can give only what we have. Unless we have Him within ourselves, we cannot give Him to others, we cannot be a source or a channel of grace to others, especially to our children.

There have been several cases throughout history when Eucharistic Hosts have turned into physical flesh. When a scientific analysis

was made of such a miracle in Lanciano, Italy, it was determined that the flesh is tissue from the muscle of a Heart! When we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, we are receiving the Most Precious Body and Blood of His Heart!

During this month of July, let us pray these words from the Litany of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus:

Blood of Christ, falling upon the earth in the Agony, save us. Blood of Christ, shed profusely in the Scourging, save us. Blood of Christ, flowing forth in the Crowning of Thorns, save us. Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross, save us.

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Home Schooling the Second Year

by Dr. Mary Kay Clark

All of us home schooling mothers can agree that the first year of home schooling can be quite a challenge. It requires substantial changes in our daily life and routine. Rest assured, however, that the second year of home schooling is always smoother than the first year.

Sometimes parents hesitate after the first year to continue to home school, because the first year was a struggle to establish a routine and to become organized. But the struggle, especially with older children, is mainly due to learning about your own children's style of learning and skills, as well as determining just what they have already learned in each subject area. Once you and your children have completed the first year, so much more can be accomplished in the second year.

By the second year, parents and children know their achievement levels for each subject. Parents know if the children are having difficulties with memory work, or with reading comprehension, or with fractions, or with spelling.

Parents know if a child can progress quickly in certain subjects, or if a child needs to take more time in other subjects. Mothers know by the second year when they need to take more time to teach diagramming, and less time to teach math.

A mother knows by the second year that her young son needs her for reading, but that he can do his math on his own. A father knows by the second year when and how much he needs to help out in math or history or science.

Maintaining the schedule

Seton's structured though flexible program not only can help establish a schedule in the first year, but it also can help maintain the schedule in the second and ensuing years. Without a guideline of lesson plans, and a certain accountability, sometimes academic assignments can fall by the wayside in the everyday crunch of hectic family life.

An "organized and planned program" is what Father John Hardon advocates to achieve academic quality and educational goals. A structured program like Seton as helps to set up a workable schedule in the first year, and then to maintain a workable schedule in the following years. It is good habits and a good home schooling routine which lead to productive home schooling.

Once the initial year is over, it is easier to organize one's daily household duties. In the first year, it is sometimes a struggle to find the time to do the laundry and other housework, but in the second year, each member of the family knows he must help with the daily and weekly chores. Since routines are now set in the second year, the whole household runs more smoothly, and Mother does not have the same frustrating feelings she had in the first year.

In the second year, Mother has discovered which of the children like to cook, and who would rather run the vacuum cleaner. One child always reminds the family when it is time to pray, and another when it is time for lunch.

By the second year, mothers have come to the realization that while

running a household demands time and attention, in the home schooling family, the mother's job can be more supervisory. She can assign jobs to her children, and by expecting these jobs to be done, will teach her children responsibility.

James Stenson, Catholic author and speaker, points out in his book on discipline, *Upbringing*, that young people need to be given household jobs which are truly important for the family and home. He says that the reason children become bored or impatient or get into trouble, especially during the early teen years, is often because they really have nothing of value to do. Assigning chores to children gives them a certain self-esteem, aids mother in the efficient running of the household, and helps make the home schooling enterprise more successful.

What parents discover in later years is that the home school runs better every year due to younger children growing up in a family where they see that the older children are expected to act responsibly, both in their home schooling and in their household chores. Parents also discover that the beginning struggles with older children are NOT repeated with younger children.

It is possible to raise a large family with obedient and disciplined children. The trick is to train the first-born children when they are little. As the other children come along, the struggles are not as difficult because the older children give the daily example of practicing good habits of home schooling and household chores.

Older children usually reinforce discipline with the younger children, not only by example, but also by word. "You can't do that. I was never allowed to do that when I was little. You better not do that!"

Older children can be involved directly in the training of the younger children in regards to chores. If you want the younger child to start learning to take out the trash, for instance, team up an older child with a younger child. The older child will be very happy to have the younger child learn the simple trash chore so that he can advance to a more advanced chore himself, such as making the shelves for the new bookcases.

