

Seton



MAGAZINE

Under the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

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Not All Heroes Wear Capes

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Family**
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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Seton Home Study School, an international Catholic institution, is to ensure that all of its students thrive intellectually and spiritually using a Christ-centered educational program that empowers them to live the Catholic Faith while embracing the academic and vocational challenges of the twenty-first century.



**LETTER FROM
THE EDITOR**

Dear Readers,

2025 is upon us, and I pray it will be a year of many blessings.

This issue's theme is mid-year review, and many of us must do a little course correction work when we reach this point in our academic year. This issue contains advice on how you can navigate any changes that need to be made.

I was particularly struck by our expert, Tara Brelinsky's words: "The first and, I dare say, most important step in course correcting is to free yourself (and your student) of guilt and anxiety. Mistakes happen, and sometimes extra attention is required." Tara's advice is wise. It is difficult not to beat ourselves up over bumps in the road, but rest assured, we all have them, and smoothing them is something Seton can help with.

I've said it before, and I will say it again: Seton students are extremely impressive. Valeria Villela is an excellent example of faith in action. When I read stories like this, I am filled with peace, knowing that this generation of young Catholics, with God's help in their lives, will bring about extraordinary change to this fallen world. Do you have a high school student who is working toward a better world? Let us know.

Finally, if you have a high school junior or senior, have them look at the Our Lady Seat of Wisdom article. This beautiful school, nestled in picturesque Barry's Bay, Ontario, has a robust liberal arts program grounded in truth and beauty. It's an excellent option for students wishing to continue their academic journey in a faithful Catholic environment.

As always, you all remain in our daily prayers, and I urge you to let us know if you need help with a mid-year course correction.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Ellen Barrett". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Mary Ellen Barrett

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us!

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COVER PHOTO:

The Reyes-Ortiz Family

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Seton
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Graduation 2025



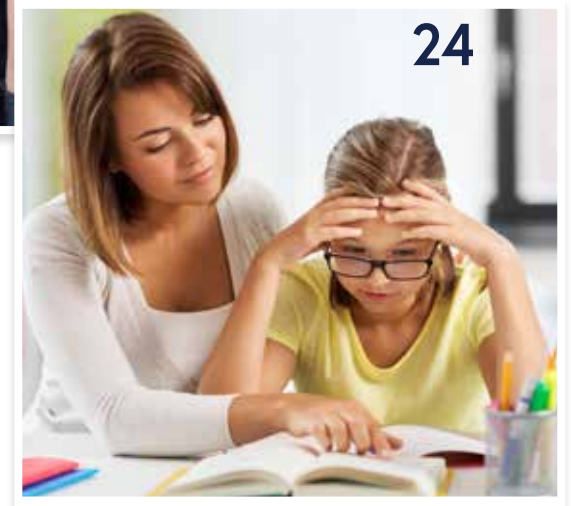
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Date**

**Saturday, May 31, 2025 at
Skyline High School
in Front Royal, Virginia
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Friday, May 30th - Family Fest at Seton

**Food • Games • Tours
Mass for Families and Graduates**

Details will be sent to 12th graders via mail and email,
and a registration page will be available in early 2025.



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Saint Poster by Emily Prause



Our high school student is moving quickly through her core subjects. Can we add electives mid-year?

Yes, adding electives is an excellent way to broaden a high schooler's learning experience, keep them engaged, and advance their completion of the 22 total credits needed for graduation.

Seton provides a variety of electives, including Keyboarding, Accounting, Computer Literacy, and World Literature.

If you are interested in enrolling your student in one of our electives, you can contact our Admissions department (admissions@setonhome.org; 540-636-2039) or submit an online enrollment form.

Sean O'Connor - High School English Counselor

How can I motivate my active 5th-grader to read? He does not want to sit down to read his book report.

You could read part of the book with him, taking turns reading the paragraphs. Encourage him to read about some "events" in the story that appeal to him.

Be interested in the story yourself, even commenting or asking questions like: What should he do? Is he a good Christian in how he talks or acts toward others in the story?

Before the internet and smartphones, young and old spent time reading, thinking, and discussing. Today, with everything so quickly presented, including opinions of right and wrong, good and bad, many young people want to avoid taking the time to read and think about the message in their reading.

Consider rewarding your son for reading a story to a younger brother or sister. See if your homeschooling group has or would start a book club. Many libraries have children's book clubs, encouraging the reading of good books and even offering ice cream "rewards" for young readers who give a brief "book report" to the librarian.

Another idea is to ask your son to write a short story about a favorite activity, such as playing a sport or fishing with Dad. He could read it to the family after dinner.

Seton Staff

Is a Seton diploma an indicator of success in college?

College professors expect students to spend a minimum of two hours working independently for every hour spent in class. Seton students develop these skills early on.

Colleges also expect students to have excellent research and writing abilities. Unlike most freshmen, Seton students enter college with the skills and work habits of college upperclassmen.

The Seton curriculum builds top-level research and writing skills, and the Seton English program helps students develop the analytical and critical thinking skills that colleges cherish.

The success of Seton students in college is well documented. Their average SAT and ACT scores far exceed those of most public and Catholic schools, and many Seton graduates receive college scholarships.

Seton graduates are sought after by all of the Seton partner colleges, such as Christendom College in Virginia, Thomas Aquinas College in California, and Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College in Ontario, Canada.



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Seton graduates have been accepted to top-level universities and colleges such as M.I.T., Ivy League colleges, and many others around the nation. Many Seton graduates have also been accepted into the national military and service academies.

Seton Staff

Do I wait until the end of the quarter to submit our work?

If you submit elementary work through the mail, we would like you to have a complete quarter in all subjects before sending it to us for grading. For high school, send complete quarters of high school work by subject or all subjects together. Processing is more efficient, and you'll have a full quarter report card when it is all graded.

However, if you are submitting items online for grading or your child is taking online tests, you do not have to wait until the end of the quarter.

I strongly recommend that you DO NOT! If the test is taken online, upload the assignment as soon as it is completed! If the test is written or typed on paper, scan (or take a picture) and upload the assignment as soon as it is completed!

That way, there is no chance that you will lose it. It also allows our graders to grade things as they come in, and overall, there will be a shorter waiting period to receive your assignment grade.

It also allows your child to correct future work based on the feedback that he receives from earlier assignments. We will give the full quarter grade once all the required Seton-graded assignments have been turned in.

You can provide parent grades at any time. If you enter them after the quarter grade has been assigned, we will re-calculate it with the parent grades.

