



Seton Home Study School

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The Holy Spirit

This month we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, the day that the Holy Spirit came to the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire while a thunderous wind blew through the building.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told His Apostles that His Father in heaven would send the Holy Spirit to abide with the members of His Church forever.

Jesus called the Holy Spirit “the Spirit of Truth.” He said the “world,” those who are attached to this world rather than to the heavenly kingdom, would not see or know the Holy Spirit of Truth.

Both Jesus and His Father will abide with those who love Him and keep His Commandments. They will send the Holy Spirit of Truth to be with us and in us. “When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will teach you all truth.”

Jesus said the purpose of the Holy Spirit of Truth is to teach us to know the Truth, and to remember His teachings when we need to teach others. “The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I have said to you.”

Jesus said a prayer to His Father for us. “I pray not that You [Father] should take them [His disciples] out of the world, but that You should keep them from evil. They are not of the world [worldly], as I also am not

of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Your word is truth. As You have sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

The Truth Jesus gives us is Himself, the Truth that frees us from evil, helping us to be holy and sanctified, helping us to attain eternal happiness. Pilate and those who reject Jesus, foolishly ask, “What is Truth?” They don’t want to know Jesus Who is Truth because it means they must accept Jesus as their ultimate authority and thus deny themselves. Jesus is Truth, and no one can know and live according to the Truth, unless one is willing to follow and obey Jesus.

The Holy Spirit gave the apostles the special gift of infallibility to receive and then to teach Divine Revelation. However, the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the apostles are not the only gifts of the Holy Spirit. We parents receive gifts of the Holy Spirit to teach our children. From our Baptism, we have received the gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

Through the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, we also will be able to speak the Truth with a power and eloquence beyond our own natural abilities. With special gifts given us in the Sacrament of Matrimony, we can teach the Truth with greater clarity and understanding. The Holy Spirit will bring “all things” to our minds.

Our home schooling can be successful because we have the power and the truth of the Holy Spirit in us and in the Church. We have been transformed by the Holy Spirit to be able to know the Truth and to teach the Truth. The Holy Spirit teaches us what to say and how to use words so that our children will be able to understand and accept the Truth about Jesus and all the things in the world He created.

The sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the sacramental graces of the Holy Spirit make it possible for Catholic families to live according to the Commandments, as well as to pray and to receive the sacraments worthily and frequently. The Holy Spirit then crowns these gifts with His Fruits: charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continence, chastity.

In a vision to St. Paul, Jesus said, “Do not fear, but speak, and hold not your peace [keep silence] because I am with you” (Acts 18:9). With the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we need to be encouraged to teach our children and to believe that the future holds special blessings for them.

- MKC

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Questions We Are Asked

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

I have difficulty finding time to read the lesson plans.

Lesson plans are a very important resource to be successful taking a course. For the most part, lesson plans do not simply give daily assignments. They also:

- Present new important material that is not in the book
- Give suggestions for further enrichment
- Give guidelines for assignments, or helps for taking tests

The lesson plans were written to help you and your student. The lesson plans are generally addressed to the parent. However, if you have an older, mature student in seventh grade or above, your student could read them and will find them helpful.

Lesson plans are just that: plans. They give a structure and an outline to a course. Just as an engineer must sometimes modify plans to account for changes in conditions, so you should tailor your lesson plans to the particular situation in your family. You are in charge of the lesson plans; they are not in charge of you.

I have a fourth grader, a sixth grader, and an eighth grader. Can I combine any of their classes?

Objectively speaking, the children's grade levels are too far apart to combine classes. However, you need to know your own children and their levels of learning in each subject area to find any possibilities. In addition, sometimes some combinations can be done on a limited basis for other reasons than educational level.

You may have a fourth grader who is a whiz in spelling and could advance into the next grade level. On the other hand, the sixth grader really is poor in

spelling and could use review of the past grade level. You could consider putting these two together in spelling.

Religion is a subject that can usually be combined. A sixth and eighth grader could take the seventh grade religion. Normally, a sixth grader could not take the eighth grade religion course because the demands would be too much.

A grade level should never be skipped in some courses, such as reading, math, and English. These courses require gradually-advancing comprehension and thinking skills.

