

## 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE

### Religion

The Junior High Religion Program helps students expand their understanding of Jesus and grow in their knowledge of the history of the Church. Classroom instruction and prayer experiences strive to develop Catholic attitudes, practices, and actions through a Service Hours program, a chastity based education program and Theology of the Body, participation and planning of school masses and prayer services, and the Peacebuilder program. Students learn and experience Catholic traditions by attending Eucharistic Adoration, observing liturgical seasons, leading/attending Stations of the Cross, and training to become Eucharistic Ministers. Putting one's faith into action is stressed in all areas of the curriculum.

### Reading (Literature)

Reading should be a daily practice designed to broaden, clarify, enlighten, motivate, and ultimately inspire the reader. In a supportive seventh grade environment, students are exposed to literature and literary elements through a variety of genres and authors. These selections serve as both models and motivation for writing. Students begin to develop skills of following recurring themes and motifs, identifying and applying standards of values, and then applying a value system to text. In other words, they begin the progression from "What does it say or mean?" to "What does it mean to me?" Therefore, in eighth grade, critical thinking and reasoning skills (analysis, synthesis and evaluation), along with careful reading, are emphasized to move the student toward the ability to interpret literature. Successful interpretive skills require adeptness in articulation and justification; therefore, students write and speak regularly about the literature they are reading and connect their reading to the world. Both impromptu and prepared essays and speeches are assigned along with creative writing and research.

### Language Arts

The seventh grade language arts curriculum focuses on developing a student's communication abilities through the written word, the spoken word, and listening. Recognizing the primacy of communication in helping students to connect with the thoughts, opinions, ideas, and emotions of others, Saint Susanna devotes this instruction time to the expansion of reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling skills as well as language arts integration throughout the content areas. The eighth grade English program covers listening, speaking, writing, and expanding vocabulary. Students master grammar skills through a variety of activities involving sentence structure. These skills are then incorporated into the writing process. The students focus on the rough draft and editing/revision portions of their writing. They develop a skill set for short answer responses on tests and quizzes using the *Better Answers* technique. The students build on decoding and vocabulary using a workbook, instruction in bases, roots, prefixes, and suffixes, and literature.

### Math

In seventh grade we will be focusing on five common core standards associated with mathematics: 1. The Number System (students explain and interpret the rules for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing with negative numbers. As well as formulate expressions and equations to solve problems). 2. Ratios and Proportional Relationship (students solve problems about scale drawings; students graph proportional relationships, and distinguish proportional relationships from other relationships). 3. Expression and Equations (write expressions and equations; learn to solve multi-step real-life and mathematical problems) 4. Geometry (reason about relationships among two-dimensional figures using scale drawings; work with three-dimensional figures; solve problems involving area, surface areas, and volume).

5. Statistics and Probability (understand and use statistics, data, random sample inferences as well as learning to draw informal comparative inferences).

In eighth grade we will be focusing on five common core standards associated with mathematics: 1. The Number System (know that there are numbers that are not rational and approximate them by rational numbers). 2. Expressions and Equations (know and apply the properties of integer exponents to generate equivalent numerical expressions). 3. Functions (define, evaluate and compare functions). 4. Geometry (understand congruence and similarity using physical models, transparencies, or geometry software). 5. Statistics and Probability (construct and interpret scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to investigate patterns of association between two quantities).

### Pre-Algebra and Algebra

In Pre-Algebra we will be focusing on five common core standards associated with mathematics: The Number System (develop a unified understanding of numbers, recognizing fractions, decimals and percentages as representations of rational numbers). 2. Ratios and Proportional Relationship (extend their understanding of ratios and develop an understanding of proportionality to solve a wide variety of percent problems). 3. Expression and Equations (continue understanding of the use of variables in mathematical expressions and construct and solve equations and inequalities). 4. Geometry (expand knowledge in solving problems involving the area and circumference of a circle and the surface area and volume of three dimensional objects). 5. Statistics and Probability (build on previous work with single data distributions to compare two data distributions and address questions about differences between populations).

In Algebra we will be focusing on six common core standards associated with mathematics: 1. Creating Equations (develop an understanding that an equation is a statement of equality between two expressions with unknown values and extend to two variable equations and systems of two equations). 2. Reasoning with Equations and Inequalities (extend understand and discover an equation can be solved by steps of simplification). 3. Arithmetic with Polynomials and Rational Expressions (extend addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to polynomials, maintaining the properties and operations). 4. Seeing Structure in Expressions (develop an understanding of expressions as computations with numbers, variables, arithmetic operations and exponents). 5. Interpreting Functions (develop an understanding of functions). 6. Building Functions (build on previous knowledge with functions and write a function that describes a relationship between two quantities; arithmetic and geometric sequences with an explicit formula).

### Science

In seventh and eighth grade year at Saint Susanna, students explore earth and physical science. Students discover the awesome phenomena that come from earth, from tornadoes and hurricanes in meteorology to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions with geology. Students continue on with the study of physics and chemistry in eighth grade. Our students investigate laws of motion and learn the relationship between matter and energy. These concepts are taught in many ways. Students learn through the use of technology, with our new Smart boards, hands-on activities and manipulative, student-to-student collaboration, and labs. Having a wide variety of teaching strategies ensures that every student has an opportunity to learn.

### Social Studies

The primary focus of the seventh grade social studies program is United States History from the establishment of the Constitution through the Spanish American War along with world events

that impacted the U.S. The geography of Mexico and modern Europe will also be covered. Dignity of work and economic justice will be the Peace and Justice component of the program. Students will identify work as a way to continue participation in God's act of creation and learn how rights of labor must be exercised in a way that advances the common good. They will understand economics as an aspect of Christian living and recognize issues of economic justice involved in the distribution of wealth in the United States and the rest of the world. The eighth grade American history course covers the 1900's through present time with an emphasis on Civics and Government. The Students study the United States as a developing world power-Manifest Destiny, Industrialization, and Immigration- and how the United States relates to other world powers politically, economically, and culturally. The course shows the progression of war, treaties, and diplomacy from WWI through the War in Afghanistan and Iraq. The geographic emphasis is on Asia and the international diplomacy between the United States, the Middle East, and other Asian countries.