



THE ST. JOAN OF ARC



Gazette

MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS
SJA SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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ALL ABOUT OUR SCHOOL...

This year, we are very pleased to include a new component of our Religion Class called Community Service Learning Projects for Kindergarten through grade eight. The rationale behind these projects is that we can start forming the habit of giving back at a young age at a time when we see a prevailing sense of entitlement from many of our youth.

Service Learning is rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and fosters the hands on expression of Christ's love for others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves. The St. Joan of Arc faculty provided input on how many hours would be age-appropriate for a child to volunteer throughout the year.



The required hours are as follows: Kindergarten and 1st Grade (4 hours for the year), 2nd Gr. (8 hours for the year), 3rd–5th Gr. (12 hours for the year), 6th and 7th Gr. (16 hours for the year), and 8th Grade (20 hours for the year).

Each quarter, students are provided with a form for them to list their participation in these projects along with the date and time commitment. As the program evolves, one of the goals of Community Service Learning Projects is to provide the opportunity for students to reflect either verbally or in writing what they learned from each experience and share their insights with their classmates.

Community SERVICE learning projects

By MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS
PRINCIPAL



SJA parents have been instrumental in the process by creating a list of opportunities for consideration. For example, Mrs. Jennifer Balbone Lopes created a list of ideas for parents to view which included: International Coast Clean Up, Drive to End Hunger with Miami Dolphins, Become an SOS Birthday Buddy, Women in Distress, Hands on Broward, and In Jacob's Shoes. Mrs. Petrone also shared some ideas she is exploring for her son so other parents can consider this option. Kevin is looking forward to his next community service learning project called Canine Assisted Therapy. This fall, Kevin Petrone, in 3B, volunteered to help his tennis coach teach younger students. He modeled how to do proper tennis techniques and helped pick up balls so the class would be more efficient. "I liked it and thought it was fun. I learned that when you do community service hours it doesn't have to be boring work, it can be fun with something you like to do."

Some of the ways students can work on this component without having to go to an organization are: adopt an older neighbor who may welcome cards, visits, or a helping hand on occasion, making cards for Veterans, and even create cards for our own ill or homebound parishioners.

We hope by participating in this program, SJA students will better recognize and understand the significance of caring for others. As Pope Francis said in Brazil on July 25, 2013,

"The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty."





Expansion of the **WORLD LANGUAGE** Program at St. Joan of Arc

By MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS — PRINCIPAL

DID YOU KNOW...

- Spanish is one of the six official languages of the United Nations besides Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Russian?
- Spanish Club (Pre-K4 thru Grade 5) and French Club (Pre-K3 thru Grade 8) are offered after school at St. Joan's?
- St. Joan's has converted a classroom into the language lab for Pre-K4 through 4th Grade?
- Spanish Heritage and Native Speakers have the opportunity to be part of a Spanish Book Club as part of their middle school enrichment cycle?

In order to not miss the critical ages for learning languages, St. Joan of Arc Catholic School has expanded its World Language Program from 3rd through 8th Grade to include Pre-K3 through 2nd Grade. A key component of the curriculum involves a program called **QTalk**.

How does the QTalk online program work?

"The QTalk program mimics the verbal and visual memory techniques children experience when they first learn to speak their first language. The combination of whole class, small group and individual learning activities is suited to a differentiated classroom environment where students in the same class are working on different learning objectives." St. Joan's students are progressing through the Seed curriculum, the Sprout curriculum and then



the Sapling curriculum (typically for grades 5 and higher). Students learn that symbols mean different words. They start to substitute different words and make new combinations to learn new phrases.

Señora Rodriguez (our Pre-K3 through 4th grade Spanish teacher), what progress do you see so far?

"I stress the fact that students need to work on greetings and *buenos modales* (good manners) as part of the curriculum. The students appear to be getting used to the routine and enjoying Spanish more. I've noticed that students like Spanish competitions so I will incorporate more use of competitions throughout the spring as a way of continuing to motivate students. The QTalk program starts with a section called "Seeds" which is divided

into four parts. All 1st through 4th Grade students have completed Part I (8 lessons which includes the mastery of 78 words). I have also found it rewarding that many Heritage and Native Speakers are asking to learn to read Spanish."