Sometimes the demands of a large family are such that mother needs to combine two children in the same grade level in several courses. In this case, you can simply explain to the older child that he or she may need to take the same courses a second time to help a younger child. Explain to the older child that he or she will really be more of a teacher's assistant. You might even consider paying the older child for helping. In many ways, the older child will benefit as well, not only in strengthening his studies, but in gaining the spiritual benefits of his generosity.

I have always been very attentive to keeping my home looking very nice. Since I started home schooling, it seems a constant battle.

This is a problem many of us moms must deal with. Maybe we don't have expensive things, but we want our home neat, clean, and organized.

Once we start having children, things change. The time and effort needed to feed the children, to make sure they are dressed, to change diapers, all the day-to-day demands of having children put the housekeeping duties on the back burner.

There are some of us who find the disarray disturbing to our nervous system. I am sure that one reason some moms do not home school is because they cannot deal with the disorganization that happens when the children are at home.

For those of us who "suffer" emotionally from this problem, things can be done to improve the situation. First and most important is to train your children with chores, maybe even with rewards, for picking up the clutter or cleaning off the kitchen counter.

A grade level should never be skipped in some courses, such as reading, math, and English.

This may be difficult for some moms who have trouble exercising authority but perhaps with support from Dad, and with a "Task Schedule," this can be accomplished.

A second option would be to employ a cleaning person to come in once a week, perhaps on a Saturday, to clean and straighten up, at least the main rooms of the house. Perhaps one of the children could work alongside her and learn the job. That way, Sunday morning should be more organized and mom can feel better about The Lord's Day.

The most important thing both for keeping an orderly house and for doing home schooling is to have a schedule and stick to it as much as possible. For example, you might be able to keep your house in pretty good shape by having everyone straighten up for half an hour a day, perhaps from 4:00 to 4:30. Half an hour isn't overwhelming, and will do a lot of good. The problem is that if you don't keep up the schedule every day, then the situation quickly deteriorates and it becomes depressing and overwhelming to think about cleaning up.

There is a theory in sociology called the "broken windows" theory.

The idea is that when people see buildings with broken windows, they decide that no one really cares what happens in the area. Because no one cares, they don't care either and so crime and general disorder increase. The broken windows themselves may not seem so important, but they lead to further decay.

Something similar happens in the house. If things aren't clean and neat, then people don't care about adding to the mess. If the carpet hasn't been vacuumed recently and the toys aren't

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put away, then no one will think much about leaving their shoes and clothes lying around. If the trash is overflowing from a wastebasket onto the floor, then nobody cares about throwing more trash on the floor. Put another way, the first time someone crayons on the wall, it's noticeable. But the tenth time, nobody cares.

It is essential to stay in prayer, asking the Blessed Mother to help you to keep your priorities in line with hers. Educating your children in the Catholic Faith, and keeping them with you so they can practice the Faith along with you, is such a huge achievement that you need to try to relax a little about the housekeeping.

Why do you give the students the first sentence in their book report paragraphs for the first and second quarters?

When new students come to Seton, many have never written a book report. Some have never written a paragraph. By giving a specific sentence and giving very specific suggestions for the middle paragraphs, we hope to guide the students to understand what a book report should look like.

Sometimes parents ask if their student could use different topic sentences. If the student has been with Seton and had the experience of writing book reports for Seton, the student certainly could choose different topic sentences. However, parents will need to be very careful in discussing the chosen topic and make sure the following paragraphs "prove" the point of the topic. In this situation, parents should read or skim read the book to make sure the student has chosen a topic which is realistic and can be proven with examples in the following paragraphs.

For the book reports for the second half of the year, the student does choose his own topic and should be able to write a topic sentence and following paragraphs based on the instructions for the previous reports.

The English book is difficult for me and my student.

Many students—and even parents—have not been taught English concepts. However, understanding grammar and the structure of a sentence certainly helps writers to construct a meaningful paragraph. English is one of those subjects that may seem strenuous at first, but once you learn and understand it, it becomes automatic and you don't need to think too much about it.

English is important for clear thinking and analytical skills. While this might not seem obvious to the student at the time, it does help both readers and writers to clarify their thinking, speaking, and writing in other subjects.

Consider purchasing some of our earlier grade level English books and going through them with your student. A little slower approach or review of the basics could help a great deal.

