



# Seton Home

# Study School

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◆ *“under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church”* ◆

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## The Family

Marriage and the family are under attack by our government laws and regulations which cater to those who are determined to change society to remove any barriers for their evil habits.

This is a precarious time for the existence of the Family. On the one hand, state laws continue to mutilate the very essence of marriage as a fundamental social good by recognizing two people of the same sex living together as “marriage.” On the other hand, more and more individual men and women continue to attack marriage by refusing to marry and instead choosing to co-habitate. Some decide to marry but only after an irresponsible lifestyle which often leads to adultery after marriage. Many who marry soon divorce, causing young people to fear marriage and a lifelong commitment.

More and more children are being raised without fathers, which studies show puts children at greater risk for many problems. Divorce continues to be epidemic, deeply wounding children. Contraceptives are widely used and widely promoted, to the point of even being handed out in schools. Pregnancy is seen either as a bad consequence to be prevented, or as something to be terminated.

In addition, day care centers and many schools separate children from family time and the textbooks denigrate family values. Social activities are with friends or online, not with family members. The high cost of housing and the necessity for mothers to work further encourages contraception and abortion.

As we face the beginning of a new year, perhaps we need to make a resolution to strengthen our own family. While we need to keep up the pressure for pro-family legislation, we also need to promote family values within our own homes. Homeschooling by parents can help members of our families to grow together in many different ways, spiritually as well as academically.

By improving our own family life, we are able to show our friends, relatives, and neighbors that families can and do succeed. When we go on picnics, when we visit the church bazaar or town parades, when we visit the library or the local museums or pro-life rallies, our family can give evidence of a strong and happy Christian family life.

Most families turn to home schooling not for academics or even because of the problems in the schools, but because they want to live a different kind of family life, one that promotes life and happiness with each other. We want our children to be good and holy and live the Christian life, so we are motivated to be so for them. Our children come to us so innocent, they motivate us to be good ourselves.

Cardinal Gagnon, when he was president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, said that the most important evangelization we can do to promote family life is to evangelize within our own family. Teaching the Faith and living the Faith are the most important ways to evangelize our children. We must show our children the importance of doing things together, especially prayers, as a family.

Father John Hardon pointed out that in the process of parents teaching their children, God’s grace flows from the parents to the children, and His graces flow from the children to the parents, and powerful graces flow even among the children as they all work together to live a Christian life.

Our Catholic family can be a motivation to other families. If we show we can be content even if we do not have a big house or lots of things, even if we do not go someplace every day to be entertained, we can influence other families. Living holy lives, living in charity toward each other, gives evidence of family happiness that does not conform to the anti-family culture.

The Holy Family of Nazareth gives an example for our family path of holiness. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph give the example of truly loving, living, praying, and working together as a family. As Jesus said in the Temple, He was about His Father’s business of teaching others about God. We and the members of our family all need to be about the business of living a holy life ourselves, but also of giving good example, thus teaching others about God’s way for Family Life.

-MKC

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## Questions We Are Asked

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

### **Am I required to give home grades?**

You are not required to give home grades; if you do not, then your student's quarter grade will be based solely on the Seton-graded assignments. There is no problem with this, except that students tend to receive higher grades when the home grades are averaged with the Seton grades.

### **Why did you send an email to parents of high school students asking about grades?**

We recently sent an email to all families who have students in high school but for whom no quarter grades have been recorded.

Although we do not wish to put any time pressure on families, we want to keep better track of how students are progressing. By determining which families are doing fine and which are having difficulties, we can better focus our resources on families who need some help. We want to make it as easy as possible for families to use the assistance that we offer.

We encourage families to seek help early on. A student who has been struggling for a week is much easier to help than a student who has been struggling for several months. Our counselors can give specific helps for each subject, or even work with parents to determine if perhaps the course load is too great, and if courses should be dropped or switched.

It is important for high school students to obtain good grades, and we want to help them be successful. For the sake of a good grade point average, which colleges are looking for, students need to obtain good grades from their first year in high school. Colleges base financial aid not only on need, but also on the SAT or ACT grades, as well as the high school grades.

