



Seton Home



Study School

Volume XXII, Number 8



“Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church”



August 2005

Assumption of Mary

The Assumption of the body and soul of the Blessed Mother of Jesus into heaven is celebrated on August 15th. This feastday reminds us of the heavenly reward which is awaiting all of us who persevere in the Christian life.

Eternal happiness in heaven is the reward Jesus has planned for us. Remember the basic words of the catechism: “Why did God make us? God made us to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to show forth His goodness and to share with us His everlasting happiness in heaven.”

Our first responsibility in life is to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him. As parents, we need to live this life ourselves, and give our children an example of how to live this message of eternal life.

The purpose of life is to get to heaven. Yet, how many hours do people spend on their personal interests, hobbies or jobs? How much time is spent watching shows on television? How much time is spent on sports activities? How much time is spent on practicing swimming or ballet? How much time does one spend preparing for a job and then working on that job? How much time do people spend on computer games or searching for this and that on the Internet?

None of these things are evil in themselves, and of course we need to do the daily things necessary to live. But on this feast day of the Assumption, we ought to reflect on how much time we spend on what is the essential reason for our very existence. We need to examine our own lifestyle and think about the message we are sending our children. God sent us children for the very reason that we are to teach them to be good followers of Christ so that they can spend eternity in heaven with Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and with us, their parents.

How much time do we spend on reading our catechism or reading a book about the catechism, explaining the truths of the teachings of Jesus? How much time do we spend listening to a priest or watching a priest on EWTN explain the Catholic Faith and how we can live that Faith more fully, so that we may be more holy in our daily lives?

We need to put our catechism lessons into practice. We cannot forget that everything the world has to offer cannot give us life after death. Do we give the same amount of time on our quest for eternal happiness with Jesus that we give to our efforts for worldly pursuits? Shouldn't our first ambition be to seek the Kingdom of Heaven?

We also need to try to receive the Sacraments more often. We ought to help others in need, and make the Service of God our first ambition and our first desire so that, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, we can eventually rise, body and soul, into eternal happiness with Jesus in heaven. As home schooling parents, we need to make the Service of God the first ambition and the first desire of our children.

“All you peoples of the earth, sing together a hymn of glory to the pure and most holy Virgin from whom the Word of God came to us, receiving flesh from her in a manner beyond understanding. O pure Virgin, intercede with Christ Our God that He may save our souls.

“O pure and most holy Virgin, the choirs of angels in heaven and the race of men on earth sing the praise of your glorious Assumption, for you became the Mother of the Creator of us all, Christ our God. We beg you to intercede constantly for us, O glorious and ever-virgin Mother of God.” (*Selections from prayers of the Catholic Eastern Rite*)

- MKC

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Questions We Are Asked

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

My son has finished everything except the book report. I just cannot get him to finish it. What do you suggest?

In the middle grade levels, sometimes the book report is basically a reading problem. It may be that your child is having trouble reading, and going through a whole book may be more than he can do in a reasonable amount of time. It may be that while your son can read, he is not comprehending what he is reading. He may read the whole book but finds it boring because the concepts are not really being understood.

If the reading process or the reading comprehension is the problem, consider having yourself or an older sister or brother, or someone else go through the book with your son. The helper can assist him in reading and have a discussion after each page or few pages about what is happening in the story. This person can see the assignment questions to help your child focus on those aspects of the book he will need to write about. He can underline or highlight important sentences in the book.

On the other hand, the problem may not be reading the book or comprehending the book, but writing the report. Many boys have problems with the writing because their brains are faster than their hands. In this case, either you or some adult, can help your son with the writing. It will be necessary to have a discussion about the book in relation to the questions or topic sentences in the assignment. It may be necessary to write out the report as your son dictates it.

If your son has a problem with the writing process, you may want to teach your son keyboarding. For an impatient boy who is discouraged by the slowness of his writing ability, he will be thrilled by the ability to put his ideas on a computer screen, and to be able to make

adjustments and corrections very quickly. Again, you may need to discuss the book and the topic sentences or assignments as he works on the computer. That is fine as long as you encourage your son to think about the ideas, but do not spoon-feed him the answers.