At Seton, we stress diagramming because it gives students a way of systematically understanding sentences. In order to diagram, you must understand the relationships of words to each other, of phrases to the sentence as a whole, and of the interaction between subject and verb. Without understanding these basic concepts, grammar can be difficult.

We have tutoring videos for diagramming on our website. Look on MySeton, go to the list of courses for your student, and look for Resources under English to access the videos. We have about 25 online now, and are adding to them.

If you have questions, email or call one of our counselors to help you.

My son seems to take a long time working on his high school history tests.

This is usually due to lack of proper preparation to take tests. Students sometimes think that it is sufficient preparation simply to read quickly through a few pages in the text. But aimless reading, often with very minimal concentration, seldom leads to a deep understanding of a topic.

Our lesson plans usually don't say to read pages. They say to study pages. Studying is a much more active endeavor than merely reading. To teach students how to study, we have a free Study Skills Course on the Home Page on our website. Besides our course, there are many other free study skills tips on the internet.

These are the basic steps to studying a chapter:

- Skim over the chapter, looking at the headings and subheadings.
- Read the end-of-chapter Review Questions.
- Read the chapter.
- Study the chapter and underline important points.

These are the basic techniques, but other techniques may work better for specific students. Some students learn better by hearing. These students might find it better to read the chapters out loud. As they underline important points, they might repeat the words or phrases. Some students like to write out important points and put key words on a sheet of paper in large print or in different colors.

As the parent, you can emphasize the important points to remember to prepare for the test. If the test covers more than one chapter, he can answer the questions for only one chapter at a time.

Ever Ancient, Ever New #4 by Dr. Mitchell Kalpakgian

Sancho Panza, the comical squire of the illustrious Don Quixote who vowed to restore knight-errantry into a debased world and recover the Golden Age, once told his master, “An ass will carry his load but not a double load.” As a loyal servant to his fearless knight-errant, Sancho performed his duties faithfully, but he never hesitated to remind his idealistic, visionary knight of the limits of human nature and the distinction between the normal and the abnormal demands of work. If Sancho were hungry, thirsty, sleepy, or in pain, Quixote heard the complaints of his squire that he often expressed in the proverbs that flowed from his tongue. This traditional wisdom also appears in proverbs from other older cultures. A famous Armenian proverb states, “No one can carry two watermelons at the same time.”

Self-knowledge demands that persons acknowledge their limitations and not attempt the impossible or the unreasonable—even though the world demands or expects it. The donkey will do an honest day’s work but not two days’ work in one. A squire will follow his knight in many battles and long travels but not go without food, drink, and rest without complaint.

In a “workaholic” society that requires long hours, encourages overtime pay, exceeds forty-hour weeks of labor, and carries on business as usual even on Sundays, it is imperative to recall the wisdom of the donkey who suddenly stops carrying his load because Mother Nature says no. Even God does not ask the impossible. Yet the nature of modern life continually makes more and more demands on those who earn a living. In a modern capitalistic economy based on two incomes, a woman often imagines that she can manage a home, raise a family,

and have a career without suffering any adverse effects upon her health, marriage, or spirit. The temptation to earn additional family income by overtime hours—a fifty or sixty hour week of work—often blinds men to the toll these supplementary earnings exact of their family life and of the state of their soul.

No one can flout the laws of nature and escape the consequences. As proverbial wisdom teaches, while God always forgives and man sometimes forgives, “Mother Nature never forgives.” To neglect the body does not benefit the soul. To neglect the spirit does not improve the budget. To ignore leisure and play does not enhance intellectual life. Any form of work—whether in or out of the home—that does not afford a person time to enjoy his family, to pursue a hobby or recreation, to read and to pray, or to welcome guests and enjoy their company and conversation is dehumanizing activity.

In *The Way of a Storyteller* Ruth Sawyer tells of a master carpenter renowned for his craftsmanship who pauses from his workaday world each year to participate in an amateur opera performed by the artisans of the village. One of the carpenter’s disgruntled customers who commissioned him to build a beautiful sofa scolded him for the delay of his work, complaining that he was losing business and disappointing his patrons. He replied in German, “Gnadige Frau [Dear Lady], something of those operas will go into your sofa.” The beauty and joy of singing the music of the opera inspired him to do his work of carpentry as a labor of love filled with divine energy. He assured his unhappy customer, “All the goodness, all the lift of the heart we got out of playing in those operas, we would

put back into our work... Nothing was lost. That is how it should be when you have experienced something great and beautiful.”

