



# Seton Home



# Study School

Volume XVII, Number 2



*“Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church”*



Feb. 2000

## *Our Lady of Lourdes*

As we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes during the month of February, we can reflect on the apparition to St. Bernadette in 1858 in Lourdes, France. What meaning does this have for us home schooling mothers as we teach the Faith to our children?

The Blessed Mother appeared eighteen times, surrounded by a bright light like the sun, clothed in white with a blue sash and a white veil. She had a bright sparkling gold rose on each bare foot. She held a white rosary with a gold cross.

The Blessed Mother encouraged Bernadette by her motions to say the rosary. During each apparition, the Blessed Mother joined Bernadette in the prayers when she said the Glory Be, in praise of the Blessed Trinity.

On February 25, the Blessed Mother asked Bernadette to dig with her hands in the soil, and to wash her face with the mud. The mud turned into a stream, and eventually it turned into a continuous spring. The spring has had miraculous healing powers from the day Bernadette dug it. Thousands of people have been cured since then.

The Blessed Mother, after being asked several times by Bernadette, announced who she was: “I am the Immaculate Conception.” Bernadette did not know the meaning of those words. The pope had proclaimed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception only four years earlier.

In the many times the Blessed Mother appeared to Bernadette, the only other

words from the Blessed Mother were “Penitence! Penitence! Penitence!” and “Pray, pray, pray for poor sinners!”

Though the Blessed Mother had very few words to say, there are many messages for us from the Lourdes apparitions. It is obvious that the Blessed Mother appeared to encourage devotion to her, especially devotion through the holy rosary. Each time that she appeared, the Holy Mother of God always asked Bernadette to say the rosary. We home schooling families must realize that the Blessed Mother is always anxious to help us, but daily rosary prayers are important, to show love and devotion before asking for any favors.

An important message from the Blessed Mother at Lourdes is her devotion to the Blessed Trinity: Certainly as we begin the new millennium, after three years of special devotions to each Person of the Blessed Trinity, it would seem that now is the time to emphasize the Blessed Trinity to our children in our daily lives.

After the previous three years of prayers, as the pope requested, to each Member of the Blessed Trinity, perhaps this year we should be thinking about all of the Persons in the Blessed Trinity, and consider them as the “family” of God. Just as there is deep knowledge, love, and union among the three Divine Persons of the Trinity, so we need to have deep knowledge, love, and union in our own home schooling families.

The words which Bernadette repeated when she was listening to the Blessed Mother were “Penitence” and “Pray for

poor sinners.” One of the saddest things we see today is a lack of penance and prayer. All of us home schooling families need to aim to go to Confession more often, at least once a month and even once a week if possible. Going to Confession frequently helps us to do more penance, and to see the great need for penance for ourselves and our children.

Our Blessed Mother asked Bernadette to dig in the mud. To those unbelievers in the crowd, Bernadette was doing something crazy. They thought she was out of her mind as she “washed” her face in the mud. Yet eventually, a wonderful and miraculous spring rose from the muddy puddle, bringing healing to thousands for generations to come.

In the same way our home schooling appears irrational and “crazy” to many. Yet we must persist because we know it is the will of God to strengthen our faith and our family in our “domestic church” of the home. We need to keep the faith ourselves, to remind ourselves that the result will be a new springing forth of spiritual life for ourselves and for our children, and for the generations to come from our children.

Our Lady of Lourdes, help us home schooling parents to reflect on your message to us and to apply it in our home schooling family life.

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## *Questions We Are Asked*

*by Dr. Mary Kay Clark  
Director, Seton Home Study School*

**I have seven children, from high school age to first grade. I feel I am able to home school only my high schooler. I live on a farm, and there is too much work to do.**

You could be overlooking your greatest resource for help, which is your older children. They can help you, not only with the housework and farm chores but also with the home schooling. Take a look at your whole situation, not just segments. Study your home management, the farm, and the home schooling responsibilities and see how they can be integrated.

One way to make home schooling easier in a large family is to combine the children in adjacent grades. For instance, consider moving an older child down with his sibling in a grade lower. It won't hurt your older child to have the extra review. If you have a younger child who is very bright and could be successful in an upper grade, consider moving that child up a grade with an older sibling. However, there may be a subject, such as math, in which your child may need to stay on the lower level.