We recommend that the student read the questions or the assignments before starting the book, and keep them in mind, or put them on a three-by-five card that he keeps in front of him, like a bookmark, as he reads the book. Each time he comes across a sentence that would help later in writing the report or analysis, he should underline it or highlight it.

Because it is the end of the summer, consider doing this project with your son in one week, having him read the book, underline the sentences, discuss the book, and write the report all in one week. This keeps him focused on this one assignment and may help him to finish up this assignment quickly. Consider ordering the next year's books a little early, and begin the first quarter (and later the other quarters) with a solid week of work on the book report.

My son did the book reports in eighth grade, but the ninth grade book analyses look more complex. Will he be able to do the analyses?

Most of our high school students who have been with us in 7th and 8th grades are able to adjust to the more advanced and interpretive book analysis. Nevertheless, we are in the process of having two reading-thinking workbooks written by one of our staff. The two reading-thinking workbooks for the 7th and 8th graders will be a step-by-step analysis of a short story following the same directions we are giving the high school students regarding the character analysis, the morality of a character, the

plot-conflict-resolution, and the theme of the novel they have chosen. Using these workbooks should make it much easier for students to write a book analysis in high school.

Also, remember that for most of the book reports for the elementary levels, and book analyses for the high school levels, we have *Chapter Notes* on our web site. These *Notes* ask questions or make comments to encourage or to motivate the students to read and to think about the books they are reading.

The student should read the questions or the assignments before starting the book. When he comes across a sentence that would help later in writing the report, he should underline or highlight it.

You can find these *Chapter Notes* by going to the Seton web site at www.setonhome.org. Click on My Seton, then Log On, then click on Courses, then scroll down to Reading, then move your cursor to the icon on the right which gives *Chapter Notes*. Your student can print them out if he wants to keep them in his novel to read or to refer to as he begins each chapter in his book.

At the high school level, we have just added a sample book analysis for each high school English course that requires a book analysis. These analyses are based on a short story which can be easily downloaded from the internet. The analyses take the student through the thinking process of each kind of analysis, such as character development or theme. At the end of about five pages, our English teacher has written

a final analysis to demonstrate what an analysis should look like.

What do you recommend for teaching my son in sixth grade about the importance of using the dictionary, the thesaurus, and the encyclopedia?

Keep in mind that a sixth grade boy is not going to go out of his way for anything except food and maybe sports. To encourage your son to use these reference books, you need to have them close at hand.

Secondly, Seton sells a dictionary and a thesaurus for different grade levels. In addition, we sell a workbook to help junior high and high school students learn on a step by step basis through activities, how to use all the features of a dictionary and a thesaurus. Many students don't know how much and in which ways a dictionary and a thesaurus can help them in their writing assignments. For typical students whose vocabulary is not large due to a lack of reading, these reference books are essential for more precise and interesting writing.

Home schooling is not easy, and one of the most difficult aspects is when a husband or a parent speaks out against it in front of the children.

Thirdly, you might think of a reward (even a monetary reward) for every time he uses his dictionary, or his thesaurus, or the encyclopedia.

By the way, you may think that paying a child for something he should do anyway is not a good idea. However, I have thought for a long time that students in the upper grades are more aware of jobs and money, and see others being paid for some jobs which are definitely less important than home schooling.

When the students reach an age when their friends are being paid for baby sitting or cleaning or mowing the lawn, we need to teach our children somehow that their home schooling work is more important. And when you think about the value of your time and money, you might consider that paying a student a dollar a day to do their work is better than spending hours cajoling them to work. This certainly seems like a better idea than simply giving a child an allowance which is not tied to any responsibility.

My father is against my home schooling my children. He continually talks to me in front of the children that they should be in "a regular school."

Home schooling is not easy, and certainly one of the most difficult aspects is when a husband or a parent not only does not approve but speaks out against it in front of the children. It sets up a conflict in the child and makes it even more difficult to home school, as the child wonders if home schooling, certainly not the norm among his friends, is something to be resisted.