Older children can help in the academic education of the younger children. Once a procedure has been established after the first year, the older children have learned what is expected for the classes and can help the younger children. For instance, once the older children have learned the procedures for the spelling classes, the vocabulary classes, the Saxon math classes, and so on, they can help the younger children with perhaps one or two classes a day.

When older children are able to help younger children, this results in the older children staying out of trouble because they do not have extra time on their hands, and it helps the younger children to keep moving ahead in their studies when mother is helping other children or taking care of the baby.

Family Structure

Back in the forties and fifties, and into the sixties, families were more structured and organized. There was a routine to family life. This was supported by the community, as all families had roughly the same routine.

The social life of the community of thirty and forty years ago supported the social life of the family. Children went to the western or adventure movies on Saturday, or played their baseball games on Saturday. Sports activities were never at dinnertime during the week. Mothers did not work; all fathers went to work in the morning, and came home at

dinnertime. Everyone tended to eat dinner at the same time. Masses were always on Sunday morning, and everyone went to confession either Saturday afternoon or Saturday evening. And we always stood in a long line! Daily Masses were early for parents, at 6:30 or 7 AM, with the children attending the parochial school Masses at 8:30.

Those days are not coming back, but we can learn from them. Children, as well as parents, need routine, organization and family stability to acquire a sense of calm and achievement.

Once an academic and household routine is established, less is likely to fall through the cracks. Children are happier, and parents feel they are really succeeding in the education and training of the children.

The spiritual life must not be forgotten, though. The rosary needs to be said at the same time each day, or it might not be said because it is so easily forgotten. Once a routine is established in regards to prayer, Mass, and Confession, more can be accomplished in the spiritual education and training of the children. The spiritual graces will seem to flow continuously through the family.

Interestingly, the father tends to become more involved in the second year as the initial bumps become smoothed out. Father is pleased that this home schooling enterprise is coasting along a little better. He sees the table is set for dinner, the kids are helping in the kitchen and with the laundry, they are becoming nicer kids. If father has not started before, in the second year, he wants to become part of the home schooling activities or he wants to teach a class.

Once fathers become involved, the whole family life improves. The head of the family is at home and he takes his place as head of the home

with authority and with concern. God meant for fathers to be an integral part of family life, and family life can never be the best it can be unless Father is directly involved.

Discipline

Dr. Mark Lowery, a home schooling father of seven children, offers excellent tips for fathers to maintain discipline and peace in the family.

Dr. Lowery says that fathers need to set the rules for the children, and review them frequently with the children. For instance, the children are to review and recite the rules for dinner at the table before dinner is served. Some of his rules are: Eat with your mouth closed; Always say "please" when you need something; Sit up straight, Don't rock your chair; Don't leave the table without permission.

Rules for behavior at church are: Stand straight; Don't lean on the pew; Don't aggravate your brother or sister; When kneeling, fold your hands; Keep your hands away from your face; Don't fiddle with your hands.

Dr. Lowery has rules for behavior in the car, when playing family games (no grumpy attitudes), when in the store, when company comes, at bedtime, and during quiet time. All these disciplinary rules teach self-discipline to the children, and help keep the household from becoming disorganized.

In conclusion, sometimes the struggles of the first year cause home schooling parents to be fearful of home schooling the next year. But those of us who have been home schooling for many years can say that each year, home schooling becomes easier as we and our husbands become more organized, more disciplined, and more knowledgeable about teaching and training our children.

Sentencing Self-Esteem

Well, here's a fine how-do-you do! For the last several years, the big fad in educational circles has been self-esteem training. Schools have spent a great deal of time and treasure trying to make children think "I am good enough, smart enough, and doggone it, people like me!"

Now the research is in, according to a piece by John Leo in *US News*, and it isn't pretty. The underlying assumption of self-esteem training is that children who think highly of themselves will thereby do better in school. But, it hasn't happened. The available research shows that there is no correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement.