This master carpenter did not allow the demands of work to rob him of a human life uplifted by his passion for opera that rejuvenated his heart and soul and produced his great art. Cardinal Newman spoke of an “overflow” that comes from the enjoyment of leisurely recreations loved for their own sake that are unrelated to the business of earning a livelihood but are always “reproductive” of good. Because man by nature is a unity of soul and body, the nourishment and care of the soul naturally affects the performance of the body as the carpenter’s words explain, and the neglect of the body of course interferes with the work of the mind and the state of the soul as Sancho insists.

The great wisdom of Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* consists of the indissoluble friendship of the knight and his squire who illuminate this intricate relationship of body and soul that must always be kept in harmonious balance. While Quixote leads his squire to transcend the body and to follow the highest spiritual ideals of truth, honor, chivalry, and beauty, the squire reminds his master that man is flesh and bones as well as spiritual and intellectual. There is a time to be lifted up, and there is a time to be brought down to earth.

Sancho reminds his Master that man is “animal” as well as “rational” and thus needs to learn of the jackass when to stop, protest, refuse, and say no. Man is created to do an honest day’s work but not to be a slave to work. Man is created not only to produce but also to sing. Without the wisdom of Sancho and the carpenter, man falls prey to another one of the addictions and excesses of modernity that urges man to eat too much, consume too much, spend too much, and work too much.

Plum Pudding and Scrabble by John Clark

My children and I were recently speaking about when and how I first began home schooling. The textbook answer is that I started home schooling in the sixth grade, but in its truest sense, home schooling begins long before a workbook or a #3 pencil box is ever opened. And the more I considered the idea of when it all began, the more my memories turned toward two special women who helped shape me.

If you are truly blessed, you will have one grandmother who makes such an impact on your childhood that her influence stays with you forever.

I had two.

Born and raised in Scotland, Jean Clark, my paternal grandmother, had a gift for “grandmothering.” I have always enjoyed cooking, and my grandmother may have been my biggest influence. To this day, I have not met her culinary equal. She could look into a nearly empty refrigerator (or as she called it, an “icebox”) and produce some of the greatest tasting food I’ve ever eaten. (That’s an accomplishment, made even greater when you consider that, as the saying goes, most Scottish cuisine is based on a dare.) Near Christmas, she would bake a plum pudding with quarters in it. My brothers and I would excitedly search our pieces to see who had the most valuable slice.

Whenever she babysat me, which was often, we would play games, like “Go Fish,” or walk down to the lake by her apartment to feed the resident ducks. We also loved to watch “The Price is Right” together. I probably learned more about the price of things watching this show than any other single factor in my youth. I learned to bid properly for items, and that you should not “overbid,” which may have had a profound influence on my career choice.

She had a deep love for Scripture. Born and raised a Protestant, she spent hours a day reading her Bible. It was impossible to know her but miss the fact that she loved her Bible. That makes an impact.

She was stricken with arthritis for much of her life, and in her last few years, she needed help walking. I used to help her walk up the staircase to her bedroom every night, just to make sure she wouldn’t fall. When I got there, she would often hand me a dollar bill for my trouble. “You don’t have to pay me Grammie,” I’d tell her. “I know, but I want to,” she’d tell me. She cared for me when I was little—now I could care for her. This is a beautiful part of family life—the caregiver and the one who is cared for switch roles—and a sadly absent one from much of American life.

Though she lived until she was 89 years old and I was 19, I don’t remember her ever saying a mean word to—or about—anyone. The closest she ever came to it was just before the royal wedding of Charles and Diana, she commented that Lady Diana was “plain.” “But,” she explained, “plain is beautiful.”

St. Teresa of Avila famously prayed, “May God protect me from gloomy saints,” meaning that if one has the faith and a true love of God, there is cause for great joy. Jacqueline Lynch, my maternal grandmother, was the opposite of gloomy. In fact, I have never met a happier person. Perhaps someone should have told my grandmother that she was no longer 17 years old, but no one had the heart to tell her; and if they had, she wouldn’t have taken it seriously anyway.

