

## **Our Second Grade Mission:**

The second grade year is a year to continue discovering and nurturing the gifts of nature and grace that each child has been given. Second grade students come to more fully appreciate the presence of Christ in sanctifying grace infused into their souls at Baptism, the presence of Christ in everyday life, and most especially, the presence of Christ in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist which they received during this graced year. It is also a year of growing autonomy in which students begin to take greater responsibility for their academic achievement as well as their moral choices. As readers, second grade students solidify the reading skills learned in the earlier grades. This enables the students to read for information rather than merely decoding. They are no longer learning to read, they are reading to learn. This development enables the students to maximize learning in all subjects. At all times, the students in second grade are challenged to pursue excellence in both the spiritual and academic realm.

## **Philosophy of Teaching**

**"Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children." --  
Catechism of the Catholic Church #2223"**

All that is accomplished at St. John Vianney is to reinforce and promote all that is taught in the home. We believe that we are not a substitute for the parents' irreplaceable role as the educators of their children and should not contradict all that the parent teaches by word and example. For a child to be truly successful, the partnership of the parents and teachers must be genuine and evident to the child.

As Christian educators, we believe in the dignity of every human person and in the importance of recognizing Christ in each person we meet. Every child is welcome and accepted as we would welcome and accept Christ Himself.

**Art:** The Visual Art Program at Saint John Vianney aims to inspire, challenge, and empower each student through exposure to the arts. It is our goal that students will become life-long learners, appreciators, and supporters of the Fine Arts.

Art creation is the foundation of our program. Students are expected to take pride in their work while developing their craft with patience and perseverance. The curriculum addresses both historical and contemporary practices, exposing students to a wide variety of media, techniques, and processes in two and three dimensional design. Students are taught how to evaluate and analyze art, thus, gaining an appreciation for a wide range of styles, movements, cultures, and historical works of art. Students learn concepts and vocabulary associated with the visual arts, as they are expected to communicate these ideas in visual, oral, and sometimes written form.

The range of art projects is as varied and diverse as the unique individuals that create them. The Visual Arts Program supports all subject areas and incorporates cross curricular instruction as much as possible. From mathematics to religion, the arts span all disciplines and require higher order thinking skills, creative problem solving, self assessment, expression, and awareness. The art curriculum is derived from Diocesan Standards and strives to remain current with state, national and global trends in art education.

#### GRADES K-4 CONTENT AND ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:

**Content Standard #1:** Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes  
*Achievement Standard:* 1. Students know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes. 2. Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses. 3. Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories. 4. Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

**Content Standard #2:** Using knowledge of structures and functions: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students know the differences among visual characteristics and purposes of art in order to convey ideas. 2. Students describe how different expressive features and organizational principles cause different responses. 3. Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas

**Content Standard #3:** Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art. 2. Students select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning

**Content Standard #4:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures  
*Achievement Standard:* 1. Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures. 2. Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places. 3. Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art

**Content Standard #5:** Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art. 2. Students describe how people's experiences influence the development of specific artworks. 3. Students understand there are different responses to specific artworks

**Content Standard #6:** Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines  
*Achievement Standard:* 1. Students understand and use similarities and differences between characteristics of the visual arts and other arts disciplines. 2. Students identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

**Foreign Language:** The foreign language program in second grade is designed to allow our students to experience other cultures through literature, music, art, dance, and other entertainment. Students learn and recite proverbs, short poems, songs, prayers and anecdotes, to identify people and objects from oral and written descriptions, to use appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave-takings, and common classroom interactions. Our students are introduced to and participate in age-appropriate cultural activities including games, Catholic Spanish customs, and traditional Spanish celebrations. They begin to recognize and identify people, Spanish saints and objects from oral and written descriptions and use this information in other school subjects.

**Language Arts:** The language arts program encompasses listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills necessary for future proficiency in these disciplines. The primary focus in second grade is reading and grammar skills. Listening comprehension and vocal reading development are a key component of our reading program to help the second grader correlate information. Phonological awareness, word analysis, vocabulary development, and listening comprehension are explicitly and consistently developed throughout the year.