Two children working together can help each other by asking each other questions, taking turns on the reading assignments, discussing the information, and so on. They keep each other moving along, and help each other, giving you time to work with the other children.

In a large family, often one or two of the older children help tutor the young children. If you have a high school boy, for instance, who is doing well in math, consider paying him a small wage for tutoring the younger children in math. If you have a girl in eighth grade, she may like to help take care of the younger

children or help listen to the first grader do his beginning reading.

Why not schedule the farm chores right in the school day schedule? Between a couple of academic classes, could the children milk the cow or clean the barn? Physical exercise between academic classes has been proven to help the learning process.

**Some days are very difficult when the children seem to resist whatever I say. Can you give me any encouragement?**

When you feel discouraged, pray immediately to the Blessed Mother and to St. Joseph for strength and support. Be sure to attend daily Mass, and go to confession frequently, even every week. Say your rosary every day, read the Bible at least fifteen minutes a day. Spend fifteen minutes in meditation with the writings of a saint, such as *Introduction to the Devout Life* by St. Francis de Sales, *Imitation of Christ* by St. Thomas à Kempis, *The Way of Divine Love* by Sister Josefa Menendez.

A Franciscan priest and retreat master, Fr. Sylvester Catallo, stopped by Seton to bring us a relic of Padre Pio, and to say that the devil is using five weapons against parents: discouragement, doubt, delay, deception, and diversion. Discouragement weakens parents' motivation to continue their important work with their children. Doubting yourself about the "correctness" of what you are doing slows down your home schooling. Delay or procrastination about doing what you know needs to be done now causes later frustration. Deception makes something less good look favorable or better. Diversion tricks us into looking at false role models, and away from the Catholic home schooling solution.

Tape a big sign on your bedroom door, or on your refrigerator, with either a statement of philosophy about why you are home schooling, or perhaps a holy picture which reminds you that you are in the home schooling apostolate for spiritual reasons.

Keep in mind your basic goal is to give your children the means to eternal salvation. Most schools today are giving children terrible secular values and attitudes. The current political agenda is toleration of any and all false ideas that come along. Objective truth is not taught; all opinions are acceptable or of equal value. "Pick your own," kids are told.

If you ever feel overwhelmed and think that you cannot continue home

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schooling, pick up the newspaper. Ask yourself if you want your children to be raised as part of the current culture of death and spiritual disease. At this time, three states are considering accepting homosexual "marriages." The men and women in these state legislatures usually reflect the thinking of the people who elected them. These are the same men and women who make laws regarding the curriculum in the state public schools.

**In your desire to present Catholic values, do you think the academics might be suffering? In your attempt to present a Catholic story, for instance, might you be distracting attention away from the concept the child is supposed to be learning?**

We have had several letters making this point, and we constantly struggle to update and revise our materials to make the academics the best that they can be.

On the other hand, throughout the schools of the world (and I mean the world) there is a strong agenda to keep God and Catholicism out of the academics. God and Catholicism are totally absent in almost every school in the world, including and often especially Catholic universities.

At Seton, we are concerned that the children learn the Catholicism first and foremost, but we are serious about education, as certainly almost every parent using the Seton program can testify. We take our cue from the ancient motto of

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***Our goal is that each student graduating from Seton can not only defend Catholic truths, but aggressively promote them, in whatever area of society he or she may be influencing.***

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the monasteries, Ora et labora, which means "Pray and work." In a sense, we consider Catholic home education to be both prayer and work, so we hope to weave the Catholic Faith into the work. We believe that for knowledge to be of use, it must be informed by Faith, and for Faith to be of use, it must be intelligent and active. As St. James says, "Faith without works is dead." (James 2:17) So, we do not strive only to form an intelligent student or only a religious student, but an intelligent religious student.

We want to provide the best in Catholic education. We are determined to help parents produce Catholics who are well educated and can change this corrupt society into the holy society it is

called to be. Our goal is that each student graduating from Seton can not only defend Catholic truths, but aggressively promote them, in whatever area of society he or she may be influencing.