There does appear, however, to be a correlation between self-esteem and violent crime. Leo quotes from a recent article in *Psychological Review*, which surveyed research on self-esteem programs and found, "Certain forms of high self-esteem seem to increase one's proneness to violence. An uncritical endorsement of the cultural value of self-esteem may therefore be counterproductive and even dangerous.... The societal pursuit of high self-esteem for everyone may literally end up doing considerable harm."

Yes, that's right. Criminals appear to be self-esteem champions. Roy Baumeister, one of the authors of the article for *Psychological Review* says, "What would work better for the country is to forget about self-esteem and start thinking about self-control." Amen to that.

War in Wenatchee

You may recall that there has been an ongoing problem in Wenatchee, Washington, of people being charged with and convicted of the most extraordinary sexual abuse crimes. For example, people have been charged and convicted of holding huge sexual mo-

lestation church services, in which whole congregations abused children. Despite the huge number of charges, no physical evidence of abuse was ever found.



The main accuser of people in the town was an unnamed child who was the foster child of the main police investigator of the abuse. She and her younger sister were witnesses at many trials, which eventually implicated scores of people. Anyone who objected to these prosecutions was generally targeted, including social workers and reporters.

The *Wall Street Journal* reports that on June 2, the main accuser ran away from a foster home and went to her grandmother's house. She told her grandmother that the charges had been fabricated, and that she had been put up to it by her foster father (who was also the policeman in charge). She further stated that she had told Child Protective Services that she had not been molested when they originally interviewed her.

Tom Grant, an investigative reporter, went to the grandmother's house and interviewed the girl. The report aired on KREM-TV that night.

The next day, a deputy arrived at the grandmother's house and forcibly

removed the girl. The authorities now are keeping the child in their custody, apparently to keep her from making any more public statements. And the authorities are threatening to charge anyone involved in the girl's previous escape with "witness tampering," a charge that has been used before to silence critics.

In the meantime, those convicted of crimes based upon the girl's testimony are still in prison.

Wyoming High School News

In Wyoming, home schoolers will now be able to participate in public school extracurricular activities. The Wyoming High School Activities Association has decided to proceed with a one-year pilot program. Under the program, groups of home schoolers will be allowed to form their own teams that can be part of the high school leagues. Or, they can join an existing team at a public high school, but they would need to pay for their own costs as team members.

Diversity Mandate

In the first ruling of its kind in the United States, a judge has ordered Rockville, Illinois, to desegregate within its schools, by using an extremely strict quota system.

The order from Judge P. Michael Mahoney requires the district to apportion its classes so that the racial and ethnic makeup of each class falls within 5% of the racial and ethnic makeup of the students enrolled in the school at each grade level. A similar ruling will apply to extracurricular activities.

In addition to classroom desegregation, the district was also ordered to decrease, by at least half, the gap in test scores between minority and white students. The judge did not make any effort to specify how the district is supposed to comply with the order.

Day-Time Curfews

We want to alert our home schooling parents about a movement to enact daytime curfews in local communities, and even at the state level.

The reason given is the need to reduce juvenile crime. But there is a lack of statistics showing that daytime curfews reduce juvenile crime.

For home schooling families, daytime curfews impose a burden, limiting the ability to leave the house. If the family is shopping and a child under 18 is somewhere else in the store, or if an older child under 18 is driving to the store, he can be stopped by the police.

In practical terms, the daytime curfew forces home schooling families to remain in their homes rather than go out during the day. Thus, the freedom to simply move about in your own community is denied with a daytime curfew. Even if home schooled children are specifically exempt, they will need to wear identification arm bands, or carry and produce on demand official documents if stopped, to prove they are in an exempt category.

In most communities, the juvenile criminals are only about two to three percent of citizens between 10 and 18, and they are all male. There is no reason at all to include girls in a curfew, which really points out the silliness. But the 97% of the boys who don't make trouble should not have a curfew either, since they are not going to be guilty of a juvenile crime.

Curfew laws violate the Constitution. They target a class of innocent citizens to be stopped by police, with no probable cause that a crime has been committed. Citizens are forced to prove their innocence, rather than the state having to prove their guilt. Random stops by police will result in many lawsuits, resulting in the necessity to

raise taxes to pay the court costs and inevitable punitive damages.

