

# JUNIOR HIGH

The adolescent years of 12 to 14 mark the period of the greatest physical, emotional and social changes your child will experience. Changes come so quickly and affect a child so profoundly that neither the child nor his/her family can keep pace with it. The school, in cooperation with the family, helps the child to make his/her way through this exciting, challenging and sometimes frightening period. He/she will then emerge with increased self-understanding and ability to make intelligent choices which will affect his/her life. St. James is committed to these goals. We also strive to develop the academic potential of each child. Our curriculum stresses those subject areas, study skills and work habits which will result in young people who are prepared for any high school curriculum they may choose.

St. James is committed to deepening the faith life of the children as they grow in the knowledge and love of God. Our goal is to ensure that the children who graduate from St. James will carry the conviction that God walks with them in every phase of their lives. Such faith will sustain them no matter what life may bring.

## FAITH FORMATION MESSAGE

The integration of God and academics is what St. James does best. Religion is not just another subject—'religion' means "relationship to God." All relationships need time to grow. Time to grow in the knowledge of God's love is the gift of a Catholic education. Over two hours are allotted each week for faith formation through prayer and education. During this time, the focus is on our Catholic faith and on the richness of our traditions.

St. James provides a comfortable and non-threatening atmosphere for the junior high student. In essence, the value of a Catholic junior high education is tremendous. The lessons learned here transcend the intellectual plane and enrich the life of the soul.

## CURRICULUM

St. James offers an excellent curriculum designed to challenge each student and prepare him/her for high school level work. The faculty and staff strive to develop competence in critical thinking skills, effective study habits, reading comprehension, mathematics and writing skills. Junior high is departmentalized. Each faculty member teaches to his/her own strengths. Consequently, the four major subjects; English, science, math and social studies are taught by someone with greater depth of knowledge in each specific area.

## COURSE OFFERINGS

The following courses are offered to seventh and eighth grade students:

Algebra (grade 8)  
American History  
Art  
Computer Science  
English  
Library  
Mathematics  
Physical Education  
Reading/Literature  
Religion  
Science  
Spanish  
Values/Service  
Vocabulary  
Vocal Music

## CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

Band  
Cheerleading  
Chess  
Intramural Sports  
Scrabble  
Spirit Club  
Stringed Instrument Program  
Student Ambassadors  
Student Theater  
Varsity Basketball for Boys and Girls  
Varsity Softball for Girls  
Yearbook

**SOCIAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES** Seventh and eighth grade students donate many hours of service to the community. They serve dinner on a bi-weekly basis at Prospect House. Students also taken part in a Relay for Life, participate in the annual Valentine Telegrams for people who need the warm touch of a caring community and a spring celebration with the children cared for by the Missionaries of Charity. Upper classmen assist teachers in supervising children in the lower grades.

**SPECIAL LITURGICAL EVENTS** We have a number of special liturgical events geared to junior high students in cooperation with our clergy and/or our junior high faculty. These may take the form of Eucharistic services, penitential services or values-based discussion sessions. Each event takes into account the special concerns, fears and needs of the 12 to 14 year old. A perennial favorite event is our junior high production of the Living Stations of the Cross, which is performed for the school and parish communities.

**DANCES** These events are open to seventh and eighth grade students. These dances allow the students to relax and have fun in a safe social environment.

**EIGHTH GRADE CLASS /AWARDS NIGHT** This wonderful evening provides a memorable conclusion to the students' years at St. James. Teachers recognize outstanding students' academic achievements and present student awards and scholarships. Students recall their experiences from kindergarten to eighth grade, give messages of thanks to teachers and parents, and view a slide show of their years here. This is a night that really speaks of the true spirit of St. James as a community.

**GRADUATION** It is fitting that our eighth graders end their years at St. James by celebrating Mass with their classmates for the final time. Faculty, family and friends join in sharing their joy. Pastors from neighboring parishes are invited to concelebrate this Mass and recognize their young parishioners' achievements.

**CLASS TRIPS** Seventh graders spend a week at Nature's Classroom in Lakeside, Connecticut. Nature's classroom provides an opportunity for students to experience learning through unique hand-on, real-world activities. This program's activities closely parallel the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) program. Special emphasis is placed on team-building, cooperative learning and environmental awareness.

Eighth graders take part in a trip to New York or an alternative destination of cultural and historical significance. This trip is the highlight and culmination of the junior high experience. It allows students one last chance to celebrate friendships made during their time at St. James.

**STUDENT COUNCIL** The student council is composed of representatives from grades seven and eight. The student council plans junior high activities and school projects. Members assist the junior high teachers and serve as positive role models for their classmates. Each year candidates organize and conduct a campaign and elections are held by homeroom. It is a positive learning experience for both the candidates and other students.

Catholic education strives  
to enable each child to grow,  
develop, and ultimately embrace  
his or her mission in life  
with a true Christian spirit