**We really do like your American and World history textbooks by Ann Carroll. They provide a good Catholic perspective. However, they have no pictures, illustrations, or graphs. What do you suggest to provide these helpful supplemental study aids?**

Seton does have other textbooks which have been evaluated by our own in-house historian-author-speaker, Bruce Clark, as well as by the Christian textbook evaluators, the Gablers from Texas. These secular texts are available for purchase to aid in providing such supplemental helps that you mention. Just ask for the supplemental secular world or American history text. They are published by Houghton-Mifflin.

However, Seton is now undertaking a project of adding Academic Resources to our web site for the benefit of our enrolled students in grades 7 through 12. We are just in the beginning stages, but eventually this will provide photographs and additional colorful supplemental information, chapter by chapter, for the Seton courses.

Our own experience is that the colorful and interesting presentation of information on some web sites can be highly motivational as well as educational.

Our plan is that the Seton enrolled student will click on the Seton web site the particular course he is studying, and then click on the chapter topic. Three or four web sites or links will be available. These are being checked out first to make sure they are appropriate and not dangerous for our Catholic students.

Though we realize students could get on the search engines and find the material for themselves, many parents do not want their children "surfing" the web because of dangerous material, and also because of the hours of time it takes to find a site which is helpful.

**This year we received the answer keys on a disk, as well as the printed copy. What will you do next year?**

We are going to try to use the technology as much as possible in the future. Even now, for instance, if we receive a phone call from a parent who misplaced a quarterly test, we are able to provide the parent the tests within minutes via the fax. In the near future, the tests will be available to enrolled families on our Internet web site. The tests and Quarter Report Forms will be able to be downloaded. We intend to provide the report cards on the web site also. (As of now, report cards can be automatically e-mailed when the grades are inputted. Just send us your e-mail address, and we can send you the grades immediately.) We are even working on the possibility of storing weekly grades on-line rather than on Quarter Report Forms and having on-line testing, which will mean that (at least for some subjects) nothing additional will need to be mailed to Seton.

We are now providing the answer keys for grades 4 to 8 on disks in the box of books. For the coming year, we hope to have answer keys for grades 1 to 8 on disk. These same disks, with updates, currently are being provided on our web site, from which individual pages, or the whole file, can be downloaded, or printed out. This provides quick and easy access, without the expense of a long distance phone call.

Some mothers have said they like the hard copy, and don't like the answer key disks. However, a printed hard copy can be printed out from the disk or from our web site. If a parent does not have the time to print it out, most kids learn how to do this quickly.

The on-disk versions really do have substantial advantages, the main one being that it is faster and easier to go directly to the page you need in the on-disk version. Also, you need only one CD for all the grade levels, rather than a series of printed answer keys, and you

***Cont'd on page 5***

## *Home Schoolers in College*

At a recent Seton home schooling conference, Mr. Thomas Susanka, a home schooling father of many years and the Admissions Officer at Thomas Aquinas College, gave a talk on Home Schooling for College. Two of his children are in college.

He said that home schooling students are very well accepted at colleges around the country, basically because of the high scores on the SAT standardized tests. They are often well over the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile, and half score in the top 25%. A large percentage of the students—sometimes nearly 30%—at Christendom College, Franciscan University of Steubenville, Magdalen College and Thomas Aquinas College were formerly home schooled.

Colleges are finding that home schooled students are well-schooled in the basic skills. They read well, they write well, they have had more exposure to good literature, and they have a good understanding of history and math.

From the comments Mr. Susanka has heard from other private Catholic colleges, home schooled students are successful, responsible, and capable of doing well in their college studies. They tend to finish their courses and to go on to graduate school.

If your students get through the Seton home study program, Mr. Susanka said, they will write well. They will have a good grasp of history, religion, and literature. In fact, they are remarkably well prepared compared to students coming from other schools.

Home schooled students in general show responsibility not only in their studies but also in their personal life in the dormitories. They take their religion seriously, and participate in the religious devotions. Home schooled students are teachable; they are open to learning new and complicated concepts. Because they are open to learning Truth, they are able

to see that the world is rational, and that Truth comes from God.