We wonder, too, what impact this will have on young people. Children could be traumatized by an unhappy experience with the police. It will be difficult to teach children to "Support Your Local Police" when they are fearful that the police will stop them simply for walking down their own neighborhood streets.

Curfews should be imposed only when there is a war or emergency situation. Even inner cities seldom have emergency situations, but for most localities, there are no gang wars, there are no rebellions in the street, there are no snipers lurking around every corner. It is ridiculous for a whole state, such as Pennsylvania is now doing, to consider curfew laws for all the little towns up and down the sides of the mountains and through the Amish communities and vast farm lands.

There are many possible solutions which address the problem of juvenile crime and which do not use a shotgun approach against innocent young citizens. For instance, communities have churches and other organizations and programs to help families and individuals in crisis situations.

Other solutions may be identifying the repeat offenders and targeting them for counseling. More detention centers may be needed for young offenders. In Virginia, the governor is trying to repeal confidentiality laws, so that young offenders' names, and the specific crimes they commit, are made public. Public exposure and public pressure will go a long way toward forcing young people to behave.

Judges are often given too much leeway, often omitting sentences or giving extremely light sentences. The community could mandate specific sen-

tences, especially for violence, drug abuse, and vandalism. Young criminals could lose their driver's license, or be forced to do community service. Judges could even impose curfews on the individual offender.

Suspensions from school could mean in-school suspensions, with students washing windows, cleaning floors, and so on.

Of course, much of the problem of juvenile crime springs from family breakdown. Focusing on local problems of family breakdown is an integral part of any strategy to combat juvenile crime. Helping parents understand and shoulder their responsibilities is a good start. For instance, in some cities, pastors and ministers are joining together and insisting that before being married in church, a couple must take six months of family counseling and learn about caring for children.

Repeal of no-fault divorce, as Michigan is considering, would be a step forward. But, in the absence of that measure, communities should insist that judges mandate waiting periods and counseling for any couple seeking a divorce in which children are involved. If parents understand the trauma that children are going through, they may be more able to help them deal with that pain.

Uniforms are proving to help with discipline in schools, as the difference between haves and have-nots disappears. Also, with uniforms, there is no room for identification of gangs via colors or types of clothes. Uniforms also help police to identify students roaming the streets.

Home schoolers need to be alert to find out if their community is considering implementing a daytime curfew. Once home schoolers are aware of such potential violations of their rights, they can take action to join together to prevent it. Being ready with reasons against a curfew, and with alternative suggestions, will be quite effective.



CONFERENCES

Manassas, VA: July 12, 13. NACHE Conference. Seton exhibiting. Other speakers include Fr. George Rutler, Fr. John Hardon, Kimberly Hahn, Laura Berquist, and Mary Hasson.

Detroit, MI: July 27. Michigan Catholic Home-Educators. Speakers: Fr. Eduard Perrone, Mrs. Marianna Bartold, Fr. Basil Nortz, Mr. Steve Ray. Call 810-561-8907.

Syracuse, NY: August 2, 3: NY Parent's Association of Catholic Educators. Speakers: Fr. George Rutler, Fr. Albert Shamon, Fr. Mark Williams, Fr. Ray Ryland, Ginny Seuffert, Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Jim Likoudis, Dr. Philip Mango. Thirty workshops, book and curriculum fair. For further information, call Jackie

Schillinger at 315-689-1394 or Matthew McCabe at 315-689-9628.

Bloomington, OH: August 16-18: Apostolate for Family Consecration. Catholic Family conference. Cardinal Arinze, Fr. Kosicki, Dr. Alice von Hildebrand. Call 614-765-4301

Indianapolis, IN: September 21. Seton and Indianapolis Home Schooling Apostolate Conference. Speakers: Fr. Charles Fiore, Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Dr. William Marra, Mrs. Ginny Seuffert, Mr. Edward Gudan.

Houston, TX: October 5. Seton and Houston Catholic Home Schoolers Conference. Speakers: Fr. Pablo Straub, Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Dr. William Marra, Mrs. Ginny Seuffert. Other speakers TBA.

