



Seton Home Study School

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◆ “Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church” ◆

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He is Risen!

After seeing Mel Gibson’s film *The Passion of the Christ*, many of us have been brought closer to the experience of the Passion of our Lord. We not only see anew how much Jesus loved us, but also just how excruciating the Passion was for His Mother and His disciples.

For those who were actually present at the horrible Crucifixion and saw the terrific sufferings borne by Jesus, seeing Jesus alive and well after the Resurrection must have been fantastic, amazing, and unbelievable. We should not be surprised that Mary Magdalen, after seeing Jesus literally beaten to death, could not believe that the healthy “gardener” was the Risen Christ.

Thus, many of us can now more fully appreciate, not only the skepticism of some, but also the incredible feelings of joy and amazement that Mary, our Blessed Mother, Mary Magdalen, and the Apostles must have had as they encountered the Risen Christ in his various appearances.

We read in the Gospel of Matthew that some claimed that the Apostles came and stole His body. Again, the movie reminds us that there was a paralyzing fear in many who were present because such horrific tortures could happen to them. We can understand anew the reason why His followers fled in fear after Jesus’ arrest, such as the fear of Peter when he denied knowing Jesus and the fear of the Apostles when they hid behind locked doors in the upper room because they feared they might be next. The

Apostles were in no shape to perpetrate a hoax on their contemporaries.

Another classic objection to Jesus’ resurrection is the claim that Jesus never really died, and, therefore, His being alive after the Crucifixion was the result of His escape from death. However, the movie reminds us that He could never have lived through the tortures of His Passion and Crucifixion.

Extreme depression and fear would have been overwhelming for the followers of Jesus who saw the Passion with their own eyes. They believed that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah come to make things better, and yet He now was suffering horrific tortures without seeming to have any power to overcome the forces against him. The Passion would have been a severe test of faith for them all, a test that we have been spared.

The movie has allowed us to capture more of the whole picture of both the events and meaning of the Passion. The whole picture is more consoling despite the horrible things we see in the movie. We see Jesus fall to the ground under the heavy cross. He looks at His mother as she kneels down next to Him. They exchange a glance of love and understanding. With renewed strength, almost a renewed vigor, He stands up with His cross, bearing it with almost a love for the cross, and tells His mother, “I come to make all things new.” We understand that it is with His cross and by His cross that He will make all things new for all of us.

All Creation became new, became changed by Jesus and His Passion and Death on the Cross. By His Resurrection, He showed that the major thing made new was the opening of the gates of Heaven, and that by His death, death and sin are conquered. Let us proclaim with the Byzantine Liturgy: “By death He conquered death, and to those in the graves, He granted life.”

As we teach our children the Faith during this Lent, we need to remind them about the Passion, the Death, and the Resurrection of Jesus. And, perhaps, too, we need to remind ourselves again to unite our difficulties in homeschooling with Jesus, so that we join our sacrifices to His and carry our cross as He carried His. Jesus will reward us by having our children become adults who will gladly carry the cross of the Faith into our society and culture.

Our society is in the throes of depression and fear, but the Resurrection will come if we Catholic homeschooling parents train and educate our children to bring Christ and the reason for His Passion to the society. Let us end by proclaiming with the Stations of the Cross: “We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee, because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.”

- MKC

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Questions We Are Asked

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

I am having trouble staying on schedule. My homeschooling is suffering, as is my housework.

If you are having trouble staying on schedule, you really need to try to be organized. I have found that if I have a realistic schedule to start the day, and don't let things interrupt my schedule, I can get things done. Obviously, when you have children, some things will happen you cannot anticipate. However, if you focus on homeschooling and schedule activities out of the house only rarely, you will have a better chance of staying on schedule.

If you have older children, be sure to train them to help you with various jobs around the house. Children want to feel they are important in the family. Give them jobs that really can help to make things easier for you.

Pray to the Blessed Mother to help you stay on schedule. She wants to help you to do your homeschooling as well as to complete your duties around the house. Consider going to daily Mass. I recently received a letter from a mother who felt her days were constantly disorganized, but once she started going to daily Mass with the children, her days were better organized, the children behaved better, attended to their schoolwork better, and her son started serving Mass. She attributes all this to the graces from daily Mass.

I need to work, my husband does not want to help, and I cannot keep track of my daughter's school work.

Some of us have unusually difficult situations, but we all need to turn to God and His Blessed Mother for help. Is there a relative or a friend who might be willing to help you with your daughter's homeschooling? She could be there while your daughter does her work, and you could check it when you get home.

Hopefully, you have time during part of each day and on weekends to do the majority of the work with your daughter. Consider also the possibility of having your daughter go to work with you and working in the same office or building. If your daughter is of high school age, you may be able to find a nearby public library or college library where she can work and you can visit her each day at lunchtime.

You and your daughter should keep your husband in your daily prayers so that he realizes how important homeschooling is. Miracles do happen, especially when they are requested, and you can pray that at some point, he will offer to help in some way.

My son is in second grade, and he is reading more advanced books from the library. Do you think I should skip the third grade reading course and put him in fourth grade?

I am not in favor of having a child just automatically skip a grade level or a course at a grade level. You cannot really know just which concepts or skills might be taught in the grade level you skipped. The best thing to do is go ahead and get the regular third grade course, but just proceed through it more quickly if your son can do it. However, be sure that he is not just reading the books. The course has three textbooks, but in that grade level, there are discussion questions in the lesson plans you want to be sure to cover. In some of the grade levels for reading, there are additional comprehension workbooks and reading-thinking skills workbooks. While the "book report" is minimal in third grade, all the skills associated with the book reports are important to learn.

When students skip a grade level, especially reading, it is not unusual for

them to begin struggling at the fourth or fifth grade level. Sometimes the student is advanced in reading, but cannot advance as quickly in interpretation skills. However, you know your child best, so you need to make that decision.

I have seven children, and my oldest is in high school. I cannot help my oldest because I am too busy with the younger ones. Should I keep homeschooling her?

Try to keep remembering why you are homeschooling in the first place. Dr. William Marra, who is now deceased but was a homeschooling father and homeschooling conference speaker for many years, constantly spoke about the cultural corruption in the schools. He insisted that parents

The high school years are important to your daughter's life. How she does in high school will have a large impact on her college and career choices.

keeping their children at home have a better chance of keeping the Faith and Catholic culture even if they spent very little time in the actual teaching. His philosophy (he was a philosophy professor at Fordham University) was "Do no harm," meaning that even if a child had little formal schooling at home, it was better than the harm that would be done to a child in a modern-day classroom. What could be more harmful than a child losing her Faith, her Catholic culture, her respect for her parents and their values? Keep praying and help your oldest to do more on her own. But also try to be involved yourself, or have your husband try to be involved in helping your child in the evenings.

Finally, try to impress upon your daughter that these high school years are important to the rest of her life. How diligently she works on her high school subjects will have a large impact on what college she can attend and what career options are open to her. She needs to realize that it is a serious matter.

My friend is interested in homeschooling, but seems concerned about lack of color in some of the books and the fact that the readers are not updated.

People start homeschooling because they want a better situation for their family, especially for their children. They want a quality education. They want to be free to train their children in the Faith. The best thing you can do for your friend is to pray for her to see the importance of a quality Catholic education. You might even start a quiet nine day novena to her patron saint.

People homeschool because they want a better situation for their family, especially for their children. They want to be free to train their children in the Faith.

A few of our books, such as the readers, do have older copyright dates. This is because the books were of such good quality when published, and they have not lost their quality simply from being old. No one would suggest that we not read the works of Shakespeare because they were written long ago.

Regarding color, many of our books are full-color or use color for highlights. It's not uncommon at all for workbooks from any publisher to use either black and white inside or use what is called "spot-color" which is black and white with one other color. Many Catholic

schools purchase the Seton books for use in their classrooms.

My husband is really not supportive of homeschooling. He thinks I cannot do it because I don't have a college degree.

You might have your husband look over your lesson plans. Let him see just how much detail we provide for you. Let him see the answer keys and the tests. Encourage him to go through our web site. He can be reassured by all the help that we provide, by phone, by email, by the message board, by online courses with audio lectures and web links. He needs to see that you are not alone but have plenty of help easily available. You might consider asking him to teach one course so that he becomes familiar with how Seton works. Also, show him on our web site the several certificates under "Accreditation," showing our recognition as an accredited school by international, national, and state organizations. You yourself may not have a degree, but you have many people with degrees and a wealth of experience helping you.

If a college degree or teacher certification were the most important qualification for teaching, then public schools would be turning out the best educated children in the world. But private school students, whose teachers generally have less in the way of formal qualifications, regularly score better on standardized tests. Homeschoolers also score extremely well on standardized tests. It is the method of private tutoring by loving parents that makes for successful homeschooling.

I am working so hard to give my children Catholic values. What do I do when they want to play with the children in the neighborhood when I know for sure that these children do not share the same values?

You need to keep in mind the personalities of your children. Some will follow other children without too much thought, so you need to protect them, or guide them, or wait until they are older to handle difficult situations. Some children may be able to remain independent in their thinking and actions,

and actually influence other children to do the right thing. Most of all, our homeschooled children need to be loyal to their Faith, to practice their Faith, and to be respectful and loyal to their own family and family values.

You may want to consider the suitability of the neighborhood that you live in. It's hard for a traditional Catholic family to live in a neighborhood where the majority of families are nontraditional. In such a case, you may want to consider moving to a more rural location where there would be fewer neighbors and those would be farther away. That would give you more control over who your children play with.

You may also want to consider moving to an area where you know there are a number of Catholic homeschooling families nearby. If you provide your children with suitable friends, you won't have to worry as much about unsuitable friends.

About a dozen years ago, Father Marvin O'Connell wrote an article in *Lay Witness* magazine, giving a history of Catholics in the United States. He spoke about the age of survival, the age of expansion, the age of assimilation, the age of consolidation during the 1940's and 1950's. He concludes his article by talking about today, the second age of survival. He believes that for Catholics to survive, not only with their Catholic Faith but also with their Catholic culture, Catholics need to homeschool their children to protect their Faith and culture from disappearing. He ended his article with the following words:

"And so I recommend, as the evangelization proper to these unhappy times, a return to the ghetto, by which I mean something quite precise. I think we need to recapture a sense of ourselves, who we are, how we differ from the consumerist world around us, what it is in contemporary American society that we admire and what we despise. We need to find again that spirit of community and fellowship we have lost ... we need to rediscover that Catholic tradition which nourished our forebearers across nearly two millennia and which, once we have found it, has to be shared with our brothers and sisters in Christ..."

Essentials of Home Management, #6

by Ginny Seuffert

Home schooling Moms and Dads all over America have very mixed feelings this time of year. On one hand, we are delighted that March mud is finally turning into green grass and daffodils. The windows are open, the kids can go outside to play after school time, and we no longer spend hours each day stowing coats, scarves, and hats that family members have been strewing all over the living room for the past six months. In our faith life, Lent is over and Christ is risen from the dead. What could be more perfect? Then why are many homeschooling parents still blue?

Too many homeschool parents greet the greening of their gardens with a gloomy realization that, while the school year is three quarters finished, they still haven't finished second quarter, and once again are facing "summer school." All the trips to zoos and museums that Mom has been promising when the weather turned nice seem pretty impossible considering how far behind the children are in their classes. You've been envisioning a brisk spring-cleaning and a sparkling house, but just haven't found the time, and don't see how you will ever find the time before the last child goes to college. By the time that happens, you'll probably die of old age! Many homeschooling parents feel frustration and a sense of failure this time of year because of what they have not accomplished.

