



Seton Home



Study School

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Ark of the Covenant

The relationship between a mother and a child in the womb is unique. A child is completely surrounded by his or her mother for nine months. In the case of Our Lady, Our Lord was conceived in her at the Annunciation. After Mary gave her consent to the angel, the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowed her, and God became man in her womb.

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord is Himself our covenant with God, uniting in Himself personally the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity and the human nature which He has taken from the immaculate and ever-Virgin Mary. He is not merely God who looks like man, or takes on the shape of man. He is God made man, according to Scripture, "like us in all things but sin."

Our Lady carried in her womb the very Summit of creation, the Lord of Glory, the Lamb of God, her own Creator who is yet her Son and the very Apex of God's revelation to us of who He is, what He looks like, and His relation to us.

The title of *Ark of the Covenant* applied to our Lady is wholly appropriate. In the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant was a chest made of the finest, longest lasting wood and overlaid with the purest gold. Inside the Ark, the Hebrews placed the signs of God's covenant with them—the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, a golden jar of manna, and the rod of Aaron.

Like the Ark covered with purest gold, Our Lady was conceived wholly unblemished, immaculate from the first instant of her existence, filled with grace in anticipation of the redemptive mystery

of her Son. Just as King David moved the Ark of the Covenant to the tabernacle set up in Jerusalem, she brought for the first time our incarnate Covenant to the magnificent temple which would play so great a role in the public life of her Son.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrews carried the Ark before them in their wanderings in the desert, and the Ark went before them into battle. When the Hebrews marched around the walled city of Jericho, they carried the Ark with them. The Ark was the sign to the people of Israel that God was with them.

Yet, the Ark of the Covenant was only a sign. It did not itself contain God. The Bible tells us that God worked wonders through the Ark, but God did not reside in the Ark. So we can say that Our Lady was like the Ark, but even greater than the original Ark. She was an Ark in which the very God, to whom the vastness of the universe is as nothing, was Himself wholly contained.

The Hebrews carried the signs of God before them as they marched. But we are fortunate to carry more than they. Through the Eucharist, we, like Mary, can carry the ever-living God with us. We carry Him not as a sign, not as a symbol, not as a mere promise of a Heaven to come, but as a living Reality. The treasure of the Eucharist is greater than all the treasures the Hebrews bore in the Ark.

As we go through our home schooling day, let us remember that the presence of God that we carry in us is greater than that which destroyed the walls of Jericho. As the Hebrews marched around Jericho with the Ark, believing that God would

come to their assistance, so we home schooling families must believe each day in the assistance of God.

O Holy Mother of God, in your home in Nazareth, you lived with the mystery of God in the flesh. Help us to realize that each one of us--fathers, mothers, priests, and religious--is faced with the mystery of God becoming a real part of our life.

We ask you, Blessed Mother, to obtain for us the graces that we need to guide our children as they move toward God. Teach us how to hand on the Faith to them in such a way that they will experience that joy which has come to us and to the whole Church through the Cross. Help us to take the Cross as our standard of comprehension, as our medium of understanding the difficult times in which we live. Obtain inspiration for us from the Holy Spirit, to lead our lives as mothers and fathers, just as you and St. Joseph were mother and father to the Lord Jesus. Lead us into the Will of God, and help us do that Will day by day. Help us to see the many opportunities that we have to open our children to the wonder of this new Covenant which is God's revelation, revolution, and civilization of love for every man, woman, and child in God's human family called together in Jesus Christ Our Lord. In this sign, we shall conquer.

- CPMB

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Questions We Are Asked

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

My twelve-year-old daughter does not want to do her school work and seems determined to have her own way. What do you suggest?

So many times the problems related to home schooling have nothing to do with the academics, but have more to do with discipline problems. It is difficult in this day and age when the culture is sending a clear message to children (as well as to adults) that they can be independent of any external authority, and that whatever they think is right, is right for them. It is clear that with this philosophy, there is little concept of sin or of doing something wrong. Therefore, even children think that if they don't feel like studying or doing a chore, they should not have to, nor should they be "forced" to do what they don't want to do.

Even if young children are not yet exposed to the culture, there is the problem of the results of Original Sin, which causes all young ones to want their own way and not to bend to the commands of obedience from their parents.

The fact is that the primary responsibility of parents is to train their children to be obedient to the commands of God. The way to start children to be obedient to His commands is to teach them first to be obedient to the commands of their parents, who are taking the place of God in regards to the training of the children. Once we realize our responsibility, we must do everything in our power to learn how best to train and to teach our children so they will become good Catholic children and reach their eternal destiny. The basis for such training needs to be spiritual. Once we realize this, we need to make our home the "domestic church" that the popes often write about. Without obedience, there can be no peace or joy in the home. A happy home is an obedient home.

We often think of obedience as an action, but we can also think of it as a habit. The habit of obedience is the disposition of the soul to obey lawful authority, including parents, employers, government officials, etc. It is a virtue directly opposed to the vice of pride. Insofar as we cultivate the habit of obedience, we weaken the vice of pride. To obey is in a certain sense to lessen ourselves and increase the value we see in others. In that sense, it is a virtue closely related to charity or love. To obey lawful authority is to show proper charity toward that authority, and, ultimately, to show love of God. Obedience might be called the first virtue, because without it we cannot please God. We cannot show love without showing obedience; we cannot simultaneously love and disobey. Scripture says that love covers a multitude of sins. We could say as well that obedience covers a multitude of sins; or rather, where there is obedience there need not be a multitude of sins. God loves obedience. The Bible tells us, "to obey is better than to sacrifice..." (I Samuel 15:22)

The world thinks that freedom consists in doing whatever one wants. But the properly-formed soul understands that true freedom is often found in obedience. A habit of obedience frees us from an over-reliance on ourselves and an over-estimation of our own abilities. Because we are able to rely on others, obedience can bring peace to a soul that otherwise would constantly be worried and disturbed. There is practically no single habit or virtue that will be more valuable to any person—child or adult—than a habit of obedience.

My housework keeps me pretty busy and I don't have enough time to do the teaching with my four kids.

Getting the housework done can be a major problem in a home schooling family. But it is one that can be solved, or at least improved. First, you need to realize that your own children are your best resource for helping you with the housework. You need to think about yourself as a small-business manager. Your children are both your "customers" and your "workers."

We could say as well that obedience covers a multitude of sins; or rather, where there is obedience there need not be a multitude of sins.

Even from the earliest years, as soon as a child can walk, you can teach him to help with jobs around the house. On Easter Sunday, after our large family Easter gathering, my husband asked the little two and three-year old girls to help pick up all the little scraps of food and paper that were lying in the yard and patio. You would think it was a party as they all scampered around, giggling and having a good time, and bringing their little scraps with their little fingers, and putting them into the plastic cup that grandpa held.

Children from the very earliest years need to be doing little chores around the house not only to help you, and to train them, but also to help the children realize they are important in making the home pleasant and successful. As they grow up, they not only can do more, they can help train the younger ones. As they grow up, they will understand their importance in the family and hopefully will come to the point of doing not only their chores but also their schooling with more independence and a certain pride in fulfilling their important role in the family.

Also, consider hiring someone to come in once or twice a week to help clean, if that is practical. Hiring household help

is not an admission of defeat. It is a recognition that sometimes we need help.

You might consider getting some books which can help with tips on housecleaning, and encouraging your children to utilize some of these tips. I have found them very helpful myself to make house cleaning more efficient. In addition, if you can keep your house clean and cut down on the dirt and germs, your family will be healthier.

What is dual enrollment for high school students?

Some colleges will allow high school students to enroll in some college courses if the high school, such as Seton, states that the student could succeed in college. While the courses would give students college credit, Seton would also give credit for the high school transcript and toward high school graduation.

You need to think about yourself as a small-business manager. Your children are both your “customers” and your “workers.”

We are happy to help students with the dual-enrollment process. However, Seton does limit the dual-enrollment subjects which we would accept toward a Seton diploma. The subjects we accept are art, music, physical education, science (excluding Biology), math, and foreign language courses.

Contact our high school counselor, Bob Wiesner, for further information.

My son would like to take a few electives, especially the one-semester courses. He would be interested in taking it over the summer. Which do you recommend?

We have several ½ credit, one semester courses. Some students take them to

reduce the course load which needs to be taken during the regular school year.

The subject should be something the student would like to take. Some students find it difficult to take a course during their “vacation.” So any course should definitely be in area of interest to the student.

The easier courses are Accounting, Keyboarding, Introduction to Computers, and Health 2. A little more difficult are QBasic Computer Programming, Vocabulary for the College Bound, and Economics. More difficult courses are Logic and Shakespeare.

My daughter complains about the difficulty of the high school history questions. Are they more difficult than in public school?

Almost all the questions on the history tests have been asked before; they are taken from the end-of-chapter questions in the textbook. Students who do not do the assignments at the end of the chapter may find these questions unfamiliar. A few questions are based on the material presented in the lesson plans. Students who do not read the lesson plans may find the questions unfamiliar.

Some questions ask the significance of certain people or certain events. These questions take a little more thinking, though usually questions from the textbook are asked, but might be in different terms or words.

We are trying to help the students not only to learn the facts, but to understand why a certain person or event has long-term significance. History is the study of people and events which have influenced not only the society in which they lived, but have influenced the society in some way in which we live now. We need to study historical people and events to understand the current ideas and American culture.

We don't believe that the history course or history tests are more difficult than other college preparatory programs. Some courses may be more difficult than public school courses, but public schools are generally not college preparatory. For students who

have been used to simple high school courses, college can be a real shock. But for students who are accustomed to doing work with a high level of understanding, the transition to college is much easier.

Do you think that teaching boys is more difficult than teaching girls? What tips do you have for teaching boys?

Teaching boys is probably more difficult for some mothers, but since I grew up with several brothers, I found it easy to teach my seven boys. Boys are very direct and want simplicity. They like things definite and straightforward. Just tell them the rule, just tell them what to do, just tell them clearly what you expect. I found they did not like a lot of discussion and various complexities and varieties of opinions; until they were older, they were not particularly interested in the whys and wherefores.

They also liked to do things with Dad and liked to play football and baseball and anything else outside. They liked going on field trips with Dad. They liked lots of activity; they could do their memory work jumping rope or bouncing a ball. They liked investigating everything around them, so I needed to keep an eye on them and their escapades.

My boys liked learning, and borrowed lots of books from the library. They liked reading in the encyclopedia. They liked science and history books probably more than fiction. They liked talking sports with Dad. They liked doing their diagrams on the blackboard. They liked having some physical activity between classes, even if it was a chore.

They needed frequent exercise to keep their brains exercising also. They wanted to know the schedule, when to do which subject, when to do their chores.

More books are being written about the training and teaching of boys, mainly due to the influence of feminists in the classrooms of America. One book I like is *Bringing Up Boys* by Dr. James Dobson. He also wrote the book *Dare to Discipline*, certainly helpful in training boys.

A Big Dose of Dad by Ginny Seuffert

I speak to literally hundreds of parents, mostly Moms every month, and I often hear the same tale of woe. Mom is afraid to attempt home school, or home education is failing because the kiddies just do not obey. They whine about or even ignore schoolwork and household assignments, and their behavior is rowdy, rude, and defiant. I always inquire where Dad is in all of this upset, and frequently receive some variation of the following: “Oh, my husband is a wonderful father! He’s the kids’ best friend. He spends all his spare time playing sports and games with them, or taking them on outings. He reads to them every night.” Sounds like a fun guy to me, but not a word about what he does when the children are disobedient or disrespectful. While buddies are great, children do best with a dad who’s a dad!

The whole concept of fatherhood has become somewhat murky over the last several decades. Egged on by radical feminists who consider the roles of mothers and fathers interchangeable—sort of like different colored Lego pieces—social scientists describe the very best dads in feminine terms, like *nurturing* and *gentle*. Before this great enlightenment we are told, fathers were unapproachable, strict, uninvolved in

the lives of their children, and afraid to show affection. In our own time, loving men, anxious to show fatherly affection for their children, ignore their natural tendencies to lower the boom on bratty kids, and try to use reason and persuasion instead; in other words to correct like mom does. While some naturally cooperative children respond well to this technique, too many children are confused about the lack of imposed limits and constantly act out misbehavior.

We Catholic home schooling families showed the world that parents are the best teachers of their children. In the same way, we need to demonstrate that manly men are neither harsh nor distant, but rather they are steady and affectionate. Manly men make the very best dads. By assuming their proper role in the family, as a *complement* to mom—not a copy—dads play an irreplaceable role in forming their children’s character, and in a very real way, make home education possible. They do it by their good example, by supporting Mom, and by applying their own unique brand of discipline.

Top-flight fathers, like all great men, lead best by example. A short anecdote from my own family illustrates this perfectly. Over fifteen years ago, my husband was the weekly cantor/lector at the early Mass in our parish, while two of our sons served as altar boys. During the car ride home after Mass one Sunday, the boys were crabbing because they had to kneel on the cold marble floor in the sanctuary without cushions. I don’t remember my husband saying much at the time. He just advised the boys to stop whining and live with a bit of discomfort once a week. The following week during the consecration, the boys once again knelt on the hard floor. On the opposite side of the sanctuary, my husband ignored the kneeler that had been provided for him, and knelt on the floor as well. Never again did he use the kneeler. Week after week, for years, he knelt on that marble floor, his back ramrod straight, and never complained. In fact, he never even mentioned it! The boys learned how to be men just by observing their dad.

While some dads tackle teaching subjects like science or history, most of the moms I talk with are more anxious for practical support and help around the house. We moms need our husbands to understand that home schooling, especially in a large family, is pretty much a full time job. Some tough days, it is a major accomplishment to get diapers changed and dinner on the table. During a difficult pregnancy, or after a new baby, or just during a bad couple of days, the house can be in shambles, and clean socks are only a faint hope.

Dads, first, be understanding of the sacrifices your wife is making, and be reasonable in your demands. (You may think clean socks *are* reasonable requests, but you might find it wise to keep that opinion to yourself on a particularly difficult day for your wife.) Second, if mom is temporarily overwhelmed, enlist the children’s help and pitch in yourself with them. A woman gets a whole new lease on life when someone *else* puts away the laundry or mops the kitchen floor.

Third, Dads, bring all those planning and organizing skills you use in the workplace to find effective solutions that will make your household run more smoothly. If you do a cost analysis, you will see that mom’s hard work is saving the family thousands of dollars in Catholic school tuition. Take a portion of those savings and pay for some domestic help from time to time. Solve the laundry problem by dropping off the dirty wash at a fluff ‘n fold in the morning and picking it up on the way home. Offer to pick up dinner as the budget allows, or grill some food for yourself and the kids once in a while.

Without question, the most important support you can provide for Mom is to insist that your children respect and obey her all the time. For some reason, no matter how tough a disciplinarian a woman may be, children just listen better to a strong father. I used to joke that once my sons began to shave, I could tie them to a tree and flog them and they would just yawn in my face. If my husband told them to jump, they said, “Yes, Sir! How high?” There is just something about dads! They are automatically recognized by the children as *the* authority in the home.



Finishing Up

Most of the families on the Seton program start their school year in August or September. So, for most of you reading this, you are either on track with your schedule, planning to finish up by June, or you are having some anxiety because your children are behind in one or more subjects, and you are worried about how to finish.

If you are having anxiety right now about the schedule, my most important advice to you is this: RELAX! There is no reason to be anxious if you have a plan of where to go from here. So, let's work on a plan.

What you do at this juncture depends on the grade levels of your children. For grade school children, the main point is to have them learn the material as well as they can, not necessarily to finish every lesson in the lesson plans. Remember, the lesson plans are guidelines. They don't have to be totally finished. Teachers in schools have lesson plans for the year as well, but they routinely don't finish them. If they finish the school year and there are still four chapters left in the book, well, there is always next year. And you don't have to do every assignment as listed in the lesson plans. You can omit, condense, modify, expand, enrich.

We encourage everyone to use the online tests and online submission of work as much as possible. But if you are behind, we especially encourage you to use the online tools, for two reasons. First, when you take online tests or submit work online, your child will receive a grade quickly. Many online tests are graded immediately by the computer. Other tests and uploaded items are graded by human graders, but most are graded within 4 or 5 days, and sometimes are graded the same day as they are submitted. Second, it is a psychological boost for students to receive grades. If you wait until the end of the quarter to submit everything, then they don't have a sense of progress. But if there are three assignments that need to be done, and they already have grades for two, they are 2/3 of the way finished. Submitting online is also convenient for the parents who don't have to keep track

of work over extended periods of time. (It's also great for Seton, saving us time and postage expenses.)