I have never met someone who simultaneously shared such a deep joy of games and a profound reverence for the Mass more than she did. She was never too busy to play *Monopoly* or *Scrabble* with us, and never too busy to talk about the Catholic Faith with us. She often treated us children like we were more important than adults.

When our family visited her over summer vacation, we would sit in the living room talking to each other, playing games, or watching TV. When she entered the room, she would walk over to each of us, give us a big hug as if she hadn’t seen us in years, smile,

and tell each of us how glad she was that we were with her. We could have stayed for three weeks, but she did that routine every single morning of our visit. Perhaps aside from my little children, I have never known someone so glad to see me as my grandmother.

One afternoon when I was about ten years old, I was playing with my cousin’s Western toy gun set. Someone mentioned to me that I shouldn’t be playing with it because it wasn’t mine, so I carefully put the toy down. The next day, my grandmother came home from shopping and handed me a toy gun and holster of my own. She explained that she had bought the toy for me because I was so careful with my cousin’s toy, and had put it back when I thought about the fact that it wasn’t mine. No one should wonder why today I am such an ardent defender of property rights.

Charles Dickens wrote that, after his conversion, no one kept the spirit of Christmas more than Scrooge. I knew someone who did. My grandmother started shopping for the next Christmas in late December. Though she had dozens of grandchildren, when we all visited on Christmas Day, she had gifts laid out for every single one of us with our names by them. Three years before she died, she announced that she had cancer. Possibly thinking that it might take her that year, she put up a Christmas tree, perhaps hoping that she would make it until Christmas. She did survive through that Christmas, but she never wanted to take down the tree. As long as that tree was there, she would make it. That little Christmas tree lasted for three years, and so did she.

It’s hard to draw the line between where home schooling begins and ends. We home-schooling parents are constantly looking for a better textbook, or for better flash cards, or for better software to teach our children. These are all important things that we do as parents. But let’s not overlook an obvious fact—the people in our lives are often able to help them in a way that mere books cannot. May our Lord bless all who have had a beneficial influence on our lives, and may God bless all the grandmothers.

The Beatitudes

by Rev. Robert Skeris

The Gospel of the Eight Beatitudes is surely one of the best beloved passages in all of Holy Writ, and deservedly so. For the fact is that men of all climes and times have regarded the Beatitudes as the ladder, so to speak, or the staircase by which the saints have ever ascended to heaven. And if we desire to be with the saints in heaven, then each of us must also mount these same rungs, patiently and perseveringly, hand in hand with our Divine Master. Let us therefore take each Beatitude in turn, and reflect upon its meaning briefly, asking Almighty God to enlighten our minds and our hearts as we do.

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. They are poor in spirit who, like the apostles, leave all temporal things for Christ's sake and become poor; they who have lost their property by misfortune or injustice, and bear this loss with patience and resignation to the will of God; they who are contented with their poor and lowly station in life, do not strive for greater fortune or a higher position, and would rather suffer want than make themselves rich by unlawful means; they who, though rich, do not love wealth, nor set their hearts upon it, but use their riches to aid the poor; and especially they who are humble, that is, who have no exalted opinion of themselves, but are convinced of their weakness and inward poverty, have a low estimate of themselves and therefore feel always their need, and like poor mendicants, continually implore God's grace and assistance.

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, FOR THEY SHALL POSSESS THE LAND. He is meek who represses every rising impulse of anger, impatience and desire of revenge, and willingly puts up with everything that God, to prove him, decrees or permits to happen to him, or that men inflict upon him. He who thus controls himself is like a calm and tranquil sea, in which the image of the divine Sun is ever reflected.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN, FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED. The mourners mentioned here are not those who weep and

lament over the death of relatives and friends, or over misfortune or loss of temporal riches, but those who mourn that God is so often offended, so little loved and honored by men, that so many souls, redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ, are lost. Among these mourners are also those who lead a strict and penitential life, and patiently endure distress; for sin is the *only* evil, the *only* thing to be lamented; and those tears only, which are shed on account of sin, are useful tears, and are recompensed by everlasting joy and eternal consolation.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER JUSTICE, FOR THEY SHALL HAVE THEIR FILL. Hunger and thirst denote the ardent longing for those virtues which constitute Christian perfection. He who seeks such perfection with ardent desire and earnest striving, will be filled, that is, will be adorned by God with the most beautiful virtues, and will be abundantly rewarded in heaven.