To regain a cheery Christian attitude, a good place to start is remembering what you actually did accomplish since the start of the last school year. You kept your children in a wholesome Catholic environment. They read stories about authentic family life, biographies of the saints, learned their math facts and how to compute with them, gained a Catholic understanding of our world's history and an appreciation for the role our Faith has played in art. Hopefully, you were able to attend daily Mass at

least sometimes, and had family devotions like Grace with meals, the Angelus, and the Rosary. Your children were able to witness first hand, and be inspired by, your sacrifices and your willingness to give up your own time and material comforts for their sakes. Moreover, your children played with their brothers and sisters and forged bonds with one another that will last for a lifetime. Even beyond your front door, your friends, neighbors, and relatives, who doubted the value of home education, have observed and learned to admire your dedication to your children and your perseverance. They've noticed what great kids you have. Seen with clearer eyes, the accomplishments of average homeschooling Moms and Dads are indeed impressive.

"Thanks so much," you may say, "but all your kind words haven't told me how to get my children out of high school before their twenty-first birthdays!" Most of us want to have summer vacation, but hesitate to take a break in the schoolwork. After all, if third grade takes fourteen months to complete, what hope can a parent have for high school in under a decade? And if spring-cleaning takes place right before company arrives for Thanksgiving dinner, how can you believe that you will ever have an orderly home?

Simple solutions have been offered in the pages of this newsletter before, and Seton has many recommendations in their lesson plans on how to streamline the coursework, but for those who do not have time to research, here are some simple tips to help you beat end-of-year burnout:

- Set your alarm and make sure you get an early start every school day. Wake the children up allowing enough time for them to eat breakfast, make their beds, and be sitting down with their books, and on task, at the same time everyday. Wear a watch and check it throughout the day to make sure you are staying on schedule.

- Emphasize the essential subjects, like religion, reading, English and math. Especially in the elementary grades, subjects like science and history can be done at night with Dad, over the weekend, or perhaps left until the summer when some subjects can be combined with family vacation plans or day trips.

- Take some time and look over the work the student must complete to finish the grade. Eliminate repetitious review of subjects in which the student does well. If your daughter is a good speller, let her skip writing the words or putting them in alphabetical order. Allow her some time to memorize the words and give her an oral quiz. If your son easily mastered his math concepts this year, let him complete just the odd-numbered problems in his textbook. See what work can be done orally, and see if bright students can "test out" of some of the daily work.

- Allow the children, especially boys, some break time during the school day so they can stretch their legs and burn off some energy. Assign specific tasks, like sweeping the hall or loading the dishwasher, to get them up and moving. Check your watch and give each child a specific time to sit down and hit the books again.

- As the weather warms, many families encourage participation in team sports, or more class trips with homeschooling buddies as a chance for the kids to reconnect with their friends and get some healthy exercise. Make sure that the children understand that these activities are available only when a certain amount of daily schoolwork and regular household chores are completed. Understand yourself that these enjoyable outings cannot be so frequent that they interfere with schoolwork or housework.

- Remove the television, the video games, instant messenger service, popular magazines, and other distractions from your pupil's life. Many homeschooling students fall

behind, not because the work is overwhelming, but because they postpone actually sitting down and doing it.

- Finally, take one day when Dad is available, and see if you can get grandma or a baby sitter to watch the youngest ones. Warn any child old enough to lift a mop not to make any plans, and spend one day spring cleaning. Launder your curtains, dust the webs from the ceiling, and polish even the vertical surfaces of your furniture. A gleaming house, with (newly washed) open windows letting in a fresh breeze will lift everyone's spirits.