One of the problems college students face today is that the current society is steeped in sensuality. For young students, sensuality gets in the way of learning. Young people should be joyful and full of hope, yet because Jesus Christ has been removed from public conversation, they struggle to find Truth. In this modern culture, minds cannot come to know Truth. The intellectual relativism that permeates the culture places emphasis on opinions, not on Truth. The modern world has corrupted truths regarding human nature and responsibility.

One of the most important things you need to do as home schooling parents is to keep the modern culture out of the lives of your children. Teach them and keep them close to the sacraments and prayer life.

Mr. Susanka gave several recommendations. First, realize that not every

child should go to college; God has a place for each of us. Keep aware of possible weaknesses in your teaching; don't neglect the math. Reading and writing are important, but so is math.

Mr. Susanka stressed that while it is important to promote independent learning, home schoolers need to experience deadlines, and how to keep them. In college, they will be living under a professor's schedule. Students should learn they cannot be endlessly doing an assignment. They need to learn to apportion their labor to complete an assignment on schedule.

Fathers need to emphasize to their children that it is important to get a broad education. Focus on the principles of life. Don't worry if at home your child cannot do every science lab experiment; he will get that at college. In high school, prepare him for the world. One estimate is that only one in ten people at forty years of age will be working at the job for which the specific job training at college prepared him. Instead of being devoted to the details of making a living, teach your children to be devoted to the details of living.



*Seton General Counsel Kenneth Clark accepting accreditation certificate from the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges.*

## Angela Baird Memorial

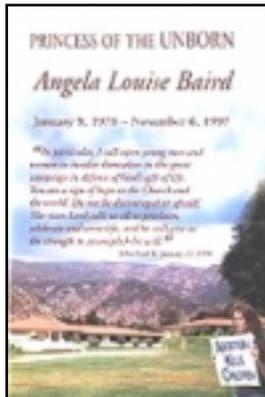
We always say at Seton that we hope to produce saints and scholars. Normally, the immediate future of our students is more in the realm of scholars than of saints. For Angela Baird, however, a 1996 graduate of Seton Home Study School, the call of Heaven came quite early.



After Angela graduated from Seton, with a grade point average of over 95%, she enrolled in Thomas Aquinas College in Ojai, California. During her sophomore year at the college, Angela slipped on a trail while hiking and fell 60 feet into a ravine. She suffered massive internal injuries, and died on November 6, 1997.

In life, Angela deeply touched those who knew her, and she further touched those who witnessed her last hours. After her fall, Angela remained conscious, though in great pain with many broken bones. She remained in the ravine for nearly three hours waiting for paramedics to evacuate her to the hospital. During this time, she said she especially wanted to pray for aborted babies and for her father.

Jon Daly, another TAC student, was with Angela for much of the time in the ravine. "We prayed the whole time," said Daly. "I asked her what she wanted to pray for. The first thing she said was to pray for aborted babies, then she said to pray for her dad and to her guardian angel. She was peaceful the whole time. After a little while it was hard for her to speak. I told her we'd pray out loud and she could pray in her heart."



More information on Angela Baird is available at the website [www.bairds.net](http://www.bairds.net).

In memory of Angela and in acknowledgment of her prayers for the unborn to the very end, Theo Stearns, of Catholics United for Life, has written a beautiful booklet on Angela's life and death called "Princess of the Unborn." The booklet is available for \$3 from Catholics United for Life, New Hope, Kentucky 40052.

A pro-life memorial fund has also been established in Angela's memory. To contribute to the fund write,

**Angela Baird Memorial**  
**c/o Spokane Teachers Credit Union**  
**P.O. Box 5264**  
**Spokane, WA, USA 99205-0264**

## Questions, cont'd from page 3

don't need to worry about pages being ripped out, the dog eating the book, etc. If you copy the contents of the CD (probably about 40 MB for the coming year) to your hard drive, you won't even need to keep the CD handy. (For environmentalists, think of all the trees we are saving!)

Of course, if you don't have a computer, materials will still be available in printed versions.

It is important for students to learn to use the computer technology. It is being used in almost every job available today. Every student needs to learn to use the computer, certainly no later than high school. It is simply a requirement in our society today and in the future.