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY. They are merciful who assist the poor according to their means, who practice every possible spiritual and corporal work of mercy, who as far as they can, patiently endure the faults of others, strive always to excuse them, and willingly forgive the injuries they have received. They especially are truly merciful, who are merciful to their *enemies* and do good to them, as it is written: Love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you. Well is it for him who is merciful, the greatest rewards are promised him; but a judgment without mercy shall be passed on the unmerciful.

BLESSED ARE THE CLEAN OF HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. They are clean of heart who carefully preserve the innocence which they received in Baptism, and keep their heart and conscience free not only from all sinful words and deeds; but from all sinful *thoughts* and *desires*, and in all their omissions and commission think only and desire only good. These, while yet on earth, see God in all His works and creatures, because their thoughts are di-

rected always to the Highest Good. And in the other world they will see Him face to face, enjoying in this contemplation a peculiar pleasure which is reserved for pure souls only; for as the eye that would see well must be clear, so must those souls be immaculate who are to see God.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD. Those are peacemakers who guard their improper desires, who are careful to have peace in their consciences and regulated tranquillity in all their actions, who do not quarrel with their neighbors, and are submissive to the will of God. These are called children of God, because they follow God who is a God of peace, and who even gave His only Son to reconcile the world, and bring upon earth that peace which the world does not know and cannot give.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT SUFFER PERSECUTION FOR JUSTICE' SAKE, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. Those suffer persecution for justice' sake who by their words, writings, or by their lives defend the truth, the faith, and Christian virtues; who cling firmly to God, and permit nothing to turn them from the duties of the Christian profession, from the practice of their holy religion; but on its account suffer hatred, contempt, disgrace, injury, and injustice even like the saints, with joy. Then they will become like the saints and like them receive the heavenly crown. And if we wish to be crowned with them, we too must suffer with them; as St. Paul wrote to Timothy, And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

The rungs of the ladder formed by the eight Beatitudes can also be described and thought of in terms of the virtues; let us therefore beseech Almighty God, that He grant us all the grace to serve Him in sanctity and justice, in poverty and humility, in meekness and repentance, in the ardent desire for all virtues, by mercy, perfect purity of heart, in peacefulness and patience, following in the footsteps of the Divine Master, His only Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and glory, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Conferences

Many state and local groups are now sponsoring their own conferences, inviting various Catholic vendors and curriculum providers. Seton is happy to participate as a vendor. For more information, see our website at www.setonhome.org/conferences, or email conferences@setonhome.org.

Herndon, VA (Washington DC). June 10-11, 2011 (Fri.-Sat.) 10th Annual Immaculate Heart of Mary National Home School and Parent Conference 2011, Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel (note new location), 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon, VA. Fri.: 9 AM - 9 PM, Sat.: 9 AM - 4:30 PM. Information: 540-636-1946 or info@ihmconference.org or www.ihmconference.org.

Seattle, WA. June 10-11, 2011 (Fri.-Sat.) Northwest Catholic Family Education Conference, Seattle Police Athletic Association Pavilion, 11030 E. Marginal Way South, Tukwila, WA. Fri.: 8:45 AM - 7 PM, Sat.: 8:45 AM - 5:30 PM. Info: Katherine at 206-230-0455, or info@nwcatholicconference.com or www.nwcatholicconference.com

Kansas City, KS. June 17-18, 2011 (Fri.-Sat.) 2011 Kansas City Catholic Home Educators Conference, St. James Academy, 24505 Prairie Star Pkwy, Lenexa, KS. Fri.: 3 PM - 9:30 PM, Sat.:

7:30 AM - 4:30 PM. For information: call Maribeth at 816-454-3729, or jmjchambermusic@sbcglobal.net, or www.kccatholichomeschooler.org

Lansing, MI. June 17-18, 2011 (Fri./Sat.) Michigan Catholic Home-Educators 17th Annual "It's Great to be Catholic!" Family and Home Education Seminar, Book and Curriculum Fair, Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave (at Cedar), Lansing, MI. Fri.: 6 PM - 9:30 PM, Sat.: 8 AM - 4:30 PM. Information: Kelley at 248-828-0135, or mchemails@gmail.com or www.homeschoolcatholic.org

Cleveland, OH. June 24-25, 2011 (Fri.-Sat.) Immaculate Heart of Mary Cleveland Home School and Parent Conference 2011, St. Adalbert Church - Keller Center, 66 Adalbert Street, Berea, OH. Fri.: 4 PM - 9 PM, Sat.: 9 AM - 4 PM. Info: 540-636-1946 or info@ihmconference.org or www.ihmconference.org

Alhambra, CA. June 25, 2011 (Sat.) SCCHE (Southern California Catholic Home Educators) 12th Annual Conference and Curriculum Fair, Sacred Heart Retreat Center, 920 E. Alhambra Road, Alhambra, CA. Curriculum fair: Sat. after 8:30 AM Mass - 6 PM. Registration info: Rita at 714-271-1272 or msg4prk@sbcglobal.net, or check

www.scchehomepage.com for complete schedule.

Chicopee, MA. June 25, 2011 (Sat.) 3rd Annual New England Catholic Home School Conference, St. Stanislaus Basilica and School, 534 Front Street, Chicopee, MA. 9 AM - 5 PM. For info call Christine at 413-315-9999 or browse to nehc.wordpress.com or www.ourladyqueenofsaints.org

Dayton, OH. July 8-9, 2011 (Fri.-Sat.) IHM Dayton Catholic Home School & Parent Conference, St. Peter's Church, 6161 Chambersburg Rd, Huber Hghts, OH. Fri.: 2 PM-8 PM; Sat.: 9 AM 4 PM. For more information: www.ihmconference.org or email info@ihmconference.org or call 540-636-1946.

Denver, CO. July 15-16, 2011(Sat.) Rocky Mountain Catholic Home Educators Conference, St. Thomas More Parish, 8035 South Quebec Street, Centennial, CO. Fri.: 3:30 PM - 7:30 PM; Sat.: 8 AM - 5 PM. Info: info@rmchec.org or www.rmchec.org

Tampa, FL. July 22-23, 2011 (Fri.-Sat.) Immaculate Heart of Mary Tampa Home School and Parent Conference 2011, St. Lawrence Church & Parish, 5225 N. Himes Avenue, Tampa, FL. Fri.: 2 PM - 8 PM; Sat.: 9 AM - 4 PM. Info: 540-636-1946 or info@ihmconference.org or www.ihmconference.org.

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Message for World Communications Day

New horizons are now open that were until recently unimaginable; they stir our wonder at the possibilities offered by these new media and, at the same time, urgently demand a serious reflection on the significance of communication in the digital age. This is particularly evident when we are confronted with the extraordinary potential of the internet and the complexity of its uses. As with every other fruit of human ingenuity, the new communications technologies must be placed at the service of the integral good of the individual and of the whole of humanity. If used wisely, they can contribute to the satisfaction of the desire for meaning, truth and unity which remain the most profound aspirations of each human being.

In the digital world, transmitting information increasingly means making it known within a social network where knowledge is shared in the context of personal exchanges. The clear distinction between the producer and consumer of information is relativized and communication appears not only as an exchange of data, but also as a form of sharing. This dynamic has contributed to a new appreciation of communication itself, which is seen first of all as dialogue, exchange, solidarity and the creation of positive relations. On the other hand, this is contrasted with the limits typical

of digital communication: the one-sidedness of the interaction, the tendency to communicate only some parts of one's interior world, the risk of constructing a false image of oneself, which can become a form of self-indulgence.

Young people in particular are experiencing this change in communication, with all the anxieties, challenges and creativity typical of those open with enthusiasm and curiosity to new experiences in life. Their ever greater involvement in the public digital forum, created by the so-called social networks, helps to establish new forms of interpersonal relations, influences self-awareness and therefore inevitably poses questions not only of how to act properly, but also about the authenticity of one's own being. Entering cyberspace can be a sign of an authentic search for personal encounters with others, provided that attention is paid to avoiding dangers such as enclosing oneself in a sort of parallel existence, or excessive exposure to the virtual world. In the search for sharing, for "friends", there is the challenge to be authentic and faithful, and not give in to the illusion of constructing an artificial public profile for oneself.

Benedict XVI,
June 5, 2011