You cannot stop the way your father thinks, but you need to tell him, whether he accepts it or not, that you are convinced that this is the right decision for your family. Tell him that whether the schools are good or not, you believe your day-to-day formal teaching using a Catholic program, as well as your example of living the Catholic lifestyle (hopefully including daily Mass) will help your children to face and to resist the secular pro-death culture.

Tell your father that you simply cannot allow his remarks to continue in front of the children, and that if he wishes to keep talking about his opposition, it must be only to you. The hope is that your father will respond, but if not, you may need to cut down on the visits. After all, your first responsibility now is to your own family.

I like your eighth grade Composition book. Have you had that before?

We did have the composition lessons in the lesson plans, but we made it into a text-workbook for the students to keep it together a little better. You will notice

that we did not put the grade level on the cover, because we believe it could be of help to a new ninth grader who may not have had much paragraph writing in a public school.

You will notice that it is a second semester course. The first eight chapters cover a variety of ways to write a paragraph: Using Details to Uphold an Idea, Using Examples to Make a Point, Supporting an Idea with Reasons, and so on. The next eleven chapters take the student step-by-step through the process of writing a research report. These chapters cover Researching, Make Source Cards, Note-taking, The Thesis Statement, The Outline, Footnotes, and so on. Many parents of eighth graders asked for this approach as some students struggled with a complete report which they felt was too much on their own.

We just received the books for sixth grade, but I can see that my daughter will struggle with the English Grammar. I am not sure how much I can help her as I don't recall studying this myself.

We do suggest that you begin working in the book for a week or so, and if it still seems too difficult, you can order a 5th grade English workbook.

When you work with your daughter, try to work right along with her, learning the concepts yourself. That way you will be able to help her. In addition, we are putting Preliminary Practice Exercises on our web site to help learn the concepts with very short, easy sentences, as a preliminary practice before the workbook exercises. Not all the grades are done, but you can find these for sixth grade, and the fifth grade ones are being added as they are completed. To find them, go to www.setonhome.org; click on My Seton, then log on, then click on courses, then scroll down to English, then move your cursor to the yellow icon on the right for the Preliminary English Exercises.

Remember that we have counselors available to help with questions in the elementary grades. You can phone or contact them by email.

Anticipating the New School Year

by Ginny Seuffert

On weekends during the spring and early summer, I travel to Catholic home schooling conferences all over the United States. Although I do not keep count, I bet I have spoken to literally thousands of Catholic moms and dads who are making huge sacrifices to teach their children at home. From them I have gained a greater understanding of what works in our home schools, but at the same time I have learned the greatest challenges that face parents. As the new school year approaches, now is the time to face these challenges head on and try to find some solutions that will work for you.

The Distraction Dilemma

Many of you find your school day schedule continuously interrupted by telephone calls and even unannounced visits from relatives and friends. One mom told me, "My extended family lives nearby, and while they are supportive of my home school, they just don't get it! They phone and drop by all the time just to say hello." Another problem is presented by friends and family, who would never dream of asking a child to take the day off from public or parochial schools, asking older home educated children to baby sit for them (or walk their dog, feed the parakeet, etc.) because their usual arrangements fell apart.

The Distraction Solution

We must let others know that we take our home schooling seriously, and that we need a certain number of uninterrupted hours to complete it. Here are some ideas:

- Forget polite hints! Inform your circle of friends and family that you need so many hours of uninterrupted time, and that you will not be accepting calls or visits until after such and such a time everyday.

- Get voice mail for your telephone, and record some version of the following script, "Thanks for calling the Smith Family. School is in session right now, but if you leave your name and number, we will call you back after 3 o'clock."

- If your mother drops by anyway, maybe she is looking for something to do! "Kids, look! It's Grandma! She's going to play with you while I teach your brothers and sisters." This is a win-win situation. Either Grandma bolts for the door, or you get some help with the little kids.

- People who are nervy enough to ask your child to skip school to perform some errand for them must be answered in a polite, but firm, manner. "Oh my goodness, Janey does schoolwork until 2:30 everyday. She couldn't possibly take time off in the middle of her school day!"