During the course of the year speaking skills are strengthened through work with singing, rhyming, sharing experiences and ideas, and conversing with peers and adults. Our second grade students tell simple stories from personal experience, continue to learn to enunciate words correctly and participate in group discussions and story development. Listening skills continue to be strengthened by following both two and three step oral directions, recalling sequence of events in a story, by predicting outcomes, and then answering orally to specific questions about a lesson demonstrating basic comprehension skills. Our second graders begin to correlate and evaluate the information taught in class so they can express their own thoughts, views, and opinions on a given topic as well as determine if the information given is fact, fiction or opinion.

Reading skills continue to develop common word recognition, syllable identification, blending and segmenting of sounds, producing rhyming words, recognizing blends, antonyms, synonyms, and homophones, as well as organizing events in sequential order and recognizing root words and suffixes. Students will continue to learn to use a variety of reading strategies, picture clues, context clues, phonics, sentence structure, and prior knowledge to discern main ideas and predict endings. The second grade students begin to connect reading vocabulary through a variety of reading, writing, listening, and speaking language activities in the language arts and other subject areas. They also begin to distinguish between the various types of works, such as fictional, fantasy, folktale, myth, fable, parable, historical fiction, legend, etc. Second graders begin to locate words in a dictionary using alphabetizing skills, to use the glossary in a book and to use word syllabication.

Every child will observe and participate in a variety of writing activities focused on writing responses across the curriculum in the form of letters, journals, poetry, and directions to complete a task. Each area is designed to enhance the child's confidence in

their ability to communicate. Handwriting activities enable the students to express themselves, to share their experiences, and to develop proper handwriting skills.

**Library:** During their weekly library visit, second graders continue to discover the realm of possibilities that can feed one's imaginations. Each child continues to develop the skills essential to becoming an active and thoughtful library user. The class listens to literature for pleasure and information, often participating in the storytelling, drama, songs, puppetry, finger plays and poetry, then relating the elements of the literature to personal experiences and predicting the outcomes of each story. Then each child is able to share in the selecting of their own books, verbalizing requests in locating materials, developing the proper procedures to check out their selections at the circulation desk and to return the materials. Students at this age are identifying themselves as readers. They are learning to choose books that are appropriate for their reading level. They are observing the card catalog in use and beginning to understand the organization of the books on the shelf. The students continue to predict outcomes, discern the different types of literature, such as fairy tales, folklore, poetry, etc. and to share opinions about the materials heard, read or viewed. Second graders begin to use encyclopedias, dictionaries, magazines, and atlases in the reference section to research topics across the curriculum. Each visit is designed to spark the child's imagination, enhance the desire to read and to discover a world beyond their scope of existence.

**Math:** The math experience for the second grade students continues to focus on mathematical explorations in the context of real-life experiences, geared to maintain the children's interest by introducing exciting opportunities for mathematical thinking. This process tends to be hands on using manipulatives and games to develop recognition of number orders/patterns, time concepts, counting, measurements, seasons, temperature, patterns, size, quantity, shapes and to solve problems. The children will continue to add and subtract 2-3 digit numbers, working with fractions and measurements, to tell time to the minute, to begin understanding time schedules, to solve word problems and identify geometric shapes and terms. Students continue to develop numeric patterns, to construct their own graphs from given data and become more proficient in identifying and reading graphs. Time is spent working with actual money which enhances the connection of the curriculum to the real world. By the end of the year, the students will begin learning multiplication facts.

**Music:** The sense of music skills is a sense of rhythm and pitch. The second grade student chants, sings songs, and does rhythmic activities to develop their singing voice and lend toward group music experiences. This is the first year for the group choir experience, "Wings of Choir" and each student who chooses to participate is able to perform at various venues and do special liturgical songs during school mass, sing at school events or on "Holy Days of Obligation." They continue to follow the directions of the conductor, to differentiate tempo, rhythm and beat and to interpret mood of music. Students will explore and experiment with a variety of musical instruments and dance to develop their natural inclination toward self-expression and creativity to reinforce self-esteem and foster enjoyment. Students will also create their own stories and distribute rhythm instruments to their classmates, and direct them to imitate key words with the

rhythm instruments in their stories. Students will learn about songwriting and write lyrics about something dear to them. Students will be introduced to Sibelius software in the computer lab to begin the process of creating music. Students in the “Wings of Choir” will learn and participate in the recording process.