Chicago, IL: November 8-10. The Round Table for Catholic Home School Leaders. Write to The Round Table, 5936 W. Eastwood, Chicago, IL 60630.

Seattle, WA: January 18, 1997. Seton Conference. Speakers: Fr. Pablo Straub, Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Dr. William Marra, Mrs. Ginny Seuffert. Other speakers TBA.

A packing list is enclosed in each box of books which notes with an asterisk which books should be returned. If you are unsure as to which books should be returned, you may call Seton and talk to Chris Nyman.

Partial Birth Abortion

Congress has not yet voted on the partial-birth abortion veto override. There is still time to call, write, or fax your support for the veto override to your Senator and Representatives.

If you don't know the proper address and phone numbers, you can get the information from the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121. Or, you can call the Clerk of the House at 202-225-7000 or the Secretary of the Senate at 202-224-2115.

E-Mail Grade Reports

We recently received an e-mail message from a family in Canada who mentioned that they were experiencing a delay of several weeks in receiving grade reports due to slow mail. The mail can take several weeks to get to Seton, and then several more weeks to get back to Canada.

To address this problem for our families outside of the United States, we are instituting a service whereby we will send grade reports by e-mail to those who have Internet addresses. E-mail grade reports will be sent to families usually within a day of when the grades are recorded at Seton.

If you live outside the United States and would like to receive this service, please send an e-mail message to us at Seton@Shentel.Net

As of now, e-mailing grades will have to be done manually, so we cannot offer it to everyone. However, we are working on an automated system that would make this service available to all our families. We will keep you posted on how this develops.

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Returning Books

If you are finished with your books for the year, we do encourage you to return them to Seton as soon as possible. Getting books back means that we can reuse books rather than having to purchase new books. This keeps prices down for everyone.

If possible, it is best to send books by UPS rather than the post office. UPS seems to be better at delivering boxes undamaged. If you need help in packing and sending the books, Mail Boxes Etc. or other similar companies can help.

The Sacredness of Marriage

The sacredness of Christian marriage consists in the fact that in God's plan the marriage covenant between a man and a woman becomes *the image and symbol of the Covenant which unites God and his people*. It is the sign of Christ's love for his Church. Because God's love is faithful and irrevocable, so those who have been married "in Christ" are called to remain faithful to each other forever. Did not Jesus himself say to us: "What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

Contemporary society has a special need of the witness of couples who persevere in their union, as an eloquent, even if sometimes suffering, "sign" in our human condition of the steadfastness of God's love. Day after day *Christian married couples are called to open their hearts ever more to the Holy Spirit, whose power never fails, and who enables them to love each other as Christ loved us*. And, as St. Paul writes to the Galatians, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness and chastity." (Gal. 5:22-23) All of this constitutes the rule of life and the program of personal development of Christian couples. And each Christian community has a great responsibility to sustain couples in their love.

From such love Christian families are born. In them *children are welcomed as a splendid gift of God's goodness*, and they are educated in the essential values of human life, learning above all that "man is more precious for what he is than for what he has." The entire family endeavors to practice respect for the dignity of every individual and to offer disinterested service to those in need.

Christian families exist to form a *communion of persons in love*. As such, the Church and the family are, each in its own way, living representations in human history of the eternal loving communion of the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity. In fact, the family is called the Church in miniature, "the domestic church," a particular expression of the Church through the human experience of love and common life. Like the Church, the family ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted *and from which the Gospel radiates to other families and to the whole of society*.

In America and throughout the world, *the family is being shaken* to its roots. The consequences for individuals and society in personal and collective instability and unhappiness are incalculable. Yet, it is heartening to know that in the face of this extraordinary challenge many Christians are committing themselves to the defense and support of family life.

So often the pressures of modern living separate husbands and wives from one another, threatening their lifelong *interdependence in love and fidelity* Our Christian conscience should be deeply concerned about the way in which *sins against life* are often presented as examples of "progress" and emancipation. Most often, are they not but the age-old forms of selfishness dressed up in a new language and presented in a new cultural framework?

Pope John Paul II, Homily at University of South Carolina, September 11, 1987