Order Overturned

Many of us relax over the summer months and do not keep to a tight schedule for wake-up, meals, and bedtime. Some of us also find our customary rules concerning the television, movies, and video games seem to be forgotten. A little laxness can be a nice break for everyone, but we have to get back on track if we want to have a successful school year.

Getting back on Track

The week before you plan to start the new school year, edge the children back into earlier bedtimes and a punctual wake-up call in the morning. Try to reestablish regular and predictable mealtimes, and don't forget to put a specific time aside for prayer everyday. Set a firm policy concerning electronic entertainment and remind the children that it will be strictly enforced.

The Housework Hassle

Many moms have told me that they love home schooling, they love having babies, they love making delicious family meals and they love staying home, but there are just not enough hours in the day to do it all. Some report that their houses are always messy, laundry is measured by mountains, and often supper is served so late that the younger children are nodding off in their soup bowls.

The Housework Solution

If you feel overwhelmed by everyday duties, you have lots of company! Here are some practical tips to restore order:

- To minimize mess, buy a cheap laundry basket for each bedroom. Take a quick glance into the bedrooms as you walk by, and make sure that dirty laundry is in the basket, not on the floor.

- Install a towel bar on the inside closet door in each bedroom. Insist the children hang up their bath towels to dry and use the same towel for a week.

- Take a few days to train individual children to perform certain tasks like laundry, washing the dishes, preparing salads, sweeping or vacuuming, and cleaning the bathrooms. When you are satisfied that the child can safely perform the duty, make it a permanent assignment for the coming school year.

Set aside the last Saturday of the month as food prep day for the following month. Stock up on the meat, as well as canned, and dry foods you will use, and don't forget to buy lots of big freezer bags. Here are a few ideas:

- Make a big pot of tomato sauce with meatballs or sausage and freeze it in one-meal sizes. (Although my Italian ancestors will be spinning in their graves, I suppose you could buy several bottles of sauce.) At dinnertime, heat up the sauce, boil some pasta and add a salad.

- Make a big pot of your family's favorite soup or stew, and freeze individual bags that are enough for one family meal. You need add only noodles or potatoes, a few fresh veggies, and a loaf of bread on the day you defrost.
- Buy boneless chicken breasts, clean and trim them, pound them or cut them into strips, season and freeze them in portions for individual meals. These make super fast and flexible dinners as you need only to sauté the cutlets, and serve them with pasta or rice, on top of a nice salad, or even on a Kaiser roll.

Many home schooling moms report that some frozen meals really get them through the tough days when everything seems to go wrong.

Remember the Reason

Finally, this time of year, it is a good idea to spend a few moments meditating on the reasons you started to home school in the first place and why it is imperative to see the job through. I will continue to pen columns designed to help you with your housework, schoolwork, discipline and even stress levels, but we must be careful not to lose sight of what is really important. The true goal of our Catholic home schooling is, with the grace of God, to form saints for the Kingdom of Heaven. Keep this holy objective in mind this coming school year when things go wrong, when you fall behind, when the kids act up, and your house seems to be tumbling down around your ears.

There are two important points for you to ponder as you pray. First, God's grace is always sufficient for all of our needs, and is available for the asking. Second, our vocation of educating our children at home is so vital to the Catholic Church in America that no sacrifice, no aggravation, no contradiction, no mess, and no exhaustion is so great that we should despair. Take heart from the words of the Psalmist, *"I sought the LORD, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to Him and be radiant with joy and your faces may not blush with shame."*

Organization

Organization is essential for successful home schooling. Organization is essential for calm and peaceful family life. Organization is essential for a clean and safe home. Organization is essential for happy children and parents. It is difficult to have an organized home when parents are home schooling, especially with several children doing schoolwork and several children below school age. But unless the day-to-day activities are managed with order and a schedule, home schooling is not the only thing that falls apart.

The greatest cause of disorder is *too many*—mainly, too many toys, and too many clothes. How many homes have so many toys and so many clothes that they are all over the place most of the time? An important first step for successful home schooling, and successful home management, is throwing out most of the toys and clothes, or, if they are still decent and usable, giving them away to the needy. Children usually have their favorite outfits, which they tend to wear over and over. They do not need all that many changes of clothing.