### **Are you going to offer any course videos other than the diagram videos?**

Yes, we will be offering tutoring videos, especially for our high school students, and likely for the 7th and 8th grade students as well.

Besides the videos, we have audio tutoring lectures as well. Students and parents can access the audio by going to the Home Page, putting in the Family Number and Password. Make sure your student's name is in the upper right-hand corner. Then click on All Course Resources. Scroll down for all Resources for all the courses in which that student is enrolled. Available tutoring audios are on the list. They are offered as helps in relation to the lesson plans weekly assignments, and the future videos will do the same.

For the upcoming videos, our English counselors are evaluating what questions come up most often for each assignment. Based on these questions, we will develop weekly video tutoring lessons.

### **I mail to Seton all the quarter tests at one time, but my friend sends the tests in as they are done. Which is better?**

In grade school, we encourage mailing in all the quarter work at once, but for high school we encourage sending in work as it is completed. The reason is simple: high school courses are more complex, and if a student is having trouble, that needs to be detected as quickly as possible.

We notice that some moms wait until two quarters—or even four quarters—of tests are finished before sending them in. While the decision is up to you, you may find that sending in only one quarter at a time gives you the opportunity to evaluate what your child is learning and where he is

making mistakes. It certainly is easier to review one quarter than two quarters of lessons. And if an entire year's worth of work is sent in at once, then there is no opportunity for students to learn from their mistakes, or to take any direction from grader comments.

Instead of using the mail, we encourage either uploading assignments and/or making use of the online tests, which are available in grades 4 and up. Online tests cannot be misplaced while waiting to be mailed, or lost in the mail, either coming or going. Online tests are graded more quickly. Students

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are anxious to see their grades, and if you delay sending in the tests, the students can become uninterested in their work. They start thinking it is not so important to do the work in a timely manner, since there is a such a time lag between completion and grading.

Electronic grading is also less expensive, for Seton and for families, since there is no need to pay postage.

### **Due to health problems, we have fallen behind in our home schooling. We are trying to catch up. Do you have any advice?**

In the elementary grades, you might need to move along more quickly in history, science, spelling, and vocabulary, but focus on religion, math, phonics, reading, and English. The other subjects could be done only once or twice a week.

The high school subjects are more important for grades on a transcript. However, high school students could take only one or two courses at a time, doing lessons for one subject in the morning for a few hours, and doing a second subject in the afternoon. In this way, students can proceed more quickly and finish up two courses in perhaps two months.

For math in grades 7 through 12, we highly recommend the DIVE CDs or the Saxon Teacher CDs. These are extremely helpful for students as they can review the lessons as many times as they need to learn the concepts.

Once when a move put my family behind schedule, my boys worked to catch up on Saturdays. They preferred that to having classes in the summer.

### **What do you think about hiring a tutor?**

Before hiring an outside tutor, you might first look to the resources in your

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own home. Older siblings are often the best tutors. Not only can this help the younger student, but it helps the older student to solidify his own knowledge of math or phonics or English or whatever as he “teaches” or listens to the younger student. Some parents pay their assistant for helping with an appropriate amount, or this can merely be counted as one of the daily chores.

Tutors in the extended family, such as uncles and aunts, grandparents, or other like-minded relatives have proven very, very successful. Only after ruling out other sources should an outside, paid tutor be considered. In such cases, you might ask around your church, or check at a local college, to find a qualified person who can help. Of course, you will want to check references and carefully monitor the situation.

Just keep in mind that God gave parents the special gifts to teach their own children, so make sure the tutors are part-time.

### **What do you think about my high school son being enrolled in one class at the local high school?**

The problem is that the local high school is permeated with the materialistic, secular culture. Even one course taken every day will bring your child into close contact with people you

would likely not choose for his friends, so you need to be very careful. Your son might be enrolled in a French class or might be in a science class, but the students, the teacher, the textbooks, the extra-curricular conversations and events, all work to influence your son in a non-Catholic value system. With the states legalizing same-sex “marriages,” and thus added to the curriculum, anti-Christian “values” and an anti-family attitude permeates everyone and everything at the school. Once your child is exposed, you cannot take his innocence back or remove his “new knowledge” of the “real world.” You might not realize what ideas or values he has “accepted” until it is too late.