**Physical Education:** The emphasis in PE is on the development of each child’s strength, endurance, co-ordination, balance, and large muscle activities such as running, galloping, climbing, throwing, catching, kicking, dancing, bending, etc. Second graders build on the skills learned in first grade such as the necessity of warm-ups of body muscles before strenuous exercise, movement in a space without collisions, jumping rope (start Jump Rope for Heart activity), and the wearing of proper clothes and shoes for physical exercises. Students continue to demonstrate the ability to lead and follow, dribble, throw, kick and catch a ball, understand oral directions, and maintain balance in a variety of postures. Continued development of the concept of shared space, equipment, group co-operation, and team effort is an important part of the second grader’s experience and curriculum.

**Religion:** We believe that the salvation of each child’s soul is primary and with their salvation in mind, we direct each student to lead virtuous lives pleasing to God, not for their own prestige. Their academics and their spiritual instruction will help them to witness the Gospel in the world and to learn what God has planned for each one of them. Each student is taught to recognize negative and positive feelings, to express gratitude, to show and ask for forgiveness, and to demonstrate honesty, sharing, charity, and respect for all people and the world around us. Each student identifies and practices Christian values, the persons with authority in the church, and participates in Christian services. Every child is taught that the two great commandments are the core of Jesus’ message and that Jesus is the model of all God wants us to become. Recognition of the major title of Mary as the Mother of God, that the Father as our Creator, and the Spirit as the source of unity and grace carrying out the work of Christ in the world encourages each child to show concern for the poor, the weak and the suffering. Explanations of the liturgical year, the Eucharist as a meal sharing celebration, the bible as the inspired word of God and the sacrifice of Jesus’ gift of Himself, the sacraments, the different parts of the mass, the meaning of gestures such as kneeling, signing, genuflecting, responding to prayer, and the different forms of prayer, enable each student to become an informed and active members in the Catholic community. Discussions of scripture help each child reach a deeper understanding of life, faith, and love of oneself and others. Each child participates in spontaneous prayer, recites basic responses of the Mass, which they attend once a week, and memorizes the prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Angel of God, Grace before/after meals, Act of Contrition, and the Morning Offering, as well as begins the spontaneous prayer experience. Identifying and discussing the lives of saints as friends and models for Christian Life helps each student reach a deeper understanding of life and faith. Second graders begin the studies sacraments, with their focus on Penance/Reconciliation and the holy Eucharist, since this is the year that the Catholic second graders prepare for their first Holy Communion.

**Science:** Second graders continue their exploration of the world using the scientific process to study the earth, the weather, animals, plants, organisms, and the universe through hands on activities which encourage the discussion and sharing of ideas as they work to process what they are observing. Activity and conversation fill the room as children participate in the activities to explore, investigate, observe, and describe a wide variety of exercises geared to expand and acquire scientific knowledge.

**Social Studies:** Each student begins to express and understand the concepts and language of geography in the context of classroom, home and community. Recognizing and using maps, globes, legends, and directions to locate their street, city, country in relation to the equator, other continents and oceans to compare the various locations. Students continue to identify people who influence the United States' history, e.g. leaders, inventors, explorers, the symbols of the U.S. i.e. flag, eagle, patriotic songs, holiday, and customs.

**Technology:** The presence of computers in the classroom gives each child the opportunity to play games that reinforce other disciplines such as reading, math, etc. and to begin teaching simple word processing skills. Each second grader goes to computer class once a week, enhancing the classroom experience with the use and understanding of the proper and responsible use of the Internet, basic computer terms and concepts, and the use of websites and graphics programs to create and research information to convey an idea and further on topic knowledge. Students continue to develop keyboarding skills by using the Type to Learn Program by Sunburst. Second graders begin to understand the appropriate and ethical conduct by following the school's Internet User Policy, and respecting the privacy of all users. The use of a word processor, saving and retrieving files and documents, and learning keyboarding skills with increased speed and accuracy enables each second grader to work independently as they enhance their knowledge across the curriculum.