Make a game of it. Tell the kids, about two or three times a year, that it is time for Give to the Needy Day. Everyone must donate at least fifteen items or fill one garbage bag with clothes and another with toys or games. Believe it or not, this one project will make life easier and the home schooling more organized and successful.

Once you have rid your house of the overabundance of toys and clothes, then put in order the toys and clothes remaining. I myself never bothered about folding, but I did insist that everything had a place and should be returned to the place where it belongs. You can even make a sign on the inside of the bedroom doors: Everything has a place! When I was younger, my parents helped me build a wooden box of about three feet long, two feet high, and two feet deep. It had a hinged top, somewhat heavy, which I could open but my little brothers and sisters could not open. Then I painted it bright red. This was my toy box and the box where I put all the things I owned. The point is that if each of the children had their own box or place where they

can keep their own things, they are more likely to return them to that place.

To keep the home schooling in order, each child should have his own bookcase for his own books and other materials. Things which are taken out and used, should be returned to the proper place when the child has finished using them. For instance, you could arrange the books on the shelves according to the order in which they are used during the day; or they could be arranged in alphabetical order. You could teach your children about the Dewey Decimal system or the Library of Congress system, whichever is used in your local library. Your children would learn about these classification systems and how books are organized in the library. They can write the book number on sticky tape and paste the tape on the back of the book. Children who are involved in helping to develop such order and organization, which they themselves have learned about and helped to design, will be more likely to put their books back in proper order.

Another important step toward organization is getting rid of things in the kitchen. Consider a once a year Give Kitchen Things to the Needy. A good time is just before Christmas. Pull everything off the shelves, pots and pans, dishes and bowls and glasses and all that plastic. Even take all the canned food off the shelves. Determine beforehand that you will give away at least 25% of the kitchen "stuff." You will be amazed at what you can live without. If you have seven people in the family, you don't need more than seven to ten sets of things. If you have more, everyone will use more and you will be filling up your dishwasher all the time. Label glasses and bowls with the names of members of the family so they can be used again without going into the dishwasher.

Arrange things in the kitchen. If necessary, have the kids help you to arrange things on the shelves. For instance, write the word "glasses" on sticky tape and tape it to the edge of the shelf. Write the words "big dishes" and do likewise. For the canned goods, write

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An Armenian Family Reunion

Dr. Mitchell Kalpakgian's recent book *AN ARMENIAN FAMILY REUNION* (Neumann Press; 1-800-746-2521) is an inspiring book about the abundant richness of family life, the laughter and comedy of an extended family filled with colorful characters, and the wisdom of an older generation seeking to communicate its traditions, ideals, and Christian culture to the next generation.

The basic plot involves five married siblings in middle age who have not enjoyed a family reunion since their parents died. Once the idea of a reunion is born, all of the brothers and sisters look forward to the occasion and plan of each evening's recreation: not movies but the entertainment of stories, each family taking its turn at storytelling—a plot device that recalls *The Canterbury Tales*. Of course, all the younger cousins in high school and college have no enthusiasm for such an imaginative form of fun. They feel deprived of all the media forms of entertainment that form the staple of popular American youth culture. Besides, they assume all these tales will sound all too familiar, merely recall the sentimental past, and amount to no more than tedious, dull recitations.

Once the storytelling begins, however, the whole mood of the young cousins changes. They find themselves immersed in the colorful fullness of reality as the stories encompass all the ages of man from the birth of a baby to the comic antics of schoolchildren to the romance of love to a crisis of middle age to the old-fashioned ways and thoughts of grandparents. The Neumann Press Booklist describes the book thus: "You are in for a delightful time with a lifetime of unforgettable stories: adventure, humorous tales, stories of miracles, romance, lively conversations, and proverbial wisdom." The parents and aunts and uncles are, as the young learn from their stories, even more real and fascinating than they ever guessed.

