

Our Seventh Grade Mission:

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 5-8 CONTENT AND ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Content Standard #1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
Achievement Standard: 1. Students select media, techniques, and processes; analyze what makes them effective or not effective in communicating ideas; and reflect upon the effectiveness of their choices. 2. Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

Content Standard #2: Using knowledge of structures and functions: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions and reflect upon these effects in their own work. 2. Students employ organizational structures and analyze what makes them effective or not effective in the communication of ideas. 3. Students select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas

Content Standard #3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students integrate visual, spatial, and temporal concepts with content to communicate intended meaning in their artworks Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks

Content Standard #4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in

various eras and cultures. 2. Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts. 3. Students analyze, describe, and demonstrate how factors of time and place (such as climate, resources, ideas, and technology) influence visual characteristics that give meaning and value to a work 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 compare multiple purposes for creating works of art. 2. Students analyze contemporary and historic meanings in specific artworks through cultural and aesthetic inquiry. 3. Students describe and compare a variety of individual responses to their own artworks and to artworks from various eras and cultures

Content Standard #6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students compare the characteristics of works in two or more art forms that share similar subject matter, historical periods, or cultural context. 2. Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts.

Foreign Language: The foreign language program in Seventh Grade is designed to allow our students to experience other cultures through literature, music, art, and dance. Students continue to learn and recite proverbs, short poems, songs 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 Seventh graders begin to use materials and/or media from the target language such as newspapers, literary texts, etc. Students learn how to tell time and speak about the weather in Spanish. They begin to write and use definite/indefinite articles, interrogative words, direct objects, pronouns, stem-changing verbs, etc.

Language Arts: Students develop a lifelong appreciation of reading, writing, and effective communication with the guidance of the Language Arts teacher. Writing skills are the primary focus in Seventh grade with attention to grammar skills. Reading skills continue to be developed and enhanced. Teachers are mindful of the demands of High School for well-organized exposition, correct sentence structure, punctuation, correct spelling, a large working vocabulary, and analysis. In order to develop these skills, our Seventh graders continue to develop listening comprehension, independent reading, word analysis, vocabulary development, regular in-class writing to emphasize student initiative and self-direction rather than teacher centered analysis are explicitly and consistently developed throughout the year.

Our Seventh grade students are required to read The Call of the Wild and one other book from the summer reading list sent home with report cards. They continue to participate in dramatizations, to give formalized speeches by using aides to speak formally (i.e. note cards, props etc.) 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 skill. Our

Seventh graders 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 either: fact, fiction or opinion. Students will continue to learn to use a variety of reading strategies such as context clues, phonics, sentence structure, and prior knowledge to discern main ideas and predict endings. The Seventh grade student continues to connect reading vocabulary through a variety of reading, writing, listening, and speaking language activities in the language arts and other subject areas and develop it by using mapping activities. Seventh graders read to identify the plot line, the setting, the main characters and their motivation in a story/selection. They begin to use a thesaurus to find new words to increase their vocabulary and to develop word meaning skills by using multiple-meaning words and analogies. Seventh graders understand inferential meaning by interpreting cause/effect and recognizing figurative/picturesque language and by making compare/contrast relationships in relation to a story or text.

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, directions to complete a task, and observations about authors. They understand that prewriting is the stimulation of ideas and gathering of thoughts. A few strategies used to develop our Seventh graders' writing skills include participating in small group or whole class written pieces as well as continuing to free write to stimulate cognitive and imaginative processes that provide thoughtful reflection. Students write drafts, then revise each type of writing i.e. essay, letters, invitation, thank you, drama, poetry, narration, argumentation, etc. then use the proper form for each type of writing. Grammar skills are honed such as punctuation, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, interjections, conjunctions, and analysis of the written work by sentence function. Each area is designed to enhance the child's confidence and ability to communicate.