People tend to think that even if public schools generally are problematic, their local school is okay because they know their community and they know that the teachers and administrators are good people. While there are certainly good and dedicated—even heroic—people in public schools, the system itself is the problem, since it denies the importance of religion. It teaches a worldview that sets up recycling and minimizing your carbon footprint as the goal in life, rather than teaching virtue and piety.

Homeschooling or home education is really about home and family and Faith.

### **I still can't find some things, like the answer keys.**

Before you begin homeschooling, you should spend a week going through the course materials. We recommend using two three-ring binders and separating the lesson plans (which your older students may read and follow) in one binder, and putting the tests, the quarter report forms, and the answer keys in a second binder. We also suggest that you skim read through all the lesson plans so that you understand how it all works. You have the Teacher Planner to help you take notes for yourself.

For older students, especially those in high school, go through the lesson plans for each subject *with each student*. Also, check out your MySeton page and find out all the helps and supplements that are available online.

### **Do I need to sit with my high school student for each subject?**

High school students often can do most of the work themselves, such as a reading assignment, or answering questions at the end of a chapter. Set up a schedule with each student, have a plan for them to check off their work assignment, and schedule time each day to make sure the work has been done. This can be done by Dad in the evening. Do not *assume* your student is doing the work. In some classes, perhaps in religion, your student will be doing fine, but in English or Algebra, you may need to keep a more watchful eye, or you may need to do some serious teaching. Your husband should be more involved with at least some of the subjects with some of the children.

### **What suggestions do you have for a 7th grade girl who is obviously bright, reads the encyclopedia and can recite the information back to you, but who takes a week to do one day's school assignment?**

Here's an idea that has worked for some students: tell her she is on her own for her schoolwork, and that you are no longer going to pester her about her assignments. However, you will pay her for every test (not assignments) she passes with a 90 or above. Tell her whenever she finishes a course, whether it is math or science or religion or history or whatever, she can immediately begin the 8th grade in that subject. Tell her if she finishes an 8th grade subject the same way, she can start a high school course in that same subject. So if she finishes her 7th grade math, she can start Algebra ½. Once she finishes that, even if she is in 8th grade, she can start earning high school credits and start Algebra I.

As soon as she begins high school, have her visit Catholic colleges. Let her see what college is about. Some Catholic colleges, like Christendom, offer summer program, usually for Religion, to show high school students what college will be like. Colleges also allow high school students to visit for a week during the school year. During her first year in high school, have her take the ACT or SAT test. This will impress on her just how much she needs to learn before attending college.

## Holy Habits in the Home

by Ginny Seuffert

Francis Cardinal George, the Archbishop of Chicago, on Catholic radio discussed the challenges facing the young men in the seminary. Vocations to the priesthood are up in Chicago, due in no small part to men from countries such as Mexico, Poland and the Philippines who come here to serve the Church in the U.S. While all the seminarians are pious and enthusiastic, the local men face special issues. The men from foreign lands grew up in observant homes in vibrant Catholic cultures, while the Chicago men grew up ... well, here.

With a few notable exceptions, most U.S. communities are decidedly secular, and most Catholic families worship only for an hour on Sunday. Pious practices in the home have all but disappeared, making it more difficult for seminarians to adapt to a life filled with devotions.

His Eminence's remarks made me think about my own childhood, at a time when vocations to the priesthood and religious life were vigorous, and when Catholics were well-known for their stable marriages, large supportive families, and strong work ethic. Churches were filled to the rafters and spilled over into the street on Sundays for each of the several Masses offered. They were pretty busy every other day as well, with each parish having its own rosary society, altar society, sodality of Our Lady, choir, novena to a favorite saint, parish schools and CYO sports, ushers, and double lines outside every confessional on Saturday. The common environment and practices of the typical Catholic home fostered this vigorous parish life, and we homeschooling families have a unique opportunity to resurrect many of these holy habits in our homes, by what we see, what we say and what we do.

In the Italian-American neighborhood where I grew up, any passer-by could see which home was occupied by a Catholic family because of the statue of Our Lady, St. Anthony, or St. Francis on the lawn. It was not uncommon for those entering a house to bless themselves with holy water

from a tiny font next to the front door. A favorite spot was a "shrine" to the Blessed Mother with a statue set up on a buffet or dresser, often surrounded by photos of deceased relatives. We children would adorn the shrine with vases of flowers lovingly picked by tiny hands. Every child received his or her first really nice rosary at First Holy Communion and these were often displayed on our dressers. Missals were another common gift and we felt grown-up when we bookmarked them with holy cards our parents brought home from wakes they attended. We all wore medals or crucifixes. The presence of all these holy items was a constant reminder of our Catholic identity.

In earlier times in our own country, and right now in some countries, prayer fills the day of faithful Catholics. During my childhood, Catholic children were told to stow shoes and slippers far under their beds at night. The next morning, when we got on our knees to retrieve the footwear, we had already "assumed the position" for morning prayers. Long before I knew the Fatima Morning Offering, I memorized a simpler version:

*Good morning, dear Jesus,  
This day is for you.  
I ask You to bless  
All I think, say, and do.*

Meals were preceded by grace. Classes in school always started with the Sign of the Cross and a Hail Mary. We said an Act of Contrition before we left for home because, as one sister thoughtfully pointed out, "You might get hit by a car on the way home, and I want to know you had final penitence." After dinner, many families had the habit of saying a rosary, and as soon as we were old enough to understand right from wrong, we children were encouraged to examine our consciences at bedtime. Younger children may not have memorized the Ten Commandments, but were taught a simple examen to help us remember them.

*Think of God (1st), His Name (2nd),  
and day (3rd),*

*Parents too, who care for you (4th).  
Are you kind in every way (5th)?  
Pure (6th and 9th), and honest (7th  
and 10th), truthful (8th) too?*

When we were in bed, my mother would come in and say prayers with us. (Children shared rooms in those days, so she only had to do it once.) I cannot remember a time when I did not know the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father, or the Hail Mary. Years later she told us that she had trained her children much like Pavlov trained his dogs. Before we said the last "Amen," little eyes were already closed.

Our actions at home and in the neighborhood offered even more reminders of the Faith. Of course, every Catholic, even the non-observant, abstained from meat on Fridays. (Interestingly, the bishops of England and Wales have just re-established meatless Fridays in their country.) A siren from an ambulance reminded us to cross ourselves. When men passed a Catholic church, they would tip their hats in honor of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Some ladies would cross themselves, but I was taught to trace a cross on my forehead. Of course, we would often stop in to make a visit or light a candle.

The Lord's Day was a special occasion every week. Only emergency workers actually worked. A few retail establishments like bakeries or coffee shops were open on Sunday morning, but everything else was closed. Yard work and household chores were for Saturday; Sundays meant church, company, and Sunday dinner.

Growing up in this environment anchored Catholicism and Catholic customs in our bones. I have no way of knowing whether or not all of the dozens and dozens of children who grew up on my block necessarily stayed faithful. What I do know is they fully understood what they were leaving or what they would cling to for life.

In a few places in the United States, often near colleges faithful to the *magisterium*, families work hard to create this type of Catholic environment. This is a movement that needs to grow. It starts with holy habits in the home.

## Halo

by John Clark

Most Catholics are aware that the Church places a special designation to virgins and martyrs among the saints. For instance, if you look at the “saint for the day” on a Catholic calendar, you may see a name listed like this: “St. Lucy, virgin and martyr.” Among theologians, it is commonly opined that these two classes of saints achieve a special “crown” in heaven. Many saints have both attributions, and there are many beautiful and inspirational stories about the saints and how they achieved these victories. One saint, for instance, revealed that when he was a young boy, he was very determined and concerned about choosing the correct path in life that God had ordained for him. One night, in answer to his prayer, the Blessed Mother appeared to him and held out two crowns—a white crown that represented virginity, and a red crown that represented martyrdom. Our Lady asked him which crown he desired. The boy responded that he chose *both*. Years later, at Auschwitz, when one of his fellow prisoners was chosen by the Nazis to be executed, the boy, who had grown up to become a Franciscan priest, stepped forward and asked to die in the place of the man.

Almost two weeks later, when the Nazis administered a lethal injection to him, the promise was fulfilled. This man, known to the Nazis as Prisoner Number 16670, is now known to heaven and earth as St. Maximilian Kolbe.

Two crowns.

Under normal circumstances, most fathers are called neither to a life of virginity nor one of martyrdom. Surely, we are called to a life of sanctity and holiness, but these white and red crowns are not to be ours. I’ve thought a lot about this “crowns” idea during my life. And though I’m not worthy to have a place in heaven

at all (although I have confidence in the mercy of Jesus that I will have a place), I’ve wondered what I can offer Jesus.

Then, last week, as I was doing research for a speech, I came upon a section of St. Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica* that I never had read before. Thomas, the Angelic Doctor, argued that there is a *third crown*, writing:

Just as by virginity and martyrdom a person wins a most perfect victory over the flesh and the world, so is a most perfect victory gained over the devil, when a person not only refuses to yield to the devil’s assaults, but also drives him out, not from himself alone, but from others also. Now this is done by preaching and teaching: wherefore an aureole is due to preaching and teaching, even as to virginity and martyrdom.

Thomas makes the argument that a crown (aureole is translated roughly to English as “halo”) can be awarded to teachers and preachers, just as one is awarded to martyrs and consecrated virgins.

A third crown? An aureole. How beautiful.

But this must be only for priests and learned doctors of the Church, right? Not so, says Thomas, continuing:

Nor can we admit, as some affirm, that it is due to prelates only, who are competent to preach and teach by virtue of their office, but it is due to all whosoever exercise this act lawfully. Nor is it due to prelates, although they have the office of preaching, unless they actually preach, since a crown is due not to the habit, but to the actual strife, according to 2 Timothy 2:5, “He . . . shall not be crowned, except he strive lawfully.

St. Thomas clearly explains that the office, or state in life, is not the chief determinant to this crown being awarded. One need not be a priest, or even a teacher by profession, to achieve this success. It is simply necessary that someone strive to teach others the Faith, and thereby win victories against the devil, and for Jesus. It seems obvious that there is a class of people who fall into this category: homeschooling parents.

As Catholic homeschooling fathers and mothers, preaching and teaching is your chosen calling. When we think of preaching and teaching, we envision something grandiose—the travels and missionary work of St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier, or the writings of St. Bonaventure and St. Augustine perhaps. But there is a call to preach and teach in another special place in the world: your living room.

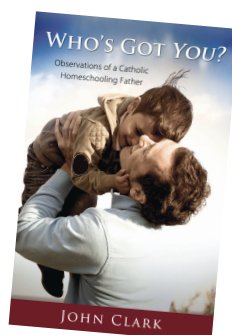
Just like in the example of St. Maximilian Kolbe, this crown is difficult to achieve. It may require dedicating ten, twenty, thirty or more years to teaching your children. It may require dedicating years to teaching your grandchildren. It’s not too late to start this missionary work. As we work our way into the new year of 2012, let the words of St. Thomas console you during the hard times.

My mom and dad started homeschooling me was I was 11 years old. I started homeschooling my own children in my 20’s. I’ve been making arguments in favor of homeschooling for 30 years, but I’ve never made a better one than this. Catholic homeschooling fathers: perform your sacred duties of fatherhood out of love, and a crown may await you.

John Clark’s new book

**Who’s Got You?**

**Observations of a Catholic Homeschooling Father** is currently available through Seton Educational Media ([www.setonbooks.com](http://www.setonbooks.com)). It is also available as an ebook for Kindle through Amazon.



## How to Teach Science in Your Daily Life Part 2

*By Kenneth J. Stein, Ph.D.*

Some time ago, we taught our 10-year-old daughter how nature recycles water through the water cycle. I explained to her that this means all water, even that which you exhale through your nose. A big breakthrough came the other day when it was raining. She asked me if some of the rain that was falling could have been the water used by John the Baptist when he baptized Jesus. In addition, she wanted to know if some of it came from the parting of the Red Sea. I told her that in both of these cases, we couldn't prove it, but that there was a very remote possibility. I thought, great, this is learning at its best! That is, she extended and applied knowledge in a way that I hadn't considered.

You can also teach science in the kitchen by baking bread or making pancakes. Discuss the importance of agriculture and how wheat has been an important dietary staple throughout history. Teach that the yeast reacts with sugars in the flour to produce carbon dioxide. Baking powder releases carbon dioxide by a chemical reaction involving baking soda. The carbon dioxide becomes trapped within the dough or batter, causing it to rise. Use this time to discuss the "Bread of Life."

Gardening is a great way to discover the life cycle of plants. It requires a bit of work to prepare and fertilize the ground. You can use this time to discuss how nutrition is important to plants. Next comes planting the seeds, which is always a lot of fun. Within a few short weeks, the children will see tiny plants rise above the ground. Then, in mid-summer they will feel a sense of accomplishment when they pick the ripe vegetables. Gardening doesn't have to be complicated. If you don't have the space or the right conditions, you can grow a few plants, such as tomatoes or beans, in pots.

If you like to fish or hunt, then these activities can also serve as a science class. I take our daughters fishing but most of their time is spent playing with my leeches and crayfish baits, or overturning rocks along the riverbank.

They mostly look for crawling things and make mudcakes. I teach them about the different kinds of insects, salamanders, and so on. When we return home, filleting fish becomes a class on fish anatomy. The other neighborhood girls say that, "it's gross," but our daughters don't seem to mind. However, they aren't quite ready to clean a fish—just yet.

Birdfeeders are very popular today. Consider placing these in highly visible areas, such as near dining room windows. Is it possible to see the birds while you're eating breakfast or dinner? Keep binoculars and a field guide handy. Can your children learn to identify birds by their songs? Besides birdwatching, see if they can learn about behaviors and interactions with other birds. Perhaps they can describe these in a daily journal.

Butterfly watching has become another means of entertainment. Nurseries sell certain flowers and shrubs that are highly attractive to butterflies and moths. These can provide the opportunity for your children to learn about butterflies in your neighborhood. How many different species can they identify? What can they learn about their behaviors? It requires much patience to watch and take notes, but can be quite rewarding.

Every so often, you may find a bird or rabbit nest in your yard. These provide the chance to see how parents care for their young. Any such discovery should be accompanied by a trip to the library to check out the references that describe the biology of these animals. If you keep a reasonable distance from their nests, then they become comfortable with their surroundings and may continue to use your property for nesting, year after year.

Once in a while you may find other oddities around your home, such as swarms of bees and wasp nests. About two years ago, a queen hornet chose our garage as the location to build her nest. I conducted research on wasps and bees for over fifteen years, so this was my turf. We decided to allow the hornet nest to stay where it was. I kept saying to myself, this probably isn't a great idea,

but knew enough not to disturb them and keep the children away from it. (Of course, if it ever became a problem, then we would have to destroy it.) Every time the automatic garage door opened, the door moved upward and ripped open the back of the nest. The nest came alive for a few minutes with hornets buzzing and flying all over. Eventually, they became accustomed to this and would quickly seal the hole. During the times when the nest was torn open, I would hold my daughters up high on my shoulders and have them peer into the back of the nest. They could see the queen and workers tending their larvae. Bees are perhaps not the safest subject of study, but it's very easy to find interesting things around you.

Sometimes one small gift opens up a new frontier for science exploration. I received a very large magnifying glass from my grandmother when I was in first grade. I looked at anything I could find outside: leaves, ants, grass, and bits and pieces of paper. In second grade, I received a microscope as a Christmas present. I still remember my enthusiasm and excitement of looking at the assortment of slides that came with the set. I liked making my own slides too, from table salt or colored sugar sprinkles that came from my Mom's kitchen.

Perhaps the best Christmas present that I received was a chemistry set. I was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and could spend hours conducting all sorts of experiments. Even though it came with many detailed experiments, I ended up going to the library to find ones that took me beyond those in the set. If a child seems to have a science vocation, then you need to find things to help keep it going.

Teaching science does not require any special magic, just a little bit of creativity. Find activities in your daily life and relate these to science or your Faith. I've listed a few examples, but there are countless others. Everything has a story to tell and it often requires some research to discover the story. Make sure that your children participate in these investigations. They will have fun and see firsthand, that the purpose of science is to learn about the natural world—His Creation.

## 2012 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](http://www.setonhome.org/conferences), or email [conferences@setonhome.org](mailto:conferences@setonhome.org).

**Jacksonville, FL.** March 16 (Fri.). Immaculate Heart of Mary Jacksonville Homeschool and Parent Conference, Embassy Suites Jacksonville-Baymeadows, 9300 Baymeadows Rd, Jacksonville, FL. 2:00 PM – 8:00 PM. Info: 540-636-1946 or [info@ihmconference.org](mailto:info@ihmconference.org) or [www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org).

**Covington, LA.** March 24, 2012 (Sat.). Roman Catholic Homeschool Association of Louisiana “Catholic Homeschooling: A Way of Life”, St. Peter’s Catholic Church, St. Mary’s Hall, 125 E. 19th Avenue, Covington, LA. After 8:30 AM Mass – 5 PM. Info: Beth at 985-796-1274 or 504-220-4626 [beth@montelepre.com](mailto:beth@montelepre.com) or [rchalinfo@rchal.org](mailto:rchalinfo@rchal.org) or [www.rchal.org](http://www.rchal.org).

**St. Louis, MO.** March 30-31 (Fri.-Sat.). St. Louis Catholic Homeschool Conference, Cardinal Rigali Center, 20 Archbishop May Drive, St. Louis, MO. Fri.: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM (Exhibits

only); Sat.: After 8:00 AM Mass–4:30 PM. Info: Cassie at 636-398-4001 or [www.stlouisatholichomeschool.com](http://www.stlouisatholichomeschool.com).

**Santa Clara, CA.** April 13-14, (Fri.-Sat.). Northern California Catholic Homeschooling Conference, Our Lady of Peace Shrine, 2800 Mission College Blvd, Santa Clara, CA. Fri.: 2 PM – 9 PM; Sat.: After 8 AM Mass – 5 PM. Info: 408-980-9825.

**Houston, TX.** April 20-21, 2012 (Fri.-Sat.). IHM Houston Homeschool & Parent Conference, University of St. Thomas, Jerabeck Athletic Center, 3800 Montrose Blvd, Houston, TX. Fri.: 2 PM – 8 PM; Sat.: 9 AM – 4 PM. Info: [info@ihmconference.org](mailto:info@ihmconference.org) or [www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org).

**Berlin, NJ.** April 21, 2012 (Sat.). 12th Annual CHAPLET Catholic Homeschool Conference, Mater Ecclesiae Roman Catholic Church, 261 Cross Keys Road, Berlin, NJ (actually in Pine Hill w/Berlin mailing address). 9 AM – 5 PM. Info: [www.chaplet.org](http://www.chaplet.org) or [conference@chaplet.org](mailto:conference@chaplet.org). Directions: [www.materecclesiae.org/directions.html](http://www.materecclesiae.org/directions.html)

**Milwaukee, WI.** April 27-28 (Fri.-Sat.). Celebrate the Faith 2012: Catholic Homeschool Conference and Vendor

Fair. Sponsored by Greater Milwaukee Catholic Home Educators (GMCHE), Thomas G. Thompson Youth Center (State Fairgrounds – North End), 640 South 84th Street, West Allis, WI. Fri.: 2:00 PM – 9 PM; Sat.: 8 AM – 5 PM. Info: [info@gmcheconference.com](mailto:info@gmcheconference.com) or [www.gmcheconference.com](http://www.gmcheconference.com)

**Harrisburg, PA.** April 28 (Sat.). 18th Annual Catholic Homeschool Conference & Curriculum Fair, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 6190 Allentown Blvd, Harrisburg, PA. After 8:30 AM Mass – 5 PM. Info: Ellen at (717) 866-5425. Info: [www.CatholicHomeschoolPA.org](http://www.CatholicHomeschoolPA.org) [conference@CatholicHomeschoolPA.org](mailto:conference@CatholicHomeschoolPA.org)

**Indianapolis, IN.** May 5 (Sat.). *Quo Vadis* Catholic Homeschool Conference. Sponsored by Holy Family Home Educators and co-hosted by Holy Rosary Catholic Parish, 520 Stevens Street, Indianapolis, IN. 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM Info: [info@hfheindy.org](mailto:info@hfheindy.org) or [www.hfheindy.org](http://www.hfheindy.org).

**Green Bay, WI.** May 12 (Sat.). Immaculate Heart of Mary Green Bay Homeschool & Parent Conference, St. Agnes Parish, 1484 Ninth St., Green Bay, WI. 9:30 AM – 4 PM. Info: 540-636-1946 or [info@ihmconference.org](mailto:info@ihmconference.org) or [www.ihmconference.org](http://www.ihmconference.org).

### The Seton Home Study Newsletter

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### **Benedict XVI on Marriage and Family**

How is it possible to communicate the beauty of marriage to the people of today?

Today, to many young people and even to some who are not so young, definitiveness appears as a constriction, a limitation of freedom. And what they want first of all is freedom. They are afraid that in the end they might not succeed. They see so many failed marriages. They fear that this juridical form, as they understand it, will be an external weight that will extinguish love.

It is essential to understand that it is not a question of a juridical bond, a burden imposed with marriage. On the contrary, depth and beauty lie precisely in finality. Only in this way can love mature to its full beauty. But how is it possible to communicate this?

For me, in Valencia, it was an important moment not only when I talked about this, but when various families presented themselves to me with one or more children; one family was virtually a “parish,” it had so many children! The presence and witness of these families really was far stronger than any words.

They presented first of all the riches of their family experience: how such a large family truly becomes a cultural treasure, an opportunity for the education of one and all, a possibility for making the various cultural expressions of today coexist, the gift of self, mutual help also in suffering, etc.

But their testimony of the crises they had suffered was also significant. One of these couples had almost reached the point of divorcing. They explained that they then learned to live through this crisis, this suffering of the otherness of the other, and to accept each other anew. Precisely in overcoming the moment of

crisis, the desire to separate, a new dimension of love developed and opened the door to a new dimension of life, which nothing but tolerating the suffering of the crisis could reopen.

This seems to me very important. Today, a crisis point is reached the moment the diversity of temperament is perceived, the difficulty of putting up with each other every day for an entire life. In the end, then, they decided: Let us separate. From these testimonies we understood precisely that in crises, in bearing the moment in which it seems that no more can be borne, new doors and a new beauty of love truly open.

A beauty consisting of harmony alone is not true beauty. Something is missing, it becomes insufficient. True beauty also needs contrast. Darkness and light complement each other. Even a grape, in order to ripen, does not only need the sun but also the rain, not only the day but also the night.

I believe that the fact the Lord bears the stigmata for eternity has a symbolic value. As an expression of the atrocity of suffering and death, today the stigmata are seals of Christ's victory, of the full beauty of his victory and his love for us. We must accept, both as priests and as married persons, the need to put up with the crises of otherness, of the other, the crisis in which it seems that it is no longer possible to stay together.

Husbands and wives must learn to move ahead together, also for love of the children, and thus be newly acquainted with one another, love one another anew with a love far deeper and far truer. So it is that, on a long journey with its suffering, love truly matures.

**Pope Benedict XVI,  
August 31, 2006**