Indeed, over the next few years, we are hoping to integrate our website into our program to create an unparalleled educational experience. We are looking into offering instant messaging, real-time internet classes, blackboard technology, and a host of other applications. These advances will allow us to give better service at a lower cost. At the same time, we are aware of the dangers inherent in the Internet, and we are working on ways to address them so that parents can feel confident in using the Seton Internet site.

If a family does not have a computer, we encourage the family to obtain one as soon as possible, especially if students are in high school. Computers are no longer expensive, and often can be obtained free if you sign up for a certain length of internet service.

**Faith and Freedom Readers are now available from Seton Educational Media.**

**540-636-9996**  
**[www.setonhome.org](http://www.setonhome.org)**



### Conferences

Information about Seton conferences is sent by mail to home schooling families on our mailing list in the state, and usually to surrounding states as well. Conferences include talks as well as the sale of Seton textbooks and supplemental books. Half-day conferences also are available. Costs are borne by Seton. If your support group is interested in having a conference in your area, please call Mary Lou Warren at Seton.

### Non-Seton Conferences

Many state and local groups are now sponsoring their own conferences, inviting various Catholic vendors and curriculum providers. Seton is happy to participate at these conferences as a vendor. Dr. Mary Kay Clark is often available to speak at these conferences.

We also suggest as a speaker Ginny Seuffert, mother of twelve children and

home schooling mother of many years. She is a favorite speaker who offers her homeschooling tips with fun and humor.

Seton has sent information to families on our mailing list within 100 miles of these conferences, which have shown an increase in attendance.

### Upcoming conferences

**Phoenix, AZ** - February 19, 2000: Seton conference with St. Thomas Guild and St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church. Father Philip Acquaro, Ginny Seuffert, Mary Kay Clark, Mr. Thomas Susanka, Father Bartholomew de la Torre. Register through Seton. Local contact is Anne at 480-969-7346.

**Front Royal, VA** - March 4, 2000: Seton Conference at Christendom College. Father Hermley, Ginny Seuffert, Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Dr. Bernie Way, Dr. Patrick Keats. Huge book sale, new and used. Register through Seton.

**Toledo, OH** - March 11, 2000: Annual Catholic Faith and Family Conference. Dr. Clark speaking. Contact Rita at 419-885-3145; Thomas\_haus@msn.com

**Olathe, KS** - March 18, 2000. Catholic Home Schooling Education Fair. Prince of Peace Catholic Church. Dr. Clark speaking. Contact Paulette at 913-829-5168.

**Rochester, NY** - March 25, 2000: Seton Conference. St. Jude the Apostle Church. Dr. Clark, Ginny Seuffert, Fr. James McLucas, Other speakers TBA. Register with Seton. Local contact is Judy at 716-247-5262.

**Houston, TX** - April 1, 2000. Annual Catholic Home Schooling Conference. Dr. Clark and Ginny Seuffert speaking. Seton books for sale. Contact: Ana at 281-583-5430.

**Harrisburg, PA** - April 8, 2000. Annual Home Schooling conference by Catholic Homeschoolers of PA. Dr. Clark speaking, Seton books for sale. Contact Ellen Kramer at 717-866-5425.

**Rockford, IL** - May 19-20, 2000. Latin Mass Community Conference. Dr. Clark speaking. Contact Peg at 800-437-5876.

**Chattanooga, TN** - June 10, 2000. Annual Catholic Home Schooling Conference. Dr. Clark speaking. Seton Books for Sale. Contact Sharon at 423-842-6319.

**Detroit, MI** - June 24, 2000. Annual Catholic Home Schooling Conference. Ginny Seuffert speaking. Seton books for sale. Contact Cathie at 313-565-6129.

### SAT and ACT

Seton students taking the SAT or ACT tests should use the Seton CEEB code to ensure that copies of the scores become part of their permanent record at Seton. The Seton code number is:

**470 902**

### California Office

Available in our Los Angeles, California, office are textbooks and pre-packed curriculums for grades K through 8. Contact Mark at Seton, 44751 Date St., Suite 8, Lancaster, CA 93534; phone: 661-948-8881; e-mail: setonca@networkone.net; fax: 661-948-7006.

