

Dear Mrs. Carroll,

You asked for an update, so I will not disappoint. Erin and I have been married almost 20 years and have 11 children; nine boys and two girls. We live near Tyler, Texas, in Bishop Strickland's diocese. We attend a diocesan FSSP parish call St. Joseph the Worker. All of our children are homeschooled through Seton. Three have graduated, two are not yet of school age. I have been a physical therapist for over twenty years, and am now working in the forensic field of life care planning providing expert testimony in mostly personal injury cases. Erin was an x-ray technician until we conceived our first child (well, first two... we had twin boys right out of the gate!). Those twin boys are now working full-time as welders and living on their own at 19 years of age. One of them, is seriously considering a vocation with the FSSP. I have coached a varsity homeschool baseball team over the last four years, but will be giving that up this season to focus more on life at home.

Now, to get to the meat of the update. My faith. I remember writing that letter some thirty years ago thanking you and Seton for the education I was provided, but mostly for the faith that had been instilled in me through that education. My "realization" of that faith did not stop with my experience in the Navy. After the Navy, I attended Longwood College (now university). That first semester, I had an anthropology 101 class. The first two weeks, the professor, who was Catholic, taught evolutionary theory. Upon completion, he announce that he was going to bring in the local priest to teach creationism just to be fair. I was pleasantly surprised until this young priest boldly announced in front of a freshman class of 54 students that the story of Adam and Eve was just a nice fairy tale and one did not have to believe in that story to be a good Catholic! I was not going to let that stand, so I raised my hand and told him and the rest of the class that "I have been Catholic my whole life. I was taught, if one wanted to believe in evolution, that there were four things one must believe concerning creation (all humans are descendants of Adam and Eve, woman came from man, the soul does not evolve, and if evolution occurred then God intended it to be that way).The priest said he had never heard that before and wanted to know where I got my information. I don't know how I recalled it in that moment, but I immediately responded, "That was Pope Pius XII to the Pontifical Biblical Commission...." He immediately stated he did not agree and had never heard that. I responded, "Well, Father, if you believe that Adam and Eve were just a fairy tale... then I would love to hear your doctrinal position on Original Sin!"

I could give you half a dozen more examples from my life like the one above.

Seton taught me how to respond in those situations. I often consider what might happen if I did not know how to respond. Others would not have the opportunity to hear what the true Catholic position is. They then would not be swayed towards the Church, but away from it. What would happen to my own faith if someone more educated than I made an argument against the Church I had not heard before? Seton has provided myself, and hundreds of other souls, the tools to not only defend and strengthen their own faith, but to provide a Catholic example to countless others. [What Seton has done] in providing quality education is a stellar accomplishment, but it is not your highest achievement. The pinnacle of your accomplishment is reaching hearts and minds in the foundation of the Catholic faith. Yes, Seton educates and teaches students to think.... but above that Seton steers souls to Christ and His Church, to the means of salvation! For this, we Seton alumni owe [our school] an eternal debt of gratitude.

May God bless you as you and Seton have blessed me,

Bryan Muench, MS, PT, CLCP