Señora Rodriguez, what do you like about QTalk?

"I like the QTalk Program because it's a fun way to learn Spanish. Students are learning verbs, pronouns, and adjectives without having to memorize. They don't realize they can already read Spanish and conjugate verbs. The lessons are interactive and catch the students' attention. The program really works as I see students being able to create their own sentences at a much quicker rate than a traditional Spanish class!"

How does the curriculum work for the younger students?

Señora Rodriguez works closely with Mrs. James in Pre-K3 to create a bilingual program for part of the day. Whatever Mrs. James is teaching, Señora Rodriguez reinforces the material in Spanish such as colors, numbers, farm animals and songs. Mrs. Rodriguez is particularly proud that the students can actively participate during attendance by using vocabulary words such as: "presente" (present), "no está" (not here), "aquí" (here), "allá" (over there) when they talk about their classmates.

What can Pre-K3 through 4th grade students and parents expect for the spring in Spanish?

Pre-K3 has been using the QTalk cards and will soon be using QTalk on the Whiteboard. Pre-K4 recently has transitioned from having Spanish only in their classroom to going into the World Language Lab. Since the lab is now up and running and most students have brought in a second set of earbuds, Kindergarten through 4th Grade will be working more and more using their individual QTalk username and password. There will also be an emphasis on Geography.

Other resources to explore: Top ten reasons to learn Spanish studyspanish.com.



ST. JOAN OF ARC

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE

March 25, 2015 • 7:00pm – 8:30pm

RSVP at info_school@stjoan.org or call 561.392.7974

Thanks to the Power of St. Joan PARENTS

By MEAGHAN BRESNAHAN

How do you shape the minds of 540 impressionable young students in one of the county's most renowned Catholic schools? Not single-handedly, that's for sure. Even with the extensive number of teachers, coaches, and executive staff that keep the trains running, St. Joan of Arc wouldn't be able to make the same educational impact on our students without support. We're talking, of course, about our St. Joan parents.

Parental support is the backbone of St. Joan of Arc's success. The time and talent that parents donate year after year allows administrators to focus on what they do best: bringing state-of-the-art education to our children. While each family is asked to contribute 10 hours per year to the school or church, most exceed this number without hesitation.

We believe that volunteers make the most impact when they can really connect with the tasks at hand. That means creating volunteer opportunities that are as diverse and individual as the parents themselves. Our Home and School Association, championed by Farrah Downing, sees to it that parents who want to get involved can do so easily, and in a way that plays to their strengths and interests.

Through HSA, moms and dads can elect to be Homeroom Parents, the captains of the classroom that supports individual teachers with their classroom needs. One of the most important functions of a Homeroom Parent is engaging other parents, no matter what their schedule may be, and finding ways for them to volunteer. A Homeroom Parent might send bulletin board materials home to be cut out, request baked goods for a special occasion, or

coordinate schedules for in-class help. We are consistently impressed — not just with our Homeroom Parents — but by how responsive all parents are to these requests.

Not all schools are fortunate enough to have a Dad's Club like St. Joan's. The Dad's Club meets each week to encourage fathers to get to know one another and prepare for activities like the Lenten Fish Fry, Golf Tournament fundraisers, Hoedown, and Edge Parties. One of the most visible markers of the Dad's Club is their contribution to St. Joan of Arc's athletic program. During the expansion of the gym, they began raising money for necessary equipment like volleyball nets and basketball hoops. Their commitment didn't end with the conclusion of construction. Each year they raise money to purchase an entirely new set of jerseys for one of the athletic teams. This year, the Dad's Club sponsored the Hydroponics/ Aeroponics/ Traditional Program.

We believe that creating a sense of community is critical not only to the success of the school, but for the happiness and satisfaction of the families who work so hard on our behalf. This community starts between parents and children. Brien Costigan has been volunteering at the library for the past 8 years. "Mr. C," as he's known by the children, recalls fondly watching the "the little kids become the big kids," including his own two daughters. Harry Newstreet, long-time member of the Dad's Club, recalls a similar experience the first time he helped coach the boy's soccer team. His son was only in Pre-K4 at the time, but the chance to see his child interact with other students helped solidify his family's commitment to St. Joan.



We also strive to create community between the families themselves. This is one of the main goals of the Parent Ambassadors, a fairly new organization of parents who are dedicated to representing the school and welcoming new families into the fold. During the summer, families new to St. Joan are assigned a veteran family to help with the transition. Some families arrange play dates with their children, go for coffee, or exchange emails to learn what it's like to be a St. Joan parent. Each pair of families creates a system that works best for them. Denise Porter, a second grade mom involved with the Parent ambassadors hopes that "giving the new families a resource other than the school office and teachers will make (them) feel welcome and comfortable."



Thanks to the hard work of our parents, the sense of community is strong and thriving at St. Joan of Arc. In light of the Lenten season, we want to echo what so many of our families have told us over the years:

At St. Joan of Arc, we are a family. Our success is your success, and we owe you much thanks and gratitude for your support.

Top 10 reasons we **STUDY** Saints:

By VICTORIA FARRINGTON

At our school, we take the study of the saints very seriously because we know they have so much to teach us about our Catholic faith.

Our Third Grade students present an inspiring and entertaining program every October in order to prepare our community for the celebration of the Feast of All Saints. Students research the lives of their favorite saints and also learn about some of the Church's more popular saints such as St. Francis of Assisi and St. Rose of Lima. These are the reasons that students at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School know about their ancestors in faith. . .

#10: The feasts of certain saints provide opportunities to celebrate ethnic and cultural traditions such as St. Patrick for March 17 and Juan Diego for Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12.

#9: Saints teach about intercessory prayer; their 'job' is to ask God for help for us such as novenas to St. Jude, the Patron Saint of impossible causes and St. Joseph, as the patron Saint of Workers, who many people pray to when seeking employment.

#8: Images, statues, artwork of saints can develop an appreciation for sacred art, for the beautiful, for the wonder of God's creations. Throughout history, the most beautiful art in the world was commissioned by the Catholic Church and inspired by religious events. Think of the great Renaissance artists such as Michelangelo and Da Vinci with their paintings

and statues of Jesus, Mary, David, and other Biblical figures.

#7: The lives of saints can inspire children to behave in certain, good ways and can encourage moral virtues. St. Augustine is a perfect example of someone who changed his way of life once he accepted the Faith. Augustine lived a life of great sin and immodesty until he accepted the teachings of the Church and reformed his ways. He became a pillar of sanctity, a priest, then a bishop, and eventually a doctor of the Church.

#6: Saints can direct children toward a particular vocation or career. St. Cecilia glorified God with her musical talents and is the patron Saint of Musicians. St. Pierre Toussaint of Haiti used his life's earnings as a hair dresser to help the poor and sick of New York City.

#5: Saints provide wonderful role models for the way to live. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, after she was widowed with eight children, became an advocate for the poor and uneducated and single-handedly began the Catholic school system in America. She used her wealth to help others, became a religious sister, and was instrumental in paving the way for nuns to be accepted in our society.

#4: The saints remind us always of our goal in life: to get to Heaven. St. Catherine of Siena, one of the few female doctors of the Church, had mystical visions of the state of a soul in God's grace in Heaven which she described with such absolute



beauty that many sinners were converted to the faith.

#3: Children can learn some of the basic teachings of the Catholic Church which are reflected in the lives of the saints. St. John Nepomucene is a Patron Saint of Reconciliation because he gave his life to protect the sanctity of the confessional. He lived in the court of King Wenceslaus of Hungary and refused to reveal what the queen said in her confession, so the King had him executed. Students learn that no matter what they may discuss with the priest in confession, everything is totally confidential, and the priest would protect this confidentiality, even unto death.

#2: Saints help children learn what it means to be a disciple of Christ. The lives of any of the early disciples of Christ demonstrate that following Jesus is the way for us to live and to spread God's kingdom on earth.

#1: The study of saints reveals who God is; they are living Scripture. St. Francis of Assisi summed it up by saying that we may be the only Bible that some people see and that we should preach the Gospel, and if necessary, use words!

So, as our students learn about these holy and pious fellow Catholics, it is our hope that they will be inspired to imitate them and their virtues, so that they may truthfully sing,

"Oh, Lord I want to be in that number...when the saints go marchin' in..."

Are you part of SJA's Pastoral Campaign? visit www.stjoan.org We've almost reached our goal! your support is needed



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