The opening story, "An Armenian Boy Versus the Turkish Army," recaptures the terrifying experience of

a young fourteen-year-old Armenian boy who narrowly and miraculously escaped the Turkish genocide of the Armenians to emigrate to America and become the founding father of the extended family rejoicing in their gift of life at this family reunion. One of the listeners to this story comments, "Just think what God can do with one human life! Not someone with advantages, special talents, a superior education, or extraordinary genius. Just a simple, ordinary boy from an obscure village in Turkey. All this good, happiness, and joy that was poured into our lives through Grandpa Nubar struggling to survive . . ."

In another story, "Europe to Cape Cod in One Second," one of the characters whimsically changes his plans to go to Europe for no other reason than the thought of touring without any friend or other family member as company on the trip. At a dinner-dance sponsored by St. Gregory's Camp, his friendly conversation with a priest leads to a surprising job offer to be the athletic and swimming director when he was not seeking any summer employment! During his summer job when his original plans were to enjoy Europe, he meets his wife-to-be. One of the listeners to this story remarks, "What this story illustrates for me is the way God's grace works Tomas could have said no to Father Luke, he could have said no to calling Siran, he could have said no to trying a second time."

After each night's storytelling, lively conversation, honest reaction, and heartfelt sentiments follow as the older and younger generations interact and old-world wisdom is passed down from the elders to the young. In one of the final chapters, the young adults reflect on these two weeks of vacation and nightly stories. They realize that they have received something indescribable by way of education that they could never receive in typical college courses. One of the college students realizes that the character, heart, and faith their relatives embody are missing in modern society: "So many people I meet at

college or in my summer jobs are afraid of life and look for forms of escape. They are afraid to get married, afraid to have children, afraid to spend money, afraid to take a chance, and afraid to leave things in the hands of Divine Providence. You can tell by all the hours of television and videos they watch that they don't live rich, abundant lives."

One of the other college students of the family compares the theme of the stories she has heard for the past few nights to something she learned in a children's literature course—why some wishes come true and others do not. She has noticed that in one tale a child's dream to own a red wagon came true; in another story a boy's longing to have his own outdoor basketball court was realized; in another story a pregnant mother suffering toxemia longed for a sign from her husband that she and her baby would survive this ordeal. The college student remarks, "The stories of wishes coming true I've heard on this vacation verify everything I learned about this topic in my class." She means that true wishes—as opposed to whims and fantasies—originate in the depths of the soul and the heart: "They are constant and do not die out or disappear. Because they are so powerful, they inspire effort, determination, perseverance, sacrifice, and prayer. A person does everything in his power to make a dream come true, taking risks, embracing opportunities, and overcoming obstacles as Aschenputtel (Cinderella) does."

These are some of stories and themes from this book that honors the goodness and greatness of families, that illuminates the happiness of simple pleasures, and that makes one fall in love with life all over again. One reader commented, "It is the most politically incorrect book that anyone could write." A reader from Ireland wrote, "I finished it and take my hat off. It's lovely and brings to life the deeply sane and humane heartbeats received from a pre-modern society.... It's one of the most personal, heart-giving books ever published. Thanks for this precious experience."

Letter from a Parent

Dear Seton, I will be starting my second year of homeschooling this September. I can't begin to describe how wonderful it has been for our family. We have two boys, ages 12 and 13. You may be wondering why we started so late. Like many parents, we thought public school was just fine.

It was fine for us until I experienced a conversion or maybe a re-version in my faith. During Lent of 2002, I decided to put one hour aside in the afternoon to talk to God, to pray, and to do spiritual reading. My boys and I would say a rosary together in the evenings. That was a Lenten season that changed my life forever. I started attending Mass two or three times a week, but by the end of Lent, I was a daily communicant.

Over the summer, my boys would attend daily Mass with me and they enjoyed it because they were now serving as altar boys. When the boys went back to school that fall, my heart would hurt that they weren't with me. This was about the time I started thinking about homeschooling.

I watched every day as some of the mothers would bring their homeschooled kids to church with them. That whole school year I watched these mothers and their children. I was impressed how well the children behaved in the pews. But most importantly, how these mothers

were with their children every day, loving, bonding, teaching them about God.

Another summer went by. It grew worse for me. Sending my kids back to school was almost unbearable. I mustered up enough courage one day to ask one of the homeschooling mom about her homeschooling, and the next day she gave me a copy of *Catholic Home Schooling* by Mary Kay Clark, a great book.

It took me the rest of that school year with many hours before the Blessed Sacrament trying to discern if homeschooling was for me. My husband did not support the idea. I prayed much, and my husband wanted to see the information packet. Finally, he agreed to give it a one year trial. And here we are eager to start our second year! My husband actually thinks that homeschooling is good for the boys now. Since he works afternoons he is home for most of their school day. He loves to do math with the boys, and they are spending quality time together. If they were still in public school they would rarely see their father on weekdays.

I hope we will be able to continue homeschooling all the way through high school. I figure God has his hand in this and is guiding us for His own reasons, and I trust I will have nothing to worry about. Not only are my children learning their Catholic faith, I am too! There is so much for me to learn about our Catholic faith. Thank you.

Organization, from p. 5

the words "vegetables" and "soups" or whatever. The kitchen is used by so many in the family, it is very important to have your kitchen organized. And the kids need to help to be a part of the organization process so that they will want to help keep things in order.

You also need order in scheduling your day. Work with your kids in planning the school day. You need a written schedule for the family in general. Put up a schedule, daily and weekly, on the refrigerator: times of all three meals, time of getting up and time to go to bed, time to go to Mass, time to go shopping, time for the music lessons, time to put on the laundry, and times for each child for his chores. Each child needs his own schedule for his school work: time for religion, time for math, time to make the bed and time to clean up the bedroom.

There is always the unexpected, but the unexpected can be dealt with better if around the unexpected there is still organization, there is still some order and a scheduling of work and play. In the home schooling movement, there is always talk about flexibility, and it is important to be ready to be flexible when something needs changing. But without order and discipline, there can be no happiness. Successful, peaceful, and calm family life and successful home schooling is dependent on order and organization.

The Seton Home Study Newsletter

is published monthly by
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Front Royal, VA 22630

Phone: (540) 636-9990

Fax Machine: (540) 636-1602

Internet: www.setonhome.org

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Subscription price for non-enrolled families is \$15 per year. Free online at www.setonhome.org/archive/default.stm

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To CHRISTIAN HUSBANDS AND WIVES

And now our words more directly address our own children, particularly those whom God calls to serve Him in marriage. The Church, while teaching imprescriptible demands of the divine law, announces the tidings of salvation, and by means of the sacraments opens up the paths of grace, which makes man a new creature, capable of corresponding with love and true freedom to the design of his Creator and Savior, and of finding the yoke of Christ to be sweet.

Christian married couples, then, docile to her voice, must remember that their Christian vocations, which began at baptism, is further specified and reinforced by the sacrament of matrimony. By it husband and wife are strengthened and as it were consecrated for the faithful accomplishment of their proper duties, for the carrying out of their proper vocation even to perfection, and the Christian witness which is proper to them before the whole world. To them the Lord entrusts the task of making visible to men the holiness and sweetness of the law which unites the mutual love of husband and wife with their cooperation with the love of God, the author of human life.

We do not at all intend to hide the sometimes serious difficulties inherent in the life of Christian married persons; for them as for everyone else, “the gate is narrow and the way

is hard, that leads to life.” But the hope of that life must illuminate their way, as with courage they strive to live with wisdom, justice and piety in this present time, knowing that the figure of this world passes away.

Let married couples, then, face up to the efforts needed, supported by the faith and hope which “do not disappoint ... because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” Let them implore divine assistance by persevering prayer; above all, let them draw from the source of grace and charity in the Eucharist. And if sin should still keep its hold over them, let them not be discouraged, but rather have recourse with humble perseverance to the mercy of God, which is poured forth in the sacrament of Penance. In this way they will be enabled to achieve the fullness of conjugal life described by the Apostle: “husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church ... husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, as Christ does the Church ... this is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

--Humanæ Vitæ, Paul VI

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