

## St. Mary's Catholic Parish School Academic Program Preschool through Eighth Grade in Moscow, Idaho



A major focus of our learning is to grow, work, and thrive as a community of learners in a Christ-centered environment. Once students are in kindergarten, they serve as leaders at the weekly school Mass where they learn to speak, gain confidence in front of people, and know they are truly known and loved by God. In helping our community learn to know that God IS truly present our very lives, the entire school takes a few minutes daily at 12:30 pm to become quiet within and without focused on God's presence in their lives.

Each day we start with an *"All-School Assembly"* where we pray, say the Pledge of Allegiance, sing a patriotic song and engage children in the key events of their school community. At the assembly each person in our school community is recognized on his/her birthday (or half birthday) with a blessing, recognition of their gifts and talents, and a book that s/he has chosen that will go into the library after it has been read. The book will be inscribed with the person's name/birthday.

Your child (from 3-year-old through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) becomes known, valued, and loved in their school community. Service, which means looking to help others, is an important part of our curriculum. As classes and as a school, our students learn to identify and help those in need within our community and across the nation and world. Additionally, our overall curriculum emphasize leadership through religion, music, student council, and service activities. As one graduate recently wrote on the school's FACEBOOK: *"I went there almost 20 years ago and even before the expansion it was top notch! To this day, I credit St. Mary's for instilling solid work ethic, compassion, curiosity, and determination in me. I wouldn't change my time there for anything!!!"*

Simply put, our focus is to provide a strong foundation in the skills needed to be a life-long learning. These skills include, but are not limited to the areas of STREAM:

*Science*  
*Technology*  
*Religion*  
*Engineering*  
*Arts*  
*Mathematics*

The focus in education today is to help students be prepared for creative jobs twenty plus years from now. To face the unknown future, students still need to be fluent in all core subjects, especially reading and thinking skills; they must develop skills of resiliency and hope in the face of adversity. Lastly, they must develop skills of being able to work with others in cooperative and effective ways.

As you read about each class starting in Preschool and continuing all the way through Eighth grade, look for the many ways we are working effectively with our students now and for their future.

**Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.**



**IGNITING** *faith, knowledge, creativity and service*

*Revised July 2021*

## Preschool Academic Program (age3):

St. Mary's Preschool provides a high quality, developmentally appropriate environment for 3-year olds+. Our focus is on social/emotional skills, academics, manners and using the gifts God has given each of us. Our program is structured to meet each child's individual needs. We encourage problem solving and emphasize process rather than product.



### Religion:

Preschool uses the *ABC Jesus Loves Me* program. We learn about the Saints, daily prayer, empathy for others and problem solving. We also follow the Church calendar for Holydays.

### Letter/Phonics/Handwriting:

We work towards identifying upper and lowercase letters and their phonetic sounds. Beginning handwriting is largely based on finger placement, hand strengthening and practice. We use the *Learning Without Tears Handwriting Program*. Workbooks are provided for each student and are used daily.

### Science:

The class learns through exploration and discussion. Exploring at the water and sand tables, chemistry in the kitchen and horticulture on the windowsill are some of the ways we will use science in our classroom.

### Art:

Art is based around the theme of the week. We use paints, scissors, markers, glue etc. to create age appropriate projects.

### Math:

We work on identifying and tracing numbers 1-20 during the year. We introduce concepts such as "More and Less Than", as well as patterning, sequencing, sorting and games.

### Electives:

We have Music and PE classes each week.

**\*\*\*STUDENT must be Age 3 and toilet trained with independent bathroom abilities by August 31<sup>st</sup>.**  
(State of Idaho law)

To the extent that the parents who send their children to these [Catholic] schools are parents like my own, who actually have faith in the church. Faith that it will provide their children with safety, a decent education and values about life and others. This is an institution that stands for all good in the world.

— Sonia Sotomayor —

## Prekindergarