



Seton Home



Study School

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Our Lady of the Rosary

The month of October is dedicated to the Blessed Mother of God, especially under her title Our Lady of the Rosary. In the Rosary, we pray an Our Father and ten Hail Marys for each of five decades on the Rosary. Each decade represents a Mystery of the Rosary; that is, an event in the life of Jesus and Mary. The first half of the Hail Mary comes from Scripture—the words of Elizabeth to her cousin Mary when she visited her. The second half is a prayer to ask Mary to intercede for all of us who are sinners.

In the 1200s, St. Dominic promoted the prayers of the Rosary, but it still may have been only the first half of the Hail Mary. The Blessed Mother appeared to St. Dominic and revealed that his preaching against a current heresy in the Church would be successful if people would say the Rosary. Our Lady gave the specific Mysteries or “meditations” of the Rosary to St. Dominic in order to encourage people to join in reflecting on the events in the life of Jesus.

Many followers of St. Dominic promoted the daily praying of the Rosary, and popes approved the addition of the Our Father to separate the ten Hail Marys, and later added the Glory Be. Pope Pius IX said, “If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, in your country, assemble every evening to recite the Rosary.”

The Blessed Mother, in her appearances to the three children of Fatima in 1917, announced that she is Our Lady of the Rosary, and asked people to say the Rosary every day to obtain peace in the world.

The Family Rosary Crusade was started by Father Patrick Peyton, who promoted the Family Rosary on the radio in the 1940’s and on television in the fifties. Father ended all his shows with his famous quote: “The family that prays together stays together.”

Pope John Paul II had a special devotion to Fatima and to the Rosary, and even led the world in a Rosary on international television. He wrote an Apostolic Letter promoting the Rosary, and declared the year from October of 2002 to October 2003 as The Year of the Rosary.

The daily family Rosary has had a revival among Catholic home schooling families as mothers and fathers realize more deeply the importance of family prayer. Many now realize that living the Catholic Faith in the home, second only to attendance at Mass, is the basic foundation of the spiritual life.

Our Lady of the Rosary, you have appeared on earth many times to confirm what the popular piety of humble religious and laity have developed on your behalf over the centuries: the prayer of the Holy Rosary. You have so made the Rosary your own that you identified yourself as “the Lady of the Rosary.”

By the will of Almighty God and the power of the Holy Spirit, you became the Virgin Mother, the chief catechist, and the first disciple of the Incarnate Son of God. Because of your complete cooperation with the Most Holy Trinity—from the first moment of your existence, during Jesus’ birth, His

hidden life, public ministry, death, Resurrection, and Ascension, the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, to your Assumption and Coronation—you have become the Mediatrix of all graces. Help us and our children to experience the Rosary as a source of abundant graces!

Blessed Virgin Mary, you lived a hidden and humble life. Your Rosary is a hidden and humble prayer. Its origin is veiled; its origin is humble because it began as a prayer of mostly illiterate peasants. Its practice is humble. It involves simple vocal words, easy memorization, repetition, and a series of simple stories. Its results are hidden if we look by sight; yet, these results are extraordinary and tremendous, like your privileges, if we “look” by faith!

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, help us and our children to say the Rosary daily and persevere in it. Help us to see the ordinariness of its practice as a way to humility. At the same time, help us and our children, especially as they grow up, to recognize the Rosary as essential to a measure of peace in our time, as a key step in the conversion of people from idolatry and immorality, and, finally, as a sure path to the heights of contemplative union with God. Queen of Peace, pray for us; Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us!

- MKC

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Questions We Are Asked

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

I cannot keep on top of everything I need to do. Taking care of the children, taking care of the house, and doing the home schooling seems more than I can handle.

Whenever we tackle a task, we must break it down into its smallest parts and decide how to accomplish each part. Sometimes we become so anxious about the problems of the moment, that we don't step back and think about how to approach each problem in a general way.

We need to set aside some time, perhaps 30 minutes a day each morning before the children wake up, and decide how to handle the situations we are facing for the day. We can do this better by starting with prayer, especially the Morning Offering, a decade of the Rosary, or reading some favorite Bible passages.

For a more thorough strategy planning session, take a Saturday morning and spend time just thinking about how to solve the specific problems. Simply going from one problem or one demanding situation to another, without taking time to plan solutions, can only lead to perpetual anxiety.

Remember that you are not alone and others want to help you. There are people under your roof who can help you: your husband and your children. You need to think carefully how your husband can, realistically, help you with one or two of your daily problem situations.

Think about how your children can help you. We think about our children as consumers, demanding our help all the time. The fact is, however, that children can help you and even want to help you, even from the time they are very young. They want to be important in the family. Most children want to feel that they can do something important in the family and not feel useless. It is not

good for children to grow up being served all the time and not having responsibilities. It makes them unhappy and discontented.

Some of us have a sister or a sister-in-law or a mother or a mother-in-law who might be willing to help in some way, such as helping with cleaning the house or helping the children with some of their assignments.

Don't let the problems cause you to be on a perpetual treadmill. Take the time, with prayer, to work out a plan. Then carry out the plan with diligence.

My children don't seem to have a sense of responsibility about their home schooling or their chores.

Too many of us mothers raise our children with very few responsibilities. Back in the early days of our developing nation, and during wartimes and recessions, children often were desperately needed to help with farm chores, working in a factory, taking jobs after school, helping to raise brothers and sisters while mom and/or dad had to work. While we pray none of us have such situations, it is important to remember that children can and will help when it is needed, but they need to be called upon, and they need to be impressed with the fact they are needed, and in some cases, desperately needed.

Help with the chores around the house, inside and outside, is more obviously necessary. St. Paul gives us a very strong statement about the necessity of work. In II Thessalonians 3:10, Paul says "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." There should be consequences for children not helping, and the consequences should be rather serious, not simply staying in the bedroom for an hour or not watching a TV show or going to bed early. I know one father who took away the children's bicycles

whenever they would not do their chores or their home schooling assignments.

My girls are having trouble with their math, and I am having trouble finding the time to analyze it myself.

Usually children in the younger and middle grades are able to do their math once it is explained to them. If you are having trouble with these levels, perhaps an older sibling or your husband or a relative can help. For the junior high and high school levels, solution manuals are available for the Saxon series, which show how to work out each problem. Also, we sell the Dive CD for the Saxon series. It has proven very valuable for the busy home schooling mom who cannot take the time to review the algebra formulas. The CD is both audio and video, and presents a tutoring session for each lesson in the book. The student can replay the tutoring lesson at any time. You can order the CD from our SEM department. Be sure you check the edition of your textbook; the CD's are available for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th edition or "homeschool" edition textbooks.

Children can and will help when it is needed, but they need to be called upon, and they need to be impressed with the fact they are needed.

Why don't you offer some of the newer, more colorful books in your high school curriculum?

We certainly would like to be able to use the newer, nicer books, but the prices are really sky high. Remember that most school textbooks are produced for the public schools, and they have an almost infinite amount of tax money to purchase books. Publishers know that and don't hesitate to produce 500 to 600 page hard-cover textbooks with heavy glossy paper and the highest quality photographs, charts, and transparencies.

In addition, many textbooks are simply not in agreement with the teachings of the Catholic Church, and some are not even in accord with historical facts. We are always on the lookout for good textbooks at reasonable prices, and certainly will add them whenever possible, or at least offer them as a supplement.

Try keeping a log for a week and writing down time spent on assignments and time spent doing other things.

Do you think my son should be able to redo his work if he did not do it correctly the first time?

Yes, we encourage you to have your student redo his work. The reason is that our goal is to educate our children, and not just have them go through a process and give them a grade. Someday your son will have a job and need to support his family; an employer will not accept poor work, and will not even keep an employee who performs poorly at his job. So encourage him to do his best the first time, but be sure that if he is careless or does not understand the material, he relearns it, reviews it, and redoes it. If he shows signs of just not caring, then there should be additional consequences, such as not getting his lunch until he has redone the work.

My husband and I are having some problems. Should I put the kids in school so they don't hear our conversations or be as aware of our problems?

We want to keep our children away from our adult problems, but exposing them to the problems in the schools won't help. In fact, if they start having problems at school, which is likely, you may not be able to deal with them if you are having problems of your own. You need to do your best to keep your adult conversations

away from the children, but the children being around often can help a situation. The children are the priority and major concern for both of you. You need to focus on their upbringing, their training, and their schooling. Perhaps your husband can help, too, in some way. When both parents can focus on raising the children rather than on their own problems, it can help them learn selflessness, which makes them better parents as well as better spouses. From what I have read, there are fewer family breakups in home schooling families.

Can we choose our own book for a book report? My sixth grader would like a different book than the one you sent.

As you know, two of the book reports are on biographies of saints. While we send one, you can choose the other, and even exchange the one we sent or purchase another. However, for the first and second quarters, we send two books so the students can write an analysis based on a specific topic which can be developed in a paragraph or two. We have done this because in the past, students often would write more of a summary of the book rather than an analysis of the character or the lesson the book teaches. Often students did not understand the theme or main conflict in the book. With specific books, we can help direct the student to a better understanding of the meaning of the book. In addition, of course, the graders are able to help the student if they are familiar with the book.

I am having trouble getting all the assignments done in a day. Do you have any suggestions?

Remember that we write the daily lessons and assignments based on what we think the average student can do. But there is no average student; each student is different. Some can do more in some subjects and less in others. It is really up to the parent to decide just how much needs to be done in each subject. Also, some of the work can be done orally. Sometimes, you can decide, for instance, if some of the problems are done perfectly, perhaps some of the others could be skipped.

Remember, too, that at the elementary levels, while some subjects are major, such as Reading, English, Religion, Spelling, Vocabulary and Math, some subjects are minor, such as Art, Music, and P.E. History and Science are not major subjects, but could be done on weekends with Dad.

At the high school level, where credits for courses are required for graduation and for college entrance, courses cannot be skipped. However, courses could be done one at a time, or two at a time; that is, one could be done all morning, and one could be done all afternoon. Some students do better if they can focus on only two courses at a time rather than studying five or six different courses in a day.

You really need to analyze what is going on in your home schooling and in your home in general. You might try keeping a log for a week and writing down time spent on assignments and time spent doing other things. Are the assignments too much, or are the children simply wasting a lot of time? Are there distractions which need to be addressed? Are the older kids having to baby-sit the younger ones so much that they really can't finish their work? Once you have sufficient information on what the problem is, then you can develop a plan to address it.

When are your academic counselors available? May my daughter call and ask a question?

The academic counselors are available from about 9 am to about 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, Eastern Standard Time. You can ask for a counselor by subject or by name. (The names and pictures of our counselors are on our website. Go to our website and click on About, then click on Staff.) You can find out about the background of our counselors and which kinds of questions they can answer. They are happy to talk with the students directly if parents prefer.

Besides the phone, you can also ask for help by email at counselors@setonhome.org or you can post a question on one of the Seton message boards.

Time, Infinity, and the Home Schooling Father

by John Clark

The most common argument fathers have against getting involved in home schooling is “I have no time.” Ah, the “time argument”. My children carry teddy bears and dolls to pacify and comfort them in times of perceived distress—I carry the time argument. Perhaps second only to the “bad back” argument, the time argument is a beauty. As in a chess match, it can stand alone —“I have no time”—or it can offer protectors—“I have no time, because I have to wash my car, do the food shopping, pay the cable bill...”

The “time argument” is almost unassailable. After all, unlike in economics, time *really is* a zero-sum game. I’ve used it many times to get out of things I didn’t want to do: take out the trash, help my brother move furniture, take my children to the pet store to replace their dead goldfish. Actually, in fairness, if I *did* take my children to the pet store every time one of their goldfish died, I would probably have to live there. My local pet store developed a “frequent goldfish buyer” program just for me.

But as strong as the “time argument” seems at first, I wonder how accurate it really is. I am the CEO of an investment advisory firm, a regular columnist, the Christendom College baseball coach, the president of a non-profit foundation, an officer of my church’s men’s club, the director of marketing for a non-profit corporation, and a father of seven. I understand time constraints. But I also understand this: the education of children will not be as successful unless the father plays a major role in his children’s education. That does not mean that it won’t be successful. There are plenty of families who are taught exclusively by the mother who are successful. Some families, such as military families, have no choice. These heroic military fathers are making it possible for the rest of us to assist in our children’s education.

But if it is logistically possible, fathers should be involved. Children need to recognize that intellectual strength is important, and they need to recognize that their father *believes* it is important.

“Intellectual strength” is important and is required by our children because there are so many errors embedded in society. We home schooling fathers have the chance to offer our children something different: we can offer them truth. *The Baltimore Catechism* teaches us that our first job here on earth is to “know God”, and as a Catholic father, you can help your children “know God”. Moreover, as a Catholic father, you have the chance to provide your children with the intellectual tools necessary to defend their precious Faith, so they may be happy with God in the next life. The prospect of preparing your children for eternity should excite you.

Intellectual Strength

Not only should you as a Catholic father be excited as the idea of helping your children spiritually, you should get excited that you are preparing them for a successful life on earth. There may have been no more important *time* in history to help children grow academically, and there may have no better *way* in history to help children grow academically than home schooling.

All things being equal, your children will receive a better education at home. Specifically, your sons and daughters will learn how to learn in a non-classroom environment. In a technological world, the traditional classroom education is almost completely outdated. In the real world, no one learns that way any more!

In many other countries, children are much more technologically-oriented—and remember this, when it comes to finding employment and starting careers, the competition may not come from Fairfax, Virginia. It may come from Helsinki, Finland or Bangalore, India.

Clyde Prestowitz is a former secretary to the Secretary of Commerce under the Reagan Administration, and the author of a book entitled: “Three Billion New Capitalists: The Great Shift of Wealth and Power to the East.” In his book, he recognizes the coming impact of the global economy, writing:

In the end, the 3 billion new capitalists are going to ensure that everyone is paid exactly what he or she is worth not on the local scale, but on a new global one. To survive in this world, you’d better do something no one else can or do what you do far better than anyone else.

Princeton economist Alan Blinder writes:

It is clear that the U. S. and other rich nations will have to transform their educational systems, so as to produce workers for the jobs that will actually exist in their societies...In the future, *how* we educate our children may prove to be more important than *how much* we educate them. (Emphasis added)

After traveling the world, making careful note of worldwide economic development, columnist and author Thomas Friedman wrote just this year:

The first and most important ability you can develop in a flat world is the ability to ‘learn how to learn’—to constantly absorb, and teach yourself, new ways of doing old things or new ways of doing new things.

And this isn’t simply a public school problem—the problem is the methodology. And the school room methodology is wrong.

On the contrary, the home school student, particularly the high school home school student, is learning how to learn. Ironically, home schooling, that “backward” way of educating, has quietly become cutting edge. The system of home education is better because, if it is done correctly, it teaches the child how to teach himself new ways of doing everything that really matters in the real world.

The “Time Argument” Revisited

First, remember that the “time argument” itself is an invitation to assess what is really important in your life. When you say “I have no time for X”, what you are really saying is: “Everything in my life is more important than X”. So the next time you are about to say: “I have no time for helping my six-year-old daughter with her reading”, substitute the words above and say this instead: “Everything in my life is more important than helping my six-year-old daughter with reading”. You might discover you have more time than you thought.

Second, if you have a television (no, I’m not going to say “throw it out”), keep a log of how much television you actually watch in a month. You can use a time sheet, a chess clock, a moon dial, a stopwatch, or in some cases, a calendar, to determine your television usage. You might surprise yourself at how much time is wasted watching television, and that might spur you to the action of cutting down your television time.

By the way, for you wives and mothers reading this, I believe that watching sports with your children is actually quality time. I’m not kidding. So when you see your husband watching a baseball game with your son, remember that this activity is a way of deepening the relationship between fathers and sons. (Tip: if you have Tivo, you can fast-forward through the advertisements and the trips to the mound. With Tivo, you can actually watch a baseball game in one hour, and watch a football game in about 30 minutes.)

Third, since time is a zero-sum game, try to use more time praying. Show God, and your children, that precisely *because* your time is so valuable, you are willing to spend much of it in prayer. Illustrate to them that the art of prayer does not emasculate a man—on the contrary, through prayer God strengthens men in all things, *including fatherhood*.

The above is adapted from the upcoming book: *The Strength of the Catholic Father*.

Manners III: The Knightly Code of Chivalry

by Mitchell Kalpakgian

In the Christian Middle Ages, the knightly code of manners obligates men to serve women with nobility and devotion. The ideal of chivalry demands that a man prove his worthiness by valorous deeds, magnanimous character, and honorable treatment of women. A chivalric knight seeks to please, serve, and defend women with special favors and great sacrifices. A true knight is inspired by pure ideals to admire and elevate woman, contemplating her as a paragon of beauty and goodness. Chaucer’s “General Prologue” portrays the model of Christian knighthood as a figure who combines courageous heroism with gentle civility:

There was a Knight, a most distinguished man,
Who from the day on which he first began
To ride abroad had loved chivalry,
Truth, honor, generousness and courtesy.
And though so much distinguished,
he was wise
And in his bearing modest as a maid.
He never yet a boorish thing had said
In all his life to any, come what might,
He was a true, perfect, gentle-knight.

The Christian knight, then, is both strong in war and gentle to women. With a great soul and large heart, he pledges fidelity to God, home, country, and women above self-interest, self-gratification, and self-glory. The chivalrous man does not give offense in word or deed to anyone, measuring his words and conduct according to the virtues of modesty and humility.

Howard Pyle’s *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* also captures the medieval ideal of Christian knighthood. In the story, the tanner sings a ballad entitled “The Wooing of Sir Keith” in which an old, ugly woman arrives at King Arthur’s court begging for the noble deed of a chivalrous knight:

Quoth she, “I have a foul disease
Doth gnaw my very heart,
And but one thing can bring me ease
Or cure my bitter smart.

There is no rest, no ease for me
North, east, or west, or south,
Till Christian knight will willingly
Thrice kiss me on the mouth.”

After King Arthur, Sir Launcelot, Sir Tristram, and Sir Gawaine fail to answer the “foulest dame’s” request by offering various excuses, Sir Keith volunteers to honor the hag’s desperate plea and kisses her three times. Thereupon the foul dame is transformed into the fair maiden who offers her love and wealth to the chivalrous Sir Keith. Sir Keith’s gallant deed unveils the mystery of romantic love that chivalry illuminates. What is this mystery? As the ballad of Sir Keith illustrates, when a man gives with a pure heart and makes a generous gift of himself in the manner of an honorable knight, it transforms a woman. It makes her fall in love. It is woman’s nature to love abundantly and totally, but that nature requires a complementary nature in man, who must respect her as a lady deserving of chivalry. Woman intuitively senses when she is loved for her own sake and responds with all the gratitude, beauty, and generosity she possesses. This kind of love is romantic, dynamic, and surprising.

Thus without a gentleman’s manners, knightly courtesy, and chivalric idealism, romantic love does not happen. The secret of a woman’s heart remains hidden, and the riches of her love remain buried. Chivalry touches the heart of woman and moves her to return love for love, but she needs to be courted and idealized, and love deserves to be won and earned. A knight must initiate courtship, and he must respond to a woman with tact, delicacy, and attention. Without chivalry, courtship declines. Without courtship, marriage suffers. Women with high ideals who expect men to be gentlemen, and men with noble hearts who honor women as heavenly gifts, create the perfect culture for the mystery of romantic love and for the mutual giving and receiving of marital love.

Preparing for College

by Ginny Seuffert

Fall can be a bittersweet time for home schooling parents of high school juniors and seniors. While we are grateful for the years we have spent teaching, we realize that they are coming to an end, and many of us know our child will soon be moving on to college. We have worked hard during grammar school and high school years to prepare our children academically, socially, and spiritually to face American life in the post-Christian era. While we recognize that our college students will enjoy far greater freedom than before, we moms and dads want to continue to guide them into this next educational phase. Now is a good time to consider which colleges and universities will be a good fit for your student's future growth as a Catholic citizen, and what he or she will need to do now to gain admittance.

What's worked for other families?

In the "Parent Resources" section of Seton's website (www.setonhome.org) there is a list of Catholic colleges that have proved to be popular with Seton families. Seton is just passing on what others have told us, so clearly we can offer no guarantees to parents, nor allow for individual family preferences. It would be safe to say, however, that the listed colleges will offer campus life and academic programs that seriously foster a Catholic world view and a virtuous way of life. These college give Seton graduates serious consideration for scholarships.

Another possibility is for the student to attend a local school. In our home state of Illinois, junior colleges are working hard to get past the popular perception that they are the "consolation" choices for students who cannot get in to better schools. Daughter Claire was admitted to the "scholars' program" at our community college, after completing an admissions process that included standardized

tests, essays, and a personal interview. In return for free tuition and some other very nice perks, Claire had to take special courses in the humanities, follow a rigorous course schedule, and perform community service. At the end of two years, she had an Associates Degree in Science, 75 credits toward her Bachelors, admission to the university nursing program of her choice, and money in the bank.

Here's the best part: she lived at home for the first two years after high school! Whatever she encountered during her school day was filtered through our family's values when she returned home at night.

Narrowing the field

Parents in our large Catholic families often must factor in the cost of various options. Although just about any student can finance college with a combination of scholarships, grants, and loans, too many of our young people are entering the workplace and marriage with a burdensome debt that might have been avoided.

Another consideration is geography. Beyond tuition and board, there can be huge expenses for a family when a child attends a school that is farther away than a half-day car ride. The airlines gouge holiday travelers and our experience indicates that there is no such thing as a cheap ticket home for Thanksgiving. Home schooling parents spend years forging strong bonds among family members, and maintaining those relationships should be a top priority.

How to get in

All of this discussion about how to choose a college will be somewhat academic (pardon the pun!) if your child fails to gain admission to the school of his or her choice. Colleges will look at your student's high

school transcript, scores on the SAT or ACT, and consider any extra-curricular activities. A personal interview can be helpful and most schools require an essay written on some very broad topic like friendship, responsibility or personal goals. The admission process is pretty subjective but a few ideas might be helpful for home schooling parents.

- Before senior year, check to see what high school subjects are required by the colleges your student is considering. Speak to a Seton high school counselor about these requirements when you re-enroll for 12th grade.
- Seriously consider some prep work for the College Boards. Seton Educational Media sells an SAT prep book, and ACT and SAT prep books are widely available in book stores. Test prep will acquaint the student with the various types of questions commonly asked, and help the student gain confidence to tackle them.
- Test prep courses are rather expensive, but often help to boost scores. One college counselor told me that the real advantage to these courses, over the relatively inexpensive books, is that parents will force students to attend the classes after plunking down hundreds of dollars for them. He feels the prep books are just as valuable – if the student actually works in them!
- Many parents worry home schooled children will be cheated out of sports scholarships because many are unable to play on high school teams. Remember that only a small percentage of public or private school students actually make the varsity teams and most will not get sports scholarships. Explore other sports options like American Legion baseball, park district sports, inter-parish leagues, or club sports to put on an admissions application.

- Sports are not the only extra-curricular activity colleges look for. Students may point to accomplishments in scouting, 4H, community theater, or volunteer work to set them apart from other applicants.

- Don't downplay your child's home education on the application. Recognized accomplishments by home schoolers in national academic competitions make home-educated students very attractive applicants. Often admission departments are looking to diversify their freshman class, and actively seek students with unique backgrounds. Your student might even wish to call attention to home schooling in the essay.

An ace up your sleeve

The biggest asset your student has in the college admissions process is the Seton program itself. Seton has developed a high school curriculum that will prepare your child for College Board examinations far more thoroughly than a thick book or a 6 week course. A Seton student, especially one who has been enrolled for the full four years of high school, has tackled a challenging college prep course, has been exposed to some of the greatest thoughts of Western

civilization, and has a comprehensive understanding of the Catholic faith. To get the biggest bang for your tuition buck, and the best chance for admission to the college of your choice, make the most of Seton's books, lesson plans, and teacher services.

Seton's requirements for graduation are a minimum requirement for a Seton diploma, and are not intended to be taken as the suggested course of study. For example, while only algebra and geometry are mandatory, the high school catalogue offers a total of seven high school math courses. Science also has a two course requirement, but again seven courses are offered. Nine courses are offered in English. Often high school students are distracted by friends, jobs, and other interests and resist a heavy course load. Moms and dads need to remind them that high level courses on a college transcript are very attractive to admissions officers, and will be a terrific preparation for challenging classes in college.

The grades on the transcript will receive close scrutiny from college admissions officers. I have heard it said that Seton's graders are tough, and I have seen that myself. On the other hand, I am always impressed by

the depth of the comments and corrections the teachers note on returned work. Read these carefully and consider them when submitting subsequent assignments. I make it a habit to review completed written assignments before they are sent in to make sure that my child has at least met the essential requirements as listed in the lesson plan. For example, if the question asks the student to compare and contrast, or list three character traits, or include dates, make sure your student has done at least that before the work is sent to Seton.

Seton students should look at the college application process with confidence, knowing that the Seton program has successfully prepared them for high level academic work. Even better, years of learning their Catholic faith, from the word and example of their parents, and Seton's Catholic curriculum, have readied our high school students to face college life armed with God's grace. Parents, speak to your children frankly as they leave your home school. Tell them how crucial it is to remain close to our Lord, especially through the frequent reception of the sacrament of Penance and faithful Mass attendance. Encourage them to turn to Our Blessed Mother for help as they accept this new challenge.

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John Paul II on the Rosary

The family that prays together stays together. The Holy Rosary, by age-old tradition, has shown itself particularly effective as a prayer which brings the family together. Individual family members, in turning their eyes towards Jesus, also regain the ability to look one another in the eye, to communicate, to show solidarity, to forgive one another and to see their covenant of love renewed in the Spirit of God.

Many of the problems facing contemporary families, especially in economically developed societies, result from their increasing difficulty in communicating. Families seldom manage to come together, and the rare occasions when they do are often taken up with watching television. To return to the recitation of the family Rosary means filling daily life with very different images, images of the mystery of salvation: the image of the Redeemer, the image of His most Blessed Mother. The family that recites the Rosary together reproduces something of the atmosphere of the household of Nazareth: its members place Jesus at the centre, they share His joys and sorrows, they place their needs and their plans in His hands, they draw from Him the hope and the strength to go on.

It is also beautiful and fruitful to entrust to this prayer *the growth and development of children*. Does the Rosary not follow the life of Christ, from His conception to His death, and then to His Resurrection and His glory? Parents are finding it ever more difficult to follow the lives of their children as they grow to maturity. In a society of advanced technology, of mass communications and globalization, everything has become hurried, and the cultural distance between generations is growing ever

greater. The most diverse messages and the most unpredictable experiences rapidly make their way into the lives of children and adolescents, and parents can become quite anxious about the dangers their children face. At times parents suffer acute disappointment at the failure of their children to resist the seductions of the drug culture, the lure of an unbridled hedonism, the temptation to violence, and the manifold expressions of meaninglessness and despair.

To pray the Rosary *for children*, and even more, *with children*, training them from their earliest years to experience this daily “pause for prayer” with the family, is admittedly not the solution to every problem, but it is a spiritual aid which should not be underestimated. It could be objected that the Rosary seems hardly suited to the taste of children and young people of today. But perhaps the objection is directed to an impoverished method of praying it. Furthermore, without prejudice to the Rosary’s basic structure, there is nothing to stop children and young people from praying it – either within the family or in groups – with appropriate symbolic and practical aids to understanding and appreciation. Why not try it? With God’s help, a pastoral approach to youth which is positive, impassioned and creative – as shown by the World Youth Days! – is capable of achieving quite remarkable results. If the Rosary is well presented, I am sure that young people will once more surprise adults by the way they make this prayer their own and recite it with the enthusiasm typical of their age group.

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