For lots of reasons, I have continued schooling over the summer for probably a majority of the fifteen years I have been teaching my children. In some families this works because the children learn to see education as an everyday task and don't lose important educational skills through lack of use. It's a good idea to keep the school day early and short during summertime. This way, the students work when they feel most refreshed, but have time for household chores and recreation. Summer is a good time to teach practical life skills that will benefit the family the whole year round. Teach the children to help with the yard work, or allow them to take turns grilling dinner. Set a rule that friends and outside activities are not to be scheduled in the morning. A proper balance of work and play will inculcate responsible habits and help you in your task of raising confident and holy children.

It is no coincidence that many state organizations schedule their homeschooling conferences and curriculum fairs at this time of year. These conferences are often the shot in the arm that homeschooling parents need to place their faith in Christ, through the intercession of His Blessed Mother. Remember, that a spotless soul is even more uplifting than a gleaming house, so try to get to Confession. With the sacraments, the help found at a good Catholic conference, some clear thinking, and a good dose of practical life skills, we, like St. Paul, will finish the race.

The Testing of Our Virtue Through Service

*by Rev. Thomas J. Euteneuer
Human Life International*

"If a man wishes to be first, he shall be the last and the servant of all" (Mk 9: 35).

The modern world is notorious for its ability to get into our lives with messages and concerns that are often alien to Christianity. Worldly ambition and "keeping up with the Joneses" are the urgent priorities of the day. The world wants us to be first, not last. It wants us to express ourselves, not renounce ourselves; it wants us to conform to the values of our worldly neighbors, not the values of the gospel. But how different it is to be a follower of Jesus Christ! How different our value system from that of the world! For the true Christian, an attitude of service is a countercultural mandate. In serving others, we imitate our Lord Jesus Christ who "came to serve, not be served."

Service is the testing ground of our virtue. The sacrificial commitment to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others manifests a generosity of heart that is foreign to the world's value of self-service. Our heartfelt response to the needs of our brothers and sisters, parents, children, and friends determines how much we will grow in virtue. Their needs call us out of ourselves and out of our tendency to think only of our own needs. Their needs give us the chance to exercise virtue without being opportunistic or "looking out for number one." If we allow the needs of others to determine our lives, then we will reap the benefits of that generosity in tested virtue. Not only that, but there is a more practical benefit of that service: it always comes back to us in time. "A man will reap only what he sows," says Jesus in another context.

My spiritual director of fourteen years was just made a bishop. This man is one of the most self-sacrificing people I have ever met. At a time in his priesthood when he would have liked to be in a parish, he was called to serve as rector of the local seminary because the Church needed it. When he became a pastor, he took the hardest parish assignment

because the Church needed it. As pastor, he was one of the few priests I have ever seen who went door to door in a grass-roots evangelization effort, and from his parish came a disproportionate number of priestly vocations inspired by the holiness of their shepherd. This good priest showed so many people what service is all about. Now he is bishop – the kind of man we want in that office! – and we can be assured that his tested ability to serve others will be applied at a much higher level for a greater impact on others for the kingdom of God.

This is the point about service whenever and wherever we are called to offer it: by serving humbly in the here and now, we have formed in us all the habits and skills needed to help others in even greater ways. The psalmist cries out: "O Lord, I thank you for you have increased the strength of my soul" (Ps 138:3); in this he is speaking about how the Lord has used him for service. It is another way of saying that service at a lower level always prepares our souls for service at a higher level because God in His Wisdom always starts with the lowly and raises them up.

The best example of selfless service that I ever heard was St. John Vianney who served some 100,000 people in the confessional in the last year of his life. His favorite charity was the blind lady begging at the end of his street. He would tiptoe down the street and drop a few coins in her mantle and run away before she knew they were there. Since the blind lady could not identify the giver of the coins to thank him, there was no way he could take credit for the act of charity!