Some of our lesson plans still include the verbiage "...and send it to Seton at the end of the quarter." This instruction is leftover from when everything was mailed to us. We are trying to eliminate that phrase in the lesson plans since it is no longer applicable if you upload your child's assignments.

Laura Clark, Academic Counselor



The Seton College Partner Program is a way to encourage students to continue their Catholic education by attending solidly Catholic colleges after high school.



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setonhome.org/colleges



Ask the Experts:

Making Mid-Year Course Corrections

Three Veteran Homeschooling Moms Share Their Experience

Attack it Afresh...



For high school, sometimes it has worked to move to a block schedule. One of my sons particularly struggled with British Lit, so he divided all of the work into three days a week. It was more work on those days, but knowing he had a break in between gave him the extra patience to attack it afresh.

My kids also benefited from calling the counselors in high school. The same son hated Spanish. He just really struggled with it.

After speaking with a counselor, he switched to German after one-quarter of Spanish I. He did not love it but was much happier and less stressed studying German. Yes, he finished a bit later that summer, but it didn't matter with Seton.

I have often put two or more students together in elementary school, especially in subjects like art, music, PE, history, and science. It can be very fun having a sibling to do a "Sink or Float?" science experiment with or draw a map of the original thirteen U.S. colonies together.

“And don't forget Dad!”

One of the best things I have found to do is get help. Teaching Textbooks worked well for my struggling math students, and finding a math class co-op in our homeschooling community helped even more. And don't forget Dad!

Once, I was having a hard time teaching a math lesson about regrouping. My husband got out the primary-colored counting bears and gave a lesson that involved a battle. In this scenario, one side must "fall back" or regroup and go over to the one's place to "reinforce" the army there. Would I have presented it like that? No. Did it work? Yes, it did.

Kristen Brown, Virginia

Come Up With a New Plan...



While homeschooling my brood of eight, we occasionally had to course-correct mid-year. Often, arithmetic required a new plan, a major review, or a do-over.

The first and, I dare say, most important step in course correcting is to free yourself (and your student) of guilt and anxiety. Mistakes happen, and sometimes extra attention is required.

Homeschoolers do not need to adhere to a public school calendar. Therein lies the real beauty and blessing of educating your children. You are free to meet their individual needs.

With one of my students, I chose a new plan in the form of a different textbook. I try to keep the curriculum the same, but occasionally, a student is better served by a different method. In this case, I got a new textbook, and we restarted the subject.

Several times, we did a major review of the material. When a son struggled halfway through algebra, we started at the beginning of the same text. This allowed me to identify his weak spots and reteach that material. It also helped him recognize the concepts he did understand, which increased his confidence.

“Free yourself of guilt and anxiety!”

There can be necessary do-overs. For one student, it meant redoing the entire course the next year. For another, it meant ordering a second copy of the textbook and having the struggling student retake the course along with a sibling. Mid-year course corrections, while not fun, are entirely doable. And they can be a lesson in resilience, creativity, and resolve.

Tara Brelinsky, North Carolina

Make Changes as Needed...



After the busy seasons of Advent and Christmas, it's a good time to assess how things are going in our homeschools. Is the current curriculum working for you and your children? Should there be any changes? Evaluate the activities that your children are involved in each week.

Should you cut back? Review the goals that you set at the beginning of the year. Are those goals realistic? Do you need to adjust them? I don't like to change curriculums and jump to something different whenever I see a child struggling with the concepts in the lessons.

It might be that I need to spend more time with that child or hire a tutor to get them over the hump. Another possibility is that I need to work with that child using the best learning style for them.

The pace you are working at may be too fast or not fast enough. One of the great benefits of homeschooling is that we can make changes as needed, and mid-year is a great time to make those adjustments.

Vicky Coughlin, California

THIS IS WHY WE HOMESCHOOL



“

What we love most about homeschooling is the freedom to manage our time and the flexibility to continue our studies at our own pace, which gives our children extra free time to explore their interests.

We chose Seton Home Study School because it is Catholic-based, simplified the transition to homeschooling convenient, and allows us to serve the church.

The Olandria Family, Cebu City, Philippines

”

The Stay-at- HOMESCHOOLING

MOM Podcast



Editor's Note: Seton Magazine Editor Mary Ellen Barrett and Catholic Homeschooling Veteran Ginny Seuffert have recorded scores of fun and informative podcasts for stay-at-homeschooling moms like you. Their insight and perspective can help and may change the way you homeschool.

BY GINNY SEUFFERT

SUCCESS TIP #1 - COMBINE SUBJECTS FOR DIFFERENT GRADES

A recent SAHM Podcast discussed a method homeschooling families can use to manage their course load more efficiently. This alternative approach involves combining subjects for students in different grades.

“Is it possible?” and “How do you do that?” are questions Mary Ellen and I often get. We recently discussed these questions in depth on the podcast. Here is a summary of our conversation:

How to Combine Different Grades

Recently, Brittany, a mom with two younger children in primary grades, a toddler and a newborn, messaged me.

Brittany wants to give them a thorough academic education. She's willing to do the major subjects separately but wondered if she could combine other subjects, like science and history.

Art, Music, and Phys Ed

These can always be combined. You can keep it simple and enroll your kids in community soccer, baseball, or softball. You can use your town's dance academy or gymnastics program or give them piano lessons. Place them together or separately; do whichever is easier and works for you.

English

“I generally advise against combining this subject unless the older student is going down a grade. Some of the concepts are pretty abstract. For example, objective, nominative, and possessive nouns and pronouns require higher-level thinking skills.”

Math

Teaching and learning math is very straightforward – either a student grasps a concept and learns his facts, or he does not. Combine classes with an older sibling if you have a little math whiz. It makes no sense to hold a child back.

Reading

In the primary grades, students are learning sounds, sight words, and reading. It is not uncommon for siblings, close in age, to work together and grasp concepts more or less simultaneously. But you may need to be flexible. Be observant and accommodate developmental skills progressing at different rates.

Reading can be a very flexible subject, and you don't necessarily have to move the student up a level. If the older child has mastered a particular grade level and can do much more, go to a public library and get extra books. Seton has a recommended reading list on your MySeton, click the yellow notepad.



Religion

This subject deserves special consideration. On one hand, it is easy to combine grades. After all, every grade has the same seven sacraments and Ten Commandments, but consider the rules of your parish since specific grades deal with sacramental preparation.

Science and Social Studies

These can be combined, certainly in primary grades K-3. They are minor subjects and often don't involve any testing or challenging assignments.

Combining is easier when students are no more than one or two years apart in age. I found it easier when the boy is the older child. Little girls often can concentrate better than boys – but you know your children.

Is This Method for You?

Use how your kids perform in primary grades to decide whether or not to continue, but take it year by year. Consider that material becomes more detailed and advanced, and testing and report writing will often increase. A 3rd grader may be able to read and comprehend 5th-grade science but be unable to take grade-level tests.



Ginny Sueffert co-hosts Stay-at-Homeschooling Mom, a podcast for Catholic home educators, with Mary Ellen Barrett. Ginny has written five books for Catholic homeschoolers, appeared on EWTN, and lectured on homeschooling across the United States. She and her husband, Ed, are the parents of twelve children and expecting grandchildren 35 and 36.

THE STAY-AT-HOMESCHOOLING MOM PODCAST

Check the podcast library's many discussions including:

- Discipline in the Early Years
- Ten Rules to Raise a Reader
- Homeschooling a Child with Special Needs
- How to Navigate Modern Culture
- Taking Young Children to Mass
- How to Get Back on Track!
- Five Keys to Long-Term Homeschool Success

In the Meantime...

Ginny and Mary Ellen are researching and writing new Seton books this winter, but you'll find a treasure trove of timeless homeschooling podcasts at:

www.setonhome.org/podcast

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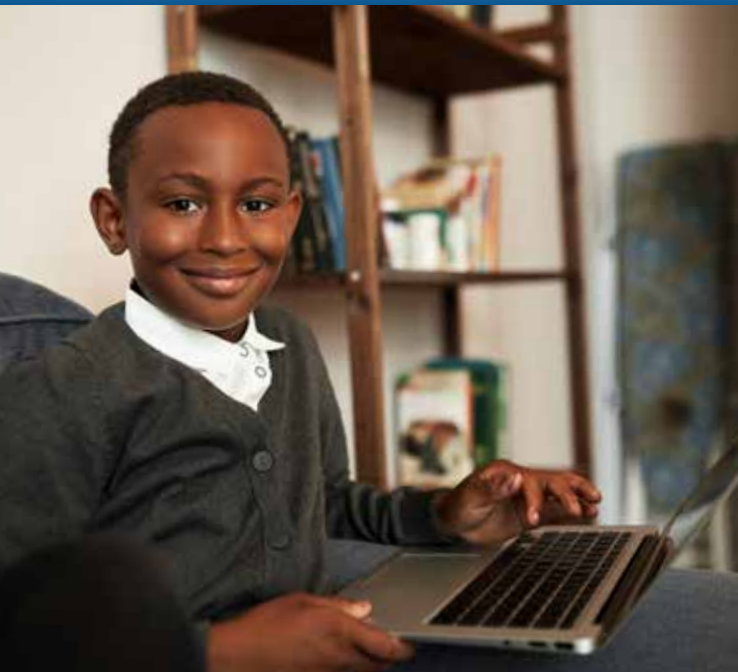
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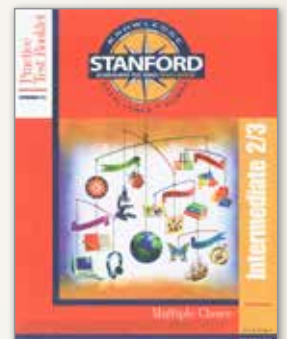
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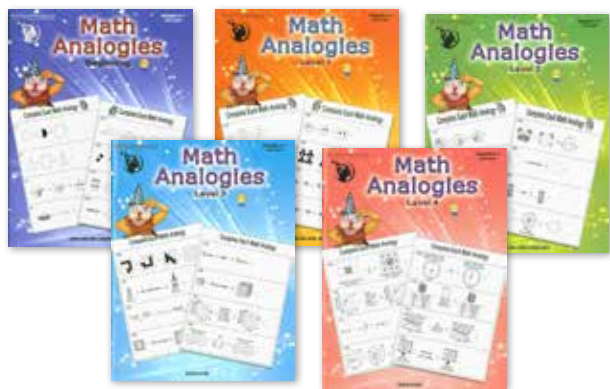


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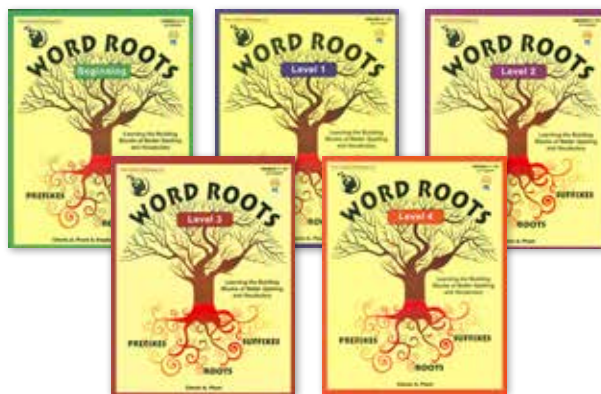
Math Analogies



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Brain Quest

Jam-packed with a whole year's worth of curriculum-based activities, exercises, and games in every subject. The Brain Quest Workbook series for grades K-6 reinforces what kids are learning in the classroom. The lively layout with original full-color illustrations and easy-to-follow explanations makes learning fun, interactive, and concrete. **Grades K-6.**

\$12.95 Each





Not All Heroes Wear Capes

BY GEMA REYES-ORTIZ

We found inspiration in homeschooling by observing other homeschooling families in our parish whose children demonstrated above-average academic knowledge. What inspired us most was their strong Catholic faith foundation and exceptional family bond.

We chose Seton Home Study for its academic excellence, but more importantly, because Seton's curriculum surrounds and is based on our Catholic Faith.

Choosing a curriculum aligned with our Catholic Faith and values is an immeasurable blessing. As parents, our top priority is our child's salvation, and homeschooling allows us to provide a Christ-centered, traditional Catholic education.

Overcoming Challenges

Seton has empowered us to overcome our fear of homeschooling despite English being our second language and having no prior exposure to homeschooling in our home country.

The fear of failure and inexperience initially held us back from homeschooling our son, but Seton's support has made all the difference. exclaiming, "They are like me! They are altar boys!" Having a curriculum that aligns with and celebrates our Catholic Faith is invaluable.

Faith in Our Routine

Prayer has been a vital part of our daily school routine. We start our day with prayer, take a break in prayer, and conclude our day in prayer.

By incorporating our Catholic Faith into our daily curriculum, we have grown closer to Our Lord as a family, and our child has developed a desire to participate in various church activities.

He looks forward to meetings with Our Lady's Rosary Makers, serving as an altar boy, participating in the Adopt-a-Priest ministry, and being part of the parish Children's Choir.



As my husband is a church musician, we have the opportunity to school at church, attend daily Mass regularly, and spend quality family time simultaneously.

Tailored Learning

Seton has been a blessing for our family, allowing us to focus on José's specific needs, personalize his learning, and incorporate activities aligned with his interests. Although he enjoyed time with his school friends, his individual needs were unmet.

Our son was diagnosed with an Auditory Processing Disorder and requires constant repetition and significant one-on-one time.

Despite the teacher's best efforts in his previous school, given the multiple students in one classroom, providing him with deep individual attention was impossible.

After becoming a homeschooling family, we noticed a significant improvement. His anxiety and frustration decreased, his self-esteem gradually improved, and he achieved higher levels of confidence. He often asks, "Remember when I couldn't do that?"

Achievements and Support

Although we still have far to go, we're satisfied with the progress. Not every day has been perfect, easy, or beautiful, and we've endured tough days. Nevertheless, José's success is evident; each small step represents a major achievement.

Seton's Special Services has supported us from day one. The saying 'Not all heroes wear capes' is certainly accurate. Our Special Service counselors, with their expertise in alternative assignments, have been instrumental in our daily accomplishments.

Thanks to the counselors, we manage our time efficiently and can include José's top interests in our activities, including learning German, fencing, and music (violin, trumpet, and composition).

José has won third place in multiple fencing tournaments and is an active member of the local Youth Orchestra and the parish Children's Choir. His dedication to music has rewarded him with meetings with notable musicians, such as Monsieur Vincent Dubois, seated next to José in the photo, titular organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, France.

Encouragement for Others

My son, a reluctant reader at school, became enthusiastic about reading after starting the *This Is Our Town* series, exclaiming, "They are like me! They are altar boys!" Having a curriculum that aligns with and celebrates our Catholic Faith is invaluable.

Although we are unsure of God's plan for our child, we pray for him to become a faithful man of God. May the Holy Spirit guide him in discerning his vocation and grant him the courage to fulfill it with joy and honor.

Do not be afraid!!! If you are able, be their parent and teacher. Support, learn, and explore together. Only a parent can truly understand a child's needs, emotions, and temperament.

A parent is the only one who can provide a complete education that addresses these needs while reflecting your family's faith and values. You are not alone. Seton is a solid Catholic curriculum with staff whose goal and mission is to help families thrive.





Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Launches New Four-Year B.A. Degrees

BY DR. NATASHA DUQUETTE



OUR LADY
SEAT OF WISDOM
COLLEGE

In February of 2024, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College was granted permission to offer majors in Classical and Early Christian Studies, History, and Literature within a new four-year Bachelor of Arts degree.

These new majors, culminating in advanced senior-level courses and honours thesis projects, build on the college's existing interdisciplinary three-year Bachelor of Catholic Studies degree to delve more deeply into each discipline in Catholic perspective, fostering commitment to Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

Each major in the four-year B.A. allows students to specialize in a particular field while still being holistically informed by the College's foundational disciplines: theology and philosophy.

Grounded in Faithful Teaching

Students at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College all receive a comprehensive liberal arts formation grounded in faithful Catholic teaching. Required courses are primarily in theology, philosophy, history, literature, Latin, sacred music, fine arts, mathematics, natural science, and the social sciences.

Our mission statement: "Faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church, and guided by Ex Corde Ecclesiae, SWC seeks to form the whole person, especially intellectually and spiritually, while respecting the freedom of the individual. Our curriculum offers a deep and wide-ranging understanding of Western civilization along with the traditions of the Church."

Students study the ideas of thinkers who have formed the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and examine great works in dialogue with this tradition. Along their journey, students will encounter the rigorous intellects of figures such as Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Dante, St. Teresa of Ávila, William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Flannery O'Connor, and Pope Benedict XVI.



Yielding Real Fruit

These students' careful and creative research, guided by faithful Catholic mentors, is yielding real fruit in fresh scholarship. It's beautiful to see the fourth-year students gaining a capacity for deeper, robust, and substantial thought as flourishing young thinkers who will contribute to the future of the Church.

One is considering ordination and undertaking discernment processes even as he envisions the shape of his thesis. The composition and presentation of an honours thesis prepares students not only for graduate studies and teaching positions in secondary and higher education but also for future service in education, law, communications, and the Church.

Advancing Catholic Education

The department chairs of the three new majors offered through the B.A. degree are thrilled about the opportunities afforded by the new programs.

Dr. Heinze (PhD, Catholic University of America) reflects: "Students will gain a reading knowledge of Latin and learn to interpret ancient writings in their original context." He trusts the Classical and Early Christian Studies major will "foster in students a life of deep reflection on the human condition and the Christian faith."

Dr. Persson (PhD, University of British Columbia) notes that students who engage in the literature major will "develop listening, writing, and speaking skills. For those interested in the Catholic imagination, the study of literature is particularly important, as literature is the arena in which various philosophies and theologies can be fleshed out and tested against the contours of reality."

Dr. Shaw (PhD, University of Toronto) emphasizes how students in the History major "learn to conduct historical research methodically—something often ignored today—especially via gathering material and analyzing sources."



He adds, "Drawing from their greater appreciation for themselves and for human nature enhanced by a study of the reasons for the choices that people have made in the past, graduates leave better able to understand and engage with others in society today—something this broken world sorely needs."

We are confident the three new majors in our freshly minted four-year B.A. degree will prepare young Catholics to face future challenges with confidence, poise, and grace.

Our Alumni and Students

Our alumni from the preexisting Bachelor of Catholic Studies degree have already been thriving within graduate programs in English, Philosophy, Theology, Museum Studies, Communications, and Political Science. They are serving in the wider world as businesspeople, professors, teachers, journalists, seminarians, priests, religious sisters, and communications specialists.

Students completing the new four-year B.A. degree and launching into the world will forge further pathways into graduate studies in Classics, History, and Literature. They will also help form the worlds of secondary and post-secondary education, editing and publishing, advanced communications, law, and politics for generations to come.



Dr. Natasha Duquette is a Professor of Literature at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College. She is the author of *30-Day Journey with Jane Austen* (2020) and has edited two essay collections: *Sublimar Aspects: Interfaces between Literature, Aesthetics, and Theology* (2007) and, with Elisabeth Lenckos, *Jane Austen and the Arts* (2013). Her articles on literature and aesthetics have appeared in journals such as *Christianity and Literature*, *Mosaic*, and *Persuasions*. Her new book on contemplative poetics is under contract with Cambridge University Press.





OUR LADY
SEAT OF WISDOM
COLLEGE

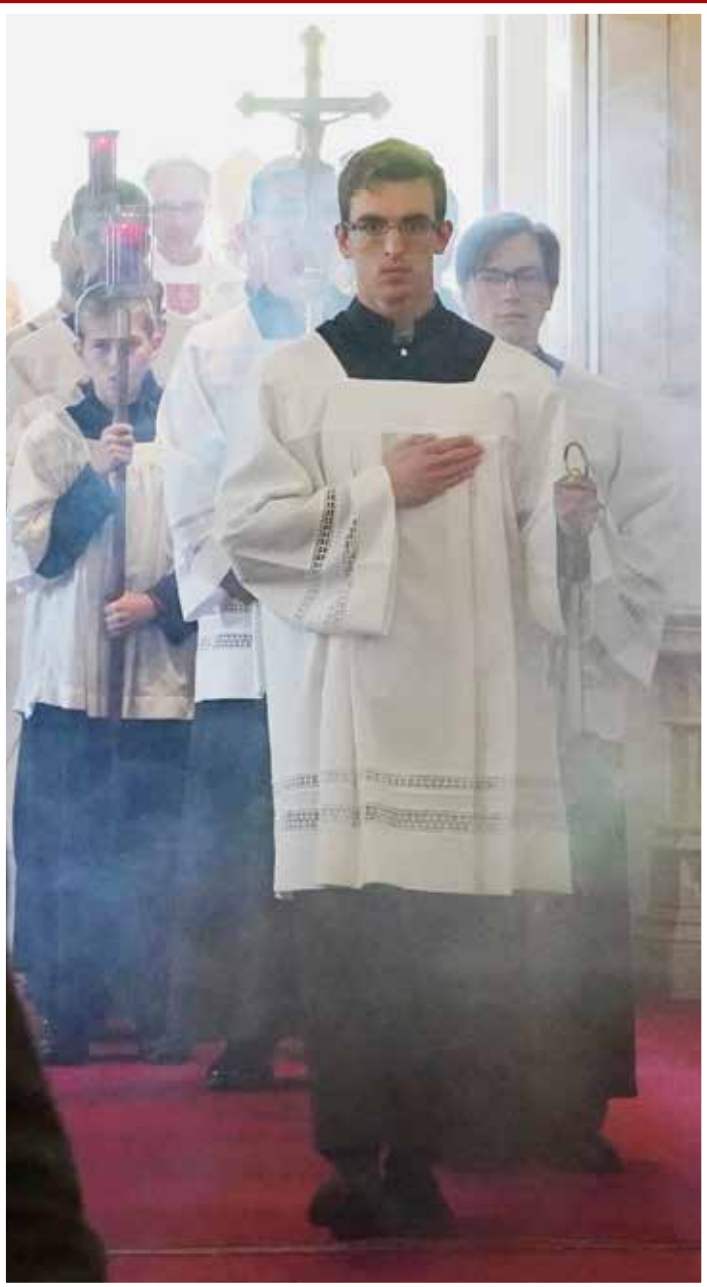


Seton
Home Study School

JOHN-
PAUL
SHAW



Seton Students in Canada



I am a Seton alumnus and a current student at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom in Barry's Bay, Ontario, Canada. My experience here, augmented by experiences Seton gave me, has been nothing short of extraordinary.

My Faith life has grown exponentially because of the education, positive environment, and good role models. From music nights and swing dances to watching movies late at night with friends to early morning rises to daily Mass, the college has given me so many memories I will never forget. Looking back over the last year, I am so grateful for all the ways it has helped me.

I would not have gained so much from my time here if it had not been for Seton. The Religion and English courses, especially, have helped prepare me for this next stage of my life.

Seton taught me how to write basic essays, analyze poetry, and do research for my writing assignments. Juggling schoolwork and extracurriculars in high school has been a fantastic preparation for life at college.

Make Friendships for Life

The positive community I found at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom has been a big part of my growth. Students live in houses instead of dorms. I learned to live in a community where people are held accountable and to a high standard. Because it is such a small school, you get to know everyone here and make friendships for life!

Everything is within walking distance, and there have been so many times I have gone to other houses for lunch, to study, or to watch a movie! Study groups are helpful for a lot of people, but the study halls make sure that there is a place for the more introverted students as well. Being in the Ontario woods, there are so many opportunities to go camping or swimming!

Our Lady Seat of Wisdom also offers a variety of sports, including soccer and ice hockey. Every year, the college puts on a play for the local community, showcasing the student body's acting talent.

Rigorous Academics

The rigorous academics here were important factors in my choosing Our Lady Seat of Wisdom. The professors spend a lot of time during office hours helping students improve their research, writing, and analysis. Like Seton, the school's mission is to educate people in the truth.

In doing so, it frees the next generation of Catholics from the lies of the devil and enables students to think critically about the world around them. This knowledge has already been so helpful to me, both in the workplace and among friends. I know it will continue to help me for the rest of my life!

The college offers several 4-Year Bachelor of Arts Degrees. However, all graduates leave with a strong knowledge of theology, philosophy, history, and literature. In studying the liberal arts, students at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom discover part of our foundation as Catholics.

Prayer Life at OLSW

By far, the most important reason why I decided to go to the college was because of its unapologetic Catholic Faith. Seton helped show me that the most important thing in this life is to get to Heaven.

Mass, Adoration, and Confession are offered daily at the Parish Church, which is next door to the college. Annual pilgrimages and retreat days help focus the students on their spiritual lives. At their houses every evening, the students pray compline together, ending each day glorifying Our Lord.

God is the basis for each school subject. The professors swear an oath of fidelity to the Magisterium every year before the bishop at the first College Mass. The school has all the Newman Guide's gold stars for Catholic colleges, and not without good reason! Both the faculty and staff never cease to hold us to high standards and encourage us to sainthood!

Positive Community

In this positive community, I have learned to grow as a person and grow in my Faith. Without the opportunities Our Lady Seat of Wisdom offers I know I would not be the person I am today.

Both Seton and the college have been so impactful to me, and through them I have been incredibly blessed. The desire they have given me to seek the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, has changed me forever. I could not recommend Our Lady Seat of Wisdom more: it is not merely a matter of studying the Faith, but in growing in Faith and as a person.

John-Paul Shaw lives in Barry's Bay and is a sophomore at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College.





Valeria Is Helping Babies and Children

My name is Valeria Villela, and my mission is to contribute to bringing this world a little closer to God.

I live in Tegucigalpa, Honduras with my parents and I have an older brother who is currently studying abroad.

I have been raised in a very loving, Catholic environment. My family and I are part of a Christian community, where we get to grow in fellowship and love of Christ with many other like-minded families.

Homeschooling is pretty much nonexistent in Honduras, but due to the pandemic my parents decided to give it a try.

Growing up, I enjoyed being a part of this community's children's ministry and youth group, and I now recently started as a member of the staff of the same youth group, serving younger teens. I have participated in many activities with this community, such as camps and mission trips.

Being in this community has allowed me to have a personal encounter with Jesus and has given me a greater desire to serve Him and follow Him in everything I do.

I enjoy community service and am currently involved with the Angelitos Foundation, an organization that delivers basic necessities to babies and children hospitalized in the Tegucigalpa Public Children's Hospital.





Seton has taught me a lot about discipline and perseverance. Even though it has not always been easy, I have learned what it means to improve myself and give my best no matter how hard it may seem.

Seton has also greatly strengthened my Catholic faith. It has given me all the reasons why I should remain Catholic, as it has portrayed the faith in a beautiful way.

We love to cook together and think we are a good team in the kitchen. While cooking or doing anything else, we love to listen to music and sing together. We also love traveling and will take the opportunity to do so anytime we get.

My family genuinely enjoy each other's company and are best friends. We love to talk, laugh, watch movies, and pray together. Even though my brother is studying abroad, when we call him, it is still the same. We are our own circle of love and trust, and we love it!

A Day in Our Lives

Waking up and breakfast is around 7:00am. Meals are very important to us, and we have the blessing of usually getting to have the three main meals all together.

After breakfast, I get ready for the day and start my homeschool at around 8:30, when my parents leave for work. I usually finish my schoolwork around lunchtime and use my afternoon to do my extracurricular activities.

Depending on the day, I have different activities going on, such as tennis practice, church youth group, and college prep courses.

Children of God

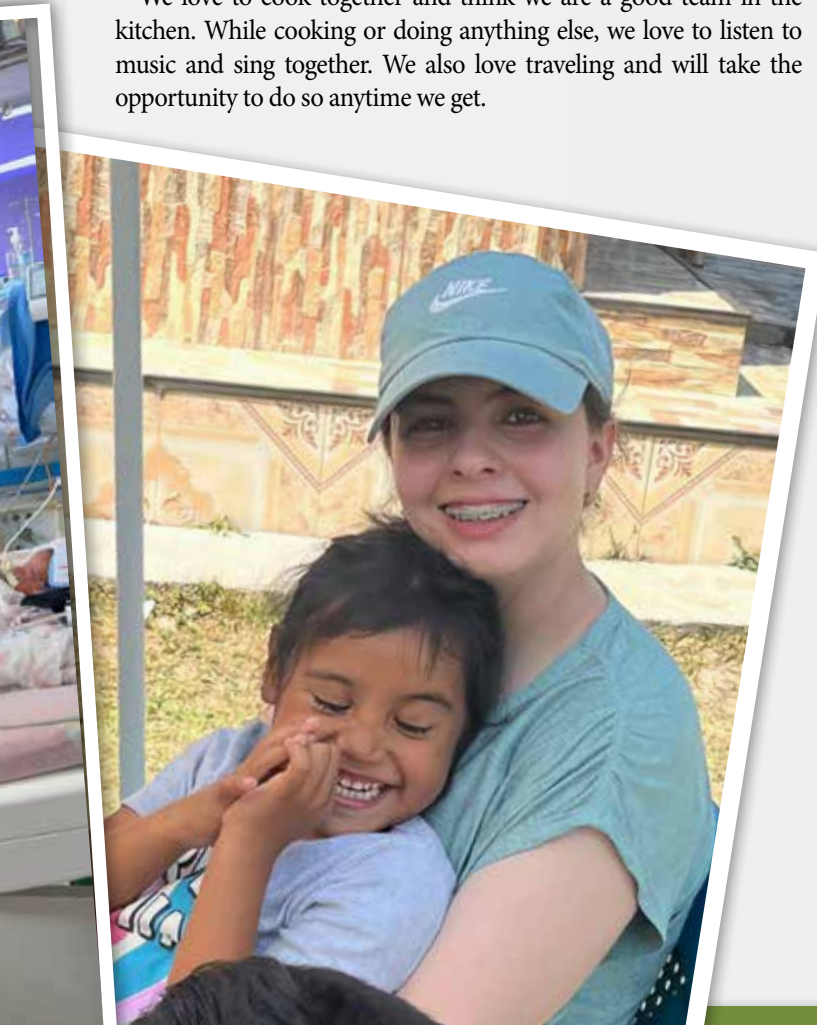
I got to do a small internship as a kindergarten and first-grade teacher's aide. Considering that I want to major in Early Childhood Education, I absolutely loved it. I love kids, and I found it a huge blessing to be a part of a child's learning experience, even if it was just for a little while. I saw firsthand how a child's brain learns, which was fascinating.

Looking at the kids I was teaching not just like a bunch of kids but as individual children of God was enlightening.

Future Plans

I hope to major in Early Childhood Education to fulfill my dreams of helping children learn, especially those who need the most help. I want to know, travel, and see the world. I eventually aspire to have a family of my own and be a wife and a mom.

Most of all, I hope to always follow God's perfect will for my life.