• *Primary Grades*

If you have children in the primary levels, you must accept the fact that you cannot hurry young children. They need to learn at their own pace their basic courses: religion, math, and language arts. They need to learn their phonics, and keep reading their books. If you feel pressured, then just read the history and science lessons to them, or have your husband or an older child read the history and science lessons to them over the weekends. It is more important to keep up with the daily lessons for the basic courses. Doing a little work over the summer break is not a bad idea; young children benefit from oral drills for the basic courses over the summer.

• *Intermediate Grades*

Children in the intermediate grades of four, five, and six, are learning essential concepts to build on for the future. While you can go light on history and science, which are repeated in later grades, you cannot go light on religion, math, or the language arts courses. These basic courses are essential for success in other courses in later years. In the intermediate grades, consider breaking up the major courses into morning and afternoon. Study and discussion of the subjects of religion, math, reading, and English can be done for ½ hour each in the morning, while written assignments can be done in the afternoon. Some subjects can be done in less time if the subject is an easy one for your child. Once you have established the rules and the pattern of assignments, most students can do the spelling, handwriting, phonics, and vocabulary on their own. Some of the assignments in these subjects can be shortened or omitted if you think your child can do well on the tests. Perhaps some assignments can be done orally, into a tape recorder, with an older sibling, with Dad or a grandparent.

• *Junior High*

If you have a student in the 7th or 8th grade, you definitely need to be sure

that your child knows the material. Students cannot be successful in high school if the material in the major subjects is not learned well. You must be careful in planning which assignments should be left out, and which should be retained. It is worth taking extra time even through the summer to make sure your child is successful in the major subject areas. Religion, math, reading, and English must be "conquered" before advancing to high school. If your child needs a review of Algebra ½ in ninth grade, he or she will still have time to take the math requirements, so don't worry too much about that. However, if you purchase the CD for Algebra ½, your child may be able to review and finish up over the summer. You can't really skip concepts in math. They need to be mastered.

The English assignments are important because they develop logical thinking skills. How words are related to each other in a sentence helps students develop not only writing and thinking skills in relation to grammar, but also in relation to analyzing the presentations we hear by politicians, religious leaders, and others trying to persuade and convince us to accept their ideas. The reading assignments are very important in 7th and 8th grades. It is not simply a matter of reading and comprehending, but being able to answer the discussion questions to show comprehension and analysis skills. The book reports, in turn, help students to develop writing and analysis skills. Unless they are being sent in to Seton, not all assignments need to be written down. They can be done orally to save time.

History and Science are more important at the junior high level, but the lessons will be repeated in high school. However, if you need the time for essential courses, then ask an older child or Dad or a grandparent to listen to your child read the assignments and have some discussion. You will not receive a grade without taking a test, but that is not essential.

• *High School*

Once a student reaches ninth grade, the courses and report card grades become important for entrance to

colleges or vocational schools after high school. All the required courses must be taken and tests need to be submitted for grading to obtain grades on a Seton report card. If your child is behind in the courses in high school, we recommend that you spend the last couple of months trying to finish up those courses he is closest to finishing. For instance, if your son is in the fourth quarter of two subjects, consider having him focus on just those two subjects, one all morning and one all afternoon. He may be able to finish those up in just a couple of weeks, giving him final grades. This will encourage him to do the same with two more courses; perhaps he can finish up two more by the end of June.

The final one or two courses he could do in the summer, or add them to next year's curriculum. Another idea to consider is having a tutor help out over the summer to help finish up a course or two. Sometimes it is just the daily accounting to someone which helps to keep a student on schedule. When it comes to a high school student, sometimes a father's supervision can make a big difference. We often encourage a high school student to go to work with his or her father so dad can simply be there for encouragement or other help.

Many high school students have trouble with the English courses. There



sometimes seems to be almost a mental block about doing some of the writing assignments. It is not that the assignments themselves are particularly difficult, but the students can't seem to make a start on them. If this is the case, then sit down with the student and help him get going. If he says that he can't write a report because of this problem or that problem, then help him formulate a plan and a timeline to solve those problems. If a student is still having trouble getting started, have the student call and speak with a counselor.

If the problems are more generalized than a single assignment, sit down with the student and devise an overall timeline. Look at what needs to be completed to receive a course grade, and set goals for when each assignment will be completed. If the assignments are complex, then set intermediate goals. For example, if a book needs to be read and a report written, then an intermediate goal might be to read to a certain chapter by this Friday. Without goals and timetables, the situation can seem unsolvable, which leads to hopelessness and giving up. But once a clear plan has been formulated, a student can have a good attitude, which is half the battle of getting anything done.

As in the earlier grades, some elements from the daily work may be omitted, especially those elements that come very easily to the particular student. Just remember not to omit any daily work that may pertain to the Seton-graded items.

High school students often run into trouble because it is so easy to press them into service babysitting or doing other household work. Parents have to remember that these students need solid blocks of time to get their work done. Sometimes a high school student can do some assignments in a college library, an environment which encourages good study habits.

Above everything, though, try not to become overanxious about "being behind," but rather focus on working out a solution. Ask Our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and your child's patron saint to help you to solve the problem.

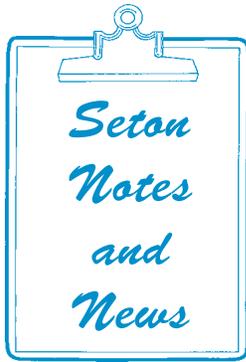
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Dad, as soon as you get home from work, ask Mom how the children behaved that day. Often just knowing Mom is giving you a report will keep a mischievous child in check. If little Johnny is a particular problem, give him more individual attention. Before you go to work in the morning, explain to Johnny just what your expectations are regarding his behavior during the day. Be very clear. "Don't let your mother tell me that you gave her a hard time doing your math today. I'm going to be asking her when I get home." If you usually go to work before the children get out of bed – no problem. Wake Johnny up! He'll know you mean business!

If you find some time, call home during your lunchtime. Cut right to the chase. "Let me speak to Johnny. Son, do you remember what I said before I left for work today? I do! Make sure you are listening to your mother today." If you stick to your guns, gradually you will find yourself receiving more good reports than bad.

It seems that a majority of the information articles that we read about home schooling are directed towards mom and concern curriculum or other classroom issues. The father's role in discipline and related subjects has been put on the back burner, and family life is suffering because of it. One really excellent source of information and inspiration for parents with a Catholic perspective is www.parentleadership.com. Steve Wood, a home schooling father, has a weekly show called *The Carpenter's Shop*, on EWTN. *The Book of Proverbs* in the Bible gives wonderful advice to fathers on disciplining and training their children.

Home schooling fathers are my heroes. Many of them put in long hours on the job so their wives can stay home and teach the children. They mow their own lawns, fix their own cars, and become general handymen for home repairs. They coach teams, and chauffeur the kids all over town. They are the best husbands and the best dads. Their strong and steady leadership serves as a model for their children. Their patient understanding comforts and supports their wives, and their firm and consistent discipline helps their children mature into men and women of the character and integrity.



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.

May 19-20, Chicago, IL. 2006 Illinois Catholic Homeschooling Conference & Vendor Fair "Teaching the Truth", University of St. Francis, 500 Wilcox St. Joliet, IL. Speakers include Mrs. Virginia Seuffert. Hours: Fri.: 4 PM to 8 PM, Sat.: 7:30 AM to 5 PM. For more info email teachingthetruth@ilhc.org or go to website www.ilhc.org.

June 2-3, Minneapolis, MN. 8th Annual MN Catholic Home Educators Conference & Curriculum Fair, University of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit

Ave., St. Paul. Hours: Fri.: 4 PM to 8:30 PM, Sat.: 7:15 AM Mass to 5 PM. For more info call Deb at 952-941-5646 or go to website www.mnconference.org.

June 9-10, Herndon, VA. Immaculate Heart of Mary National Home School and Family Conference 2006, Dulles EXPO & Conference Center - North Hall, Chantilly, VA. Hours: Fri.: 9 AM to 9 PM, Sat.: 9 AM to 4:30 PM. Speakers include Dr. Mary Kay Clark, Mrs. Virginia Seuffert, and Mrs. Laura Berquist. For info go to website: www.ihmconference.org.

June 9-10, Denver, CO. 7th Annual CO Catholic Home Educators Conference, Bishop Machebeuf Catholic High School - Lowry Campus, 458 Uinta Way Denver, CO 80230. Hours: Fri.: 12 PM to 8 PM, Sat.: 8 AM - 6 PM. For more info call 303-814-1143 or go to website at www.mt3solutions.com/rchc.