Be not afraid to serve others out of the abundance of your heart! There is so much benefit to it. Although it is not easy to always be putting yourself last, we have His promise that some day we will be raised up to His Kingdom through the love of our brethren and friends. And for homeschooling parents, through the love and service for their own children.

Book Analysis and Conflict

Several of our graders and counselors in the English Department came up with some ideas to help students to understand the different kinds of “conflict” which students are to write about in a book analysis for high school English. We think this might be useful for all our parents and students when analyzing books.

Conflict is a literary term referring to the opposition of two forces, expressed as “___ versus ___.” There are four main types of conflict in literature.

Man versus man. When the basic conflict in the story is one man or men opposing another man or men, we say this is a man versus man conflict. This is the conflict only when there is no other conflict that receives as much attention. A novel that has this as the main conflict may be emphasizing other aspects of the story over conflict. When analyzing man versus man, be especially careful not to resort to plot summary. Rather, discuss the reasons behind the conflict and highlight the important moments that build tension or affect the power struggle between the opponents, explaining why they are important to the development of the conflict.

Man versus nature. This involves the struggle of a person or group of people against non-intelligent, impersonal forces. Again, avoid writing a plot summary, concentrating instead on the most important occurrences that relate specifically to this conflict. Discuss how and why they occur. There are only a few books with this conflict on the Seton booklist.

Man versus society. This conflict involves a person or people whose ideas, or what they stand for, are not accepted by the society in which

they live. What that society depends on the focus of the author: it may be a family, a small village, or even an entire world. It is whatever group affects the main character the most. Keep in mind, the society may not actively or consciously act against him, nor will every member of that society always have the same ideas. Rather, the character will find it difficult to get along in that society because few or none share his point of view.

When analyzing this type of conflict, don't ignore the action, but concentrate on the differences in belief that cause the conflict. Be sure to address changes in belief, and whether the character suffers an active or passive persecution. Is he attempting to change society (like a saint working for converts), or is he simply trying to resist outside influence, like avoiding peer pressure?

Man versus self. This conflict occurs when the focus of the story is on the main character changing his ideas or learning something. The actions and events in the novel serve as opportunities for the main character to reflect or gain experience. The end result is a change or development in the character's beliefs or ideas following a major event, or series of events, in which the main character has to make a choice between the old belief and the new.

This is often confused with man versus society, but there are major differences. In man versus self, the pressure to change, even if it originates with society, is continued by the main character himself through his thoughts and reflections. Also, change is usually a good thing in man versus self, whereas if the main character

changes his basic beliefs to match those of the people around him in man versus society, then he has “lost”. This type of conflict is easiest to spot once you finish the book.

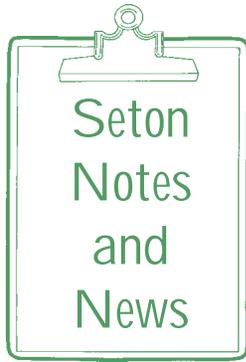
Very few books have only one conflict, but almost every book has a main conflict, the one that really drives the story forward. Without the main conflict, there is no story.

Usually the main conflict is fairly obvious to spot, but for some novels this isn't the case. Sometimes other important but non-vital conflicts, called sub-conflicts, are given more attention at certain points in the story. This is why it is especially important to look at the book as a whole, rather than just concentrating on certain chapters or incidents.

The main conflict is centered around the main character, present throughout most of the book, and is always against the same antagonist. The main conflict is not a plot summary, is not a single incident in the story, nor can it be introduced in just a few chapters.

When trying to identify or analyze the main conflict, carefully consider the ending and the main character. Who wins, or what values triumph? Why? Is the ending happy or sad? If there is a clearly victorious person or idea, is it good that these people or values win? Why or why not?

Don't assume the conflict you find the most interesting is the main one. Some authors may be more interested in setting, analogy, character study, or some other literary element, in which case the conflict may be reduced to the bare minimum necessary to drive the story. When in doubt, review the most important circumstances, including thoughts and reflections involving the main character.



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. For more information, contact Mary Lou Warren at 540-636-9990.

Pasadena, TX (Houston area). April 23 & 24, 2004. 14th Annual ARCH Curriculum Fair at St. Pius V Catholic School, 812 South Main, Pasadena. For information call 281-797-5578.

Ripon, CA (Sacramento/Modesto area). April 24, 2004. Northern California Catholic Home School and Family Conference at St. Patrick Catholic Church, 19399 E. St./Rte. 120 Highway, Ripon. Co-hosted by Seton and Human Life International. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with a full teen

program. Free admission. For information call Fran at 209-824-5795. The conference brochure is available on the Seton website.

Harrisburg, PA. April 24, 2004. 10th Annual Catholic Homeschool Conference and Curriculum Fair at Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Route 22 West, Harrisburg. For information call Ellen at 717-866-5425.

West Allis, WI (Milwaukee area). April 24, 2004. Greater Milwaukee Catholic Home Educators Curriculum Fair at Saint Mary Help of Christians, 6014 Madison St. For information call Kathy at 414-543-2665.

Charleston, SC. April 24, 2004. 2004 South Carolina Home School Conference and Vendor Fair at Bishop England High School, 363 Seven Farms Drive. For information, call Michelle at 843-881-2451.

Ankeny, IA (Des Moines area). May 8, 2004. 4th Annual Catholic Family Home School Conference at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church, 510 E. 1st Street, Ankeny, Iowa. For information, contact Melissa at (515) 832-6214.

Memphis, TN. May 14 and 15, 2004. 5th Annual Catholic Home School and

Curriculum Fair at St. Louis Church, 203 S. White Station Rd. For information, call Ana at 901-861-6089, or email thebonds@highstream.net.

Chicago, IL. May 15, 2004. Immaculate Heart of Mary Regional Catholic Home School and Family Conference at Dominican University—main campus, River Forest, IL. For information, email chicago@ihmconference.org or call call Carol at 708-267-7778.

Denver, CO. June 4 and 5, 2004. Catholic Home Educators of Colorado, 5th Annual Conference at Bishop Machebeuf Catholic High School, 458 Uinta Way, Lowry Campus. For information call 303-814-1143.

St. Paul, MN. June 4 and 5, 2004. 5th Annual Minnesota Catholic Home Education Conference and Curriculum Fair, at the University of St. Thomas. For information, call Debbie at 952-941-5646.

Herndon, VA (DC area). June 25 and 26, 2004. 2004 Immaculate Heart of Mary National Homeschool and Family Conference at the Dulles Hilton. For information, go to www.ihmconference.org, email at info@ihmconference.org or call 540-636-1946.

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The Family: Cradle of Civil Society

This is a suitable moment for us to exhort especially heads of families to govern their households according to these precepts, and to educate their children from their earliest years. The family may be regarded as the cradle of civil society, and it is in great measure within the circle of family life that the destiny of the State is fostered.

Consequently, they who would break away from Christian discipline are working to corrupt family life and to destroy it utterly, root and branch. From such an unholy purpose, they are not deterred by the fact that they are inflicting a cruel outrage on parents, who have the right from nature to educate those whom they begot, a right to which is joined the duty of harmonizing instruction and education with the end [purpose] for which they were given their children by the goodness of God.

It is then incumbent upon parents to make every effort to resist attacks on this point and to vindicate at any cost the right to direct the education of their offspring in a Christian manner; and first and foremost to keep them away from schools where there is risk of their being imbued with the poison of impiety.

Where the right education of youth is concerned, no amount of trouble and labor is too much....However, let everyone be firmly convinced, first of all, that the minds of children are best trained above all by the teaching they receive at home. If in their growing years they find in their homes the rule of an upright life and the exercise of Christian virtue, the salvation of society will be in great part assured.

Encyclical *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1/10/1890

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