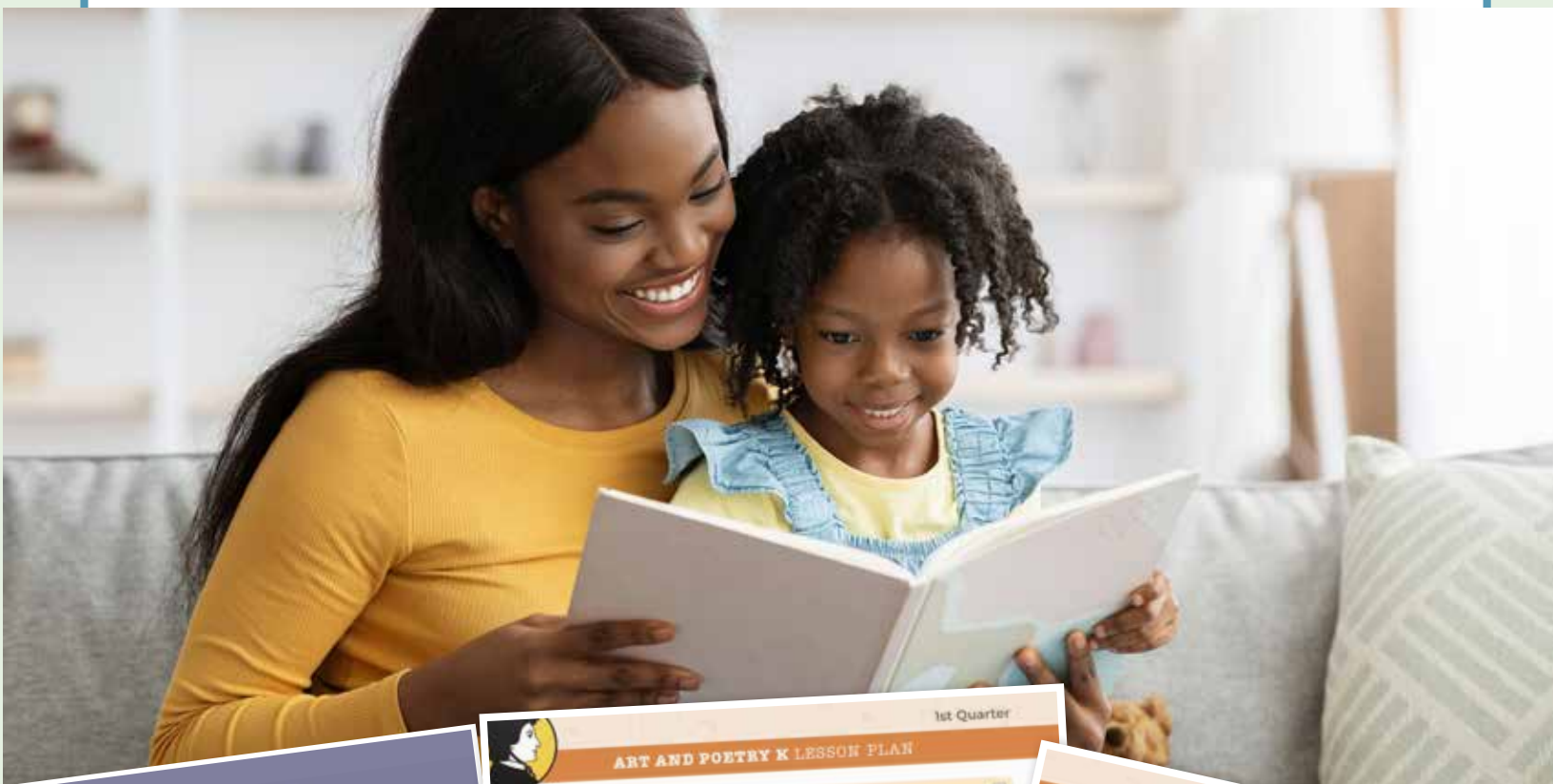


in
the

Schoolroom

BY MARY ELLEN BARRETT

THE ELEMENTARY VALUE OF LESSON PLANS



Art and Poetry K
FOR YOUNG CATHOLICS

Seton Press.

1st Quarter

ART AND POETRY K LESSON PLAN

Read the poem out loud to your child again.

Ask your child if he or she can recite the poem from memory. Help if your child gets stuck.

ACTIVITIES TO TRY

Ask the following questions:

1. What needed a nail? (Parent: If your child needs help, read line one out loud.)
2. What needed a shoe? (Parent: If your child needs help, read line two out loud.)
3. What needed a horse? (Parent: If your child needs help, read line three out loud.)
4. What needed a stick? (Parent: If your child needs help, read line four out loud.)
5. What needed the hatch to be worn? (Parent: If your child needs help, read line five out loud.)

Discuss with your child the meaning of a few other proverbs or sayings you know. Here are some examples:

- "A stitch in time saves nine."
- "A picture is worth a thousand words."
- "Beggars can't be choosers."
- "An apple a day keeps the doctor away."
- "It's better to be safe than sorry."
- "Actions speak louder than words."
- "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

Here is a proverb from the Bible about wisdom. Discuss this proverb with your child.

"The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom..." (Proverbs 4:7)

What does this proverb mean?

As St. Augustine explains (according to Herberich's Catholic Bible Commentary), the first step to acquire wisdom is to want to acquire wisdom. If we want wisdom, we should ask God for a gift from God. Ask God for wisdom, and He will give it to you. He will help you to know what is true and to do what He wants you to do. Wisdom will help you to make good decisions in life that are pleasing to God.

Day 2

THE PAINTING

The title of this painting is *Shewing*. It was painted by Sir Edwin Henry Landseer. He was known for painting animals. His paintings were so popular that the queen of England, Queen Victoria, asked him to paint pictures of her children, pets, and horses. She even asked him to paint a picture of himself to give to Prince Albert, her first husband.

Seton Home Study School
www.setonpress.com

1st Quarter

ART AND POETRY K LESSON PLAN

Shewing is a painting of a horse named Old Betsy. In front of the horse is a donkey, and every year to them is a day. It is painted in the Elizabethan style. The artist wanted to show great love to his painting. From him and with them to the horse's face. The horse does not feel any pain when the horsehouse is called on. The horsehouse protect the horse's face from getting hurt when it walks, runs, and runs.

Have your child look carefully at the painting for a moment. Then ask the following questions:

1. Do you think the owner of this horse takes good care of it? What in the painting makes you think that?
2. Look at the window in the barn. What type of window are they having today? How can you tell?
3. What are the three animals looking at? Why do you think they are looking so hard?
4. Do you like this painting? Why or why not?

ACTIVITIES TO TRY

Watch with your child a video of a blacksmith shoeing a horse. (You can find a video online.)

Ask your child to color the picture of horses on the Week 4 Activity Page in the Activity Pocket.

Lesson 3

Week Five

Day 1

SOMETIMES, NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY, YOU END UP RIGHT BACK WHERE YOU STARTED.

"The Grand Old Duke of York" is one of the oldest known English nursery rhymes. It is about 300 years old. In this poem, the duke leads thousands of soldiers, but all he commands them to do is to walk up and down a hill over and over again!

Read the poem out loud to your child slowly three times.

Ask your child which word appears most often. Show your child the word in the book.

Read each line slowly, asking your child to repeat it after you.

Read the poem out loud to your child again.

Ask your child if he or she can recite the poem from memory. Help if your child gets stuck.

Seton Press

One of the most common questions we are asked at Seton Home Study School is whether lesson plans are necessary to teach Kindergarten. While it is possible to teach Kindergarten without them, lesson plans offer invaluable guidance and structure. This is perfectly illustrated by the thirty fun and engaging projects included in our new Kindergarten Art and Poetry course.

“Lesson plans offer invaluable guidance and structure”

We firmly believe that a child’s education should focus on what is true, good, and beautiful from the very beginning. What better way to introduce young learners to these timeless values than through great works of art and poetry? This course enriches students with these treasures and fosters their intellectual and emotional development in unique ways.

Poetry in Early Learning

Familiarity with poetry is a vital part of a young learner’s growth. Poetry helps children recognize rhythm and rhyme while teaching them critical pre-reading skills such as inflection and pitch. These foundational abilities pave the way for more advanced language and literacy development.

Each lesson in the course pairs a classic poem with a famous painting, creating a rich, multisensory experience for the student. The lesson plans provide helpful background information on each artwork and poem, adding depth to the activities. Additionally, every lesson includes:

- Songs to sing that complement the theme
- Finger-play games to engage motor skills
- Simple craft projects that bring the concepts to life



Rooted in Faith and Beauty

Our Art & Poetry course reflects Seton’s commitment to nurturing young minds with beautiful ideas rooted in the Catholic faith. In today’s fast-paced, digital world, many classic poems and artworks are being forgotten.

By preserving and passing on these treasures, we aim to cultivate a love of truth and beauty that will inspire children for a lifetime.

When children are immersed in what is good, true, and beautiful, they naturally develop the discernment to reject what is false and harmful. This enriches their personal lives and helps preserve the culture and their spiritual well-being.

Designed to be Flexible

Seton Home Study School offers year-round enrollment so that you can begin this transformative journey anytime. Our Kindergarten courses, including the Art & Poetry course, are designed with flexibility in mind. Families have up to two years to complete the curriculum, accommodating a variety of schedules and learning paces.

If purchased separately, the Art & Poetry course costs \$40.00. Full Kindergarten enrollment costs \$275.00.

Whether enrolling in a single course or the entire grade level, you receive books, lesson plans, and counseling services.

If you want to enroll in the Kindergarten Art & Poetry course, call us at:
866-280-1930 ext. 1



Mary Ellen Barrett is mother of seven children and two in heaven, wife to David, and a lifelong New Yorker. She has homeschooled her children for eleven years using Seton and an enormous amount of books. She is editor of the *Seton Magazine* and also a contributor to *The Long Island Catholic*.

6

Homeschooling Tips I Should Have Known Sooner

BY LAURA FUSTO

Homeschooling can be tough! However, those of us who have accepted this special vocation know it is worth it. So, how can we make it more manageable? The best answer to this question might be found in my reply to *Overwhelmed Mother of Three*:

Dear Laura,

I have several elementary students enrolled and I am overwhelmed.

We are still struggling to finish some first-quarter courses because they are too difficult, and I am having problems dividing my time between my younger and older students.

Also, the amount of work required in some courses is just too much. How can I manage all of this?

Overwhelmed Mother of Three

1 Adjust to Succeed

Consider combining students in the same course.

Adjust each student's curriculum to meet their needs.

A student can be in different grade levels within his or her curriculum.

If a course is too easy or hard, exchange it.

If your student is really struggling within our regular curriculum or has a special learning need, contact our Special Services department.

2 You're in Control

The lesson plans are guidelines; you can adjust them as needed.

You do not need to complete every assignment in the lesson plan.

You, not Seton, decide when your student is ready to move up to the next grade level.

The three "Rs" (reading, writing, and arithmetic) are the only formal courses your students need before Seton High School; consider teaching the other courses more informally without testing.

3 Timing is Everything

Students have 14 months to submit Seton-graded work.

Seton has no quarterly deadlines.

Try to submit Seton-graded work as it is completed; it will give you and the student a feeling of accomplishment.

4 Grading

Parent grading is not required.

Only Seton-graded work must be submitted to receive a complete grade report.

Your students have an opportunity to redo all Seton-graded assignments.



5 This Will Help

Create an educational “Mom’s Busy” box for each student. When you are too busy to assist students in need, send them to their busy box until you can help them.

Try to begin each day with each student’s least favorite course, either English, reading, or math; the rest of the day may go much smoother.

Have students complete written assignments as they are assigned; trying to catch up on several writing assignments at once can be very frustrating.

If you want help with any of these suggestions, please contact one of our elementary counselors.

- **Counselors @setonhome.org**
- **Chat at SetonHome.org**
- **Call: 540-636-9990**

6 Older Students

Expect older students to do most work by themselves.

Trust, but verify, that the older students are completing their work.

Consider “block scheduling” where students focus on a single subject. This approach allows them to complete a week’s worth of assignments in one day and potentially finish a year’s curriculum for a subject within four to six weeks.

Block scheduling can be adapted to include multiple subjects in a day. For example, students might dedicate mornings to one subject and afternoons to another or alternate subjects for full-day sessions.

Here to Help You

Seton is here to serve your needs, not the other way around. Do not hesitate to reach out to Seton with any questions or concerns. There are no “dumb” questions.



Laura Fusto received her BA in Communications from McDaniel College. She and her husband, John, have been blessed with three daughters. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, golfing, shopping with her daughters, and playing pinochle with her husband and their friends.



Seton Student Achievements

SHARING SUCCESS WITH THE SETON COMMUNITY



Faustina Maria Won State Vocation Contest

Faustina Maria loves to write, and says that the *Baltimore Catechism* and Seton's Religion courses prepared her to write her vocation essay.



Rafael Named UK National Piping Champion

Rafael is interested in Rugby, Taekwondo, Royal Marines Cadets, and guitar and is inspired to become an engineer with a Formula 1 company.

setonmagazine.com/students



A STUDENT-MODERATED COMMUNITY OF
SETON HOME STUDY SCHOOL STUDENTS

FIND OUT MORE AT
CATHOLICHARBOR.COM



"Jesus
Christ is
my only
Spouse"

saint

Agnes

January 21

PATRON SAINT OF CHASTITY,
VIRGINS, GARDENERS, & GIRLS



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Fathers, Build Up the Church

And you, fathers, do you pray with your children, with the whole domestic community, at least sometimes?

Your example of honesty in thought and action, joined to some common prayer, is a lesson for life, an act of worship of singular value.

*In this way you bring peace to your homes: Pax huic domui.
Remember, it is thus that you build up the Church."*

Familiaris Consortio

On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World

Pope St. John Paul II

November 22, 1981

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