Library: During their weekly library visit, Seventh graders continue to discover the realm of possibilities that can feed ones imaginations. We build library skills into English as well as other curriculum areas, as student search for information to complete their projects. Each child continues to develop the skills essential to becoming an active and thoughtful library user, as they nurture their love of literature by exploring the library and broadening their exposure to the various types of literature thru more in-depth examination in the various areas available to them. Students are able to independently use the computerized card catalog system. Seventh graders continue to use encyclopedias, dictionaries, magazines, computer websites 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 Seventh grader is designed to bridge arithmetic and algebra by emphasizing the development of strategies to solve computations and the introduction of algebraic concepts and techniques. It is also emphasized that there are often multiple ways of solving mathematical problems. The children will continue to work with measurements which extends to spatial reasoning, fractions, ratios, percentages, multiplication and division, to solve word problems, to find averages and to solve equations. We reinforce the importance of geometric concepts i.e. area, radius,

circumference, angle, perimeter, number theory, probability etc. Mathematics is presented as a form of logic that allows students to understand relationships among various forms and mathematical ideas. Additionally, we try to relate the mathematical concepts learned to real-world situations.

Music: The Seventh grade student continues to develop the elements of music i.e. meter, notes, tone, chords, beat, mood of music, good singing posture, breathing, diction, and does rhythmic activities to develop their singing voice and lend toward group music experiences. Students will explore and experiment with a variety of musical instruments, with a focus on music composition to explore their natural inclination toward self expression and creativity to reinforce self-esteem and foster enjoyment. Students will learn about songwriting and write lyrics about something dear to them. Students will also write their own melody with chords to accompany their lyrics. Students will engage in orchestrating a simple melody utilizing Sibelius software in the computer lab.

Physical Education: The emphasis in PE is sports and physical education skills. Seventh graders build on the skills learned in previous years such as the necessity of warm-ups of body muscles before strenuous exercise, aerobic activities to enhance flexibility and co-ordination, and movement education to perform loco motor and nonlocomotor skills in various sequences. Students will learn how to officiate different sports. Continued development of the concept of shared space, equipment, group co-operation, good sportsmanship behavior, strategies of various sports, and team building emphasizing co-operation and problem solving is an important part of the Seventh grader's experience and curriculum.

Religion: Seventh grade religion classes focus on the person of Jesus Christ. After a brief review of the salvation history leading up to the fullness of time, students read the Scriptures for a deeper understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. They do so from various points of view (historical, political, and medical). However, the emphasis is more on the life of Christ as He came to show us the embodiment of the Father's love for mankind and His redemptive plan; the focus always is from a spiritual point of view. The students learn to revere the Bible as inspired directly by God and intending to convey to them a message applicable and meaningful to their lives today. Thus the students learn to read about the life of Christ as a source of moral teachings for their own lives and as an example of what leading a Christian life entails. They learn about the four evangelists, who they were, their primary audiences and the characteristics that distinguish one writer from another. They study the infancy narratives (the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary), the beginning of His public ministry, His parables and miracles (the Luminous Mysteries), His passion, death (Sorrowful Mysteries), resurrection, and ascension into Heaven (Glorious Mysteries). They continue to study the beginnings of the Church and the apostolic dispersion. Within each of these topics, there are in-depth studies on doctrines such as the Beatitudes, moral living (the Sermon on the Mount), the purpose of miracles, the reasons for the Jewish condemnation of Jesus, the theology of suffering and redemption, Christian practices such as mortification and penance, the seasons of the liturgical year.

The geographic locations of significant places in the life of Jesus are located and identified. Seeing actual pictures of places such as Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Ain Karim, the River Jordan, the Mount of Olives, Golgotha, Bethany help the students to appreciate the historical reality of Jesus and firmness of their faith. This is a major theme within this year: the reasonableness of the Catholic Faith. Within the context of a review of the salvation history leading up to the fullness of time, the students are taught the beginnings of Apologetics: the proofs for the existence of God, proofs for His divine attributes (such as omnipotence, omniscience, all-loving, and omnipresence), the evidence for the historicity of Jesus Christ, the proof of his miracles, especially His resurrection.

It is also a year that reviews the sacraments. This time, however, it is done in the context of the life of Christ, showing how the sacraments were instituted first by Him in His mission of redemption. The Catholic Faith is clearly sacramental; it involves both the spiritual and the physical elements of the earth as Jesus used them and showed us to imitate.