June 16-17, Lansing, MI. "It's Great to be Catholic!" Family and Home Education Conference & Book Fair Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan (at Cedar), Lansing, MI 48933. Hours: Fri.: 6 PM to 9:30 PM, Sat.: 8 AM to 4:30 PM (with 11:15 AM Mass). For more information email mch001@juno.com or website www.homeschoolcatholic.org.

June 24, Chino Hills, CA (Los Angeles area). SCCHE (Southern California Catholic Home Educators) Conference and Curriculum Fair, St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church, 14085 Peyton Drive, Chino Hills, CA 91709. Hours: 8 AM to 5 PM. Speakers include Dr. Mary Kay Clark. For more info go to website www.sccchehomepage.com.

June 24, Indianapolis, IN. Immaculate Heart of Mary Indiana Conference 2006 Hamilton County 4-H Exhibition Center, 2003 E. Pleasant St., Noblesville, IN 46060. Hours: 8 AM to 4:15 PM, Mass at 4:30 PM. Speakers include Dr. Mitchell Kalpakgian, Mrs. Virginia Seuffert, Mrs. Rita Munn. For more info email infoindiana@ihmconference.org, or website www.ihmconference.org/indiana.

July 22, Atlanta, GA. "Cultivating Catholic Families: Building The Domestic Church", Mary Our Queen Catholic Church, 6260 The Corners Parkway, Norcross, GA 30092. Hours: 8 AM (Mass) to 5 PM. Speakers include Dr. Mary Kay Clark. For more information call Michelle at 678-513-9775, or email mgrunk@bellsouth.net, or go to the website at www.gacatholicconference.org.

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Urbi et Orbi Message from Pope Benedict XVI

During last night's great Vigil we relived the decisive and ever-present event of the Resurrection, the central mystery of the Christian faith. Innumerable Paschal candles were lit in churches, to symbolize the light of Christ which has enlightened and continues to enlighten humanity, conquering the darkness of sin and death for ever. And today there re-echo powerfully the words which dumbfounded the women on the morning of the first day after the Sabbath, when they came to the tomb where Christ's body, taken down in haste from the Cross, had been laid. Sad and disconsolate over the loss of their Master, they found the great stone rolled away, and when they entered they saw that his body was no longer there. As they stood there, uncertain and bewildered, two men in dazzling apparel surprised them, saying: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, he is risen" (*Lk 24:5-6*). "*Nom est hic, sed resurrexit*" (*Lk 24:6*). Ever since that morning, these words have not ceased to resound throughout the universe as a proclamation of joy which spans the centuries unchanged and, at the same time, charged with infinite and ever new resonances.

"He is not here . . . he is risen." The heavenly messengers announce first and foremost that Jesus "is not here": the Son of God did not remain in the tomb, because it was not possible for him to be held prisoner by death (cf. *Acts 2:24*) and the tomb could not hold on to "the living one" (*Rev 1:18*) who is the very source of life. Like Jonah in the belly of the whale, so too Christ crucified was swallowed up into the heart of the

earth (cf. *Mt 12:40*) for the length of a Sabbath. Truly, "that Sabbath was a high day", as Saint John tells us (*Jn 19:31*): the highest in history, because it was then that the "Lord of the Sabbath" (*Mt 12:8*) brought to fulfillment the work of creation (cf. *Gen 2:1-4a*), raising man and the entire cosmos to the glorious liberty of the children of God (cf. *Rom 8:21*). When this extraordinary work had been accomplished, the lifeless body was suffused with the living breath of God and, as the walls of the tomb were shattered, he rose in glory. That is why the angels proclaim "he is not here", he can no longer be found in the tomb. He made his pilgrim way on earth among us, he completed his journey in the tomb as all men do, but he conquered death and, in an absolutely new way, by an act of pure love, he opened the earth, threw it open towards Heaven.

May the Risen Lord grant that the strength of his life, peace and freedom be experienced everywhere. Today the words with which the Angel reassured the frightened hearts of the women on Easter morning are addressed to all: "Do not be afraid! ... He is not here; he is risen (*Mt 28:5-6*)". Jesus is risen, and he gives us peace; he himself is peace. For this reason the Church repeats insistently: "Christ is risen - *Christós anésti*." Let the people of the third millennium not be afraid to open their hearts to him. His Gospel totally quenches the thirst for peace and happiness that is found in every human heart. Christ is now alive and he walks with us. What an immense mystery of love!

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