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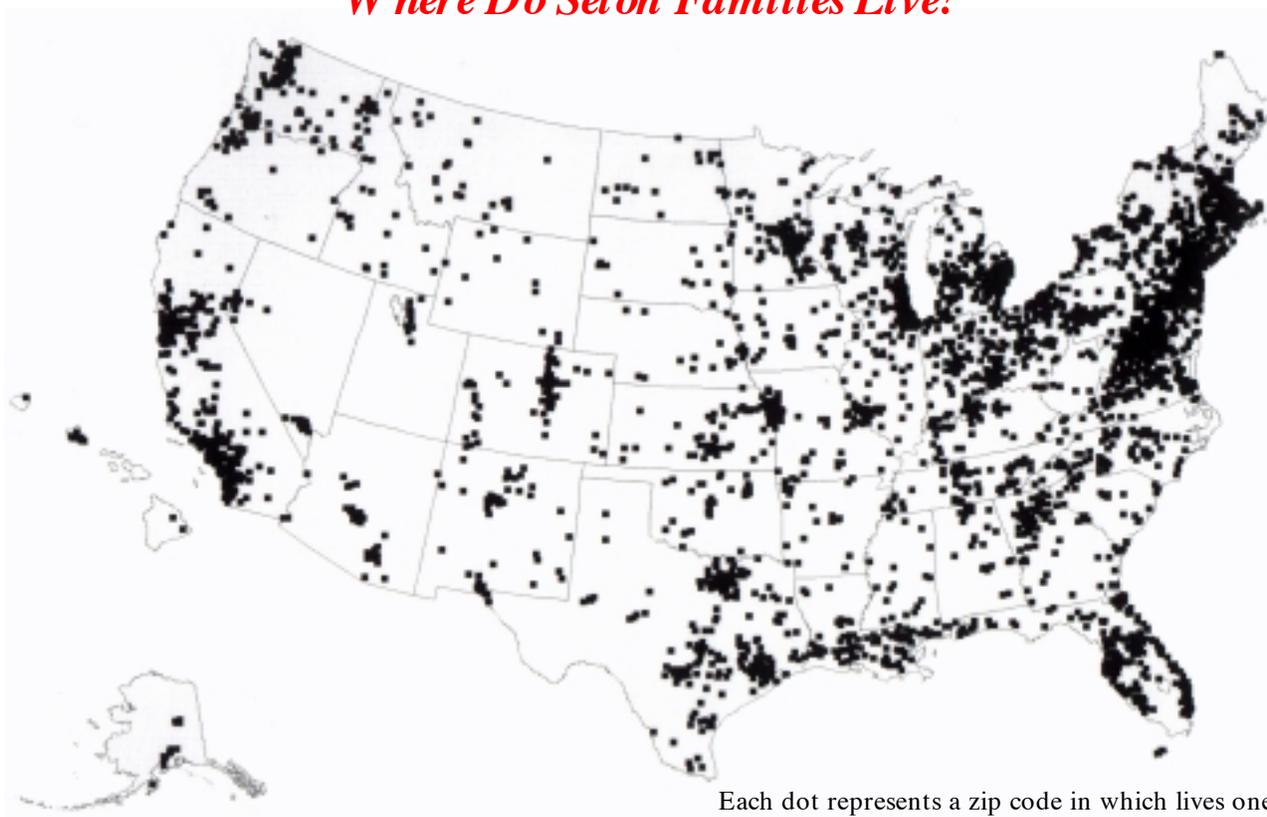
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Senior Guidance: Bob Wiesner, 540-636-2238  
History: Bruce Clark, Ext. 122  
Elementary: Winnie Newcomb, 540-636-2342; Patricia McKenna, 540-636-1755; Gary Gale, Ext. 121  
Admissions, Enrollment, Re-Enrollment: 540-636-2039  
Home Schooling Fathers: Tom Kosten, Bruce Clark, Randy DeClue  
Special Needs/LD: Paula Galligan, Ext. 151; Pat Walker, Ext. 152  
Report Cards/Graders: Melissa Olt, Ext. 138; Edmund Micucci, Ext. 166  
Independent Studies: Dr. Jerry Smith, Ext. 159  
Testing (CAT): Margaret Luckey, Ext. 150

## *Where Do Seton Families Live?*



Each dot represents a zip code in which lives one or more Seton families.

### *Seton Home Study School*

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Front Royal, VA 22630

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