The faith they profess goes more than just rote memorization; it encompasses a whole life vision. 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. To this goal appreciation of one's abilities and uniqueness of self and others, identifying rights and responsibilities of membership in family, neighborhood, parish faith community, and society, as well as recognizing the authority of God and of parents in one's life are key. 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 and knows and respects the persons with authority in the church. They learn the theological virtues, the moral (cardinal virtues), the capital vices, and the sensitive appetites (concupiscible and irascible). The latter involve them in a study of the emotions which are neutral in and of themselves. Thus they learn that virtue lies in the right use of these emotions. Vice, on the contrary, involves some defect or excess of these emotions. The lives of the saints help students to see how these virtues are actually lived out practically.

Every child is taught that the two foundational truths of the Christian religion: the Trinity and the Incarnation. All their religion classes take place within a context of study but with devotion, reverence and a desire for what is true and holy. They continue to learn about the saints in general and our inheritance as members of that community. They learn 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.

Attendance at Mass, opportunities for Confession, First Friday Adoration and Eucharistic Processions with Triple Benediction provide students with many and varied opportunities

to deepen their spiritual lives. Explanations of gestures such as kneeling, signing, genuflecting, responding to prayer, and the different forms of prayer, all enable each student to become an informed and active member in the Catholic community. Reading scripture reverently (*lectio divina*) and discussions of scripture help each child reach a deeper understanding of life, faith, and love of God, oneself and others. Each child participates in prayer at the beginning of class, has the opportunity to participate in spontaneous prayer, recites basic responses of the Mass, which he/she attends once a week, and memorizes the prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Angel of God, Grace before/after meals, Act of Contrition, Morning Offering, Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love, and the Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel.

Christian art, music, and classical literature become a vehicle for the learning process, helping the students to see the riches of the Catholic culture and learn their Faith. As they go through the curriculum, the students are exposed to a wide variety of sacred art and learn to identify many symbols, colors and images for the Faith. Plays, movies, music are all used to enhance students understanding and love of God and His creation.

The curriculum is extensive but it gives the students a sense of the fullness of the Catholic Faith and a desire to learn more about the individual elements within it. That eagerness and love of the Faith is essential for the students to foster throughout their lives and demonstrates that they have a true love for God and an authentic foundation to their spiritual lives.

Science: The science curriculum for Seventh graders is Life Science. Their exploration of the world using the scientific process to study the plants, animals, cells, organisms, food chains, DNA, and environment helps the students to develop an understanding of the physical world by investigating their questions such as why something is, how it works, and why it does what it does. Often in answering their many questions they discover more questions to investigate. Developing keen observational skills is an integral part of the Seventh grader's science program as they focus on Life Science, the experiments which are designed to answer their questions, and present the data which justifies their experiment results. The students participate in science fair, creative challenges, group projects, and debates as well as create models, dioramas, and power point presentations.

Social Studies: Our Seventh grade social studies experience focuses on Geography and Tennessee History. Students begin to investigate Tennessee historical periods to better understand state events and ideology. Our Seventh graders continue to identify people who influenced Tennessee's beginnings through today - its leaders, inventors, and explorers, and continue to use current events to keep informed and identify recent happenings as well as recognize the need for world peace and an understanding of others, their lifestyles and beliefs. We also discuss the governments, religions, economics, and lifestyles from around the world, and how the United States might be affected by these different cultures. The class is always open for discussion of current and historical events.

Technology: The presence of computers in the classroom gives each child the opportunity to continue to enhance the learning and teaching process. Each Seventh 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 are proficient in their typing skills but will continue to develop speed and accuracy using the Type to Learn Program by Sunburst. Seventh graders continue to learn the appropriate and ethical conduct of computer/internet use by following the school's Internet User Policy, and respecting the privacy of all users. The emphasis on creativity and preparing class presentations and photo galleries by the use of a word processor, saving and retrieving files and documents, and researching thru the use of other reference websites and search engines, enables each Seventh grader to probe more deeply into their computer/class projects and work independently as they enhance their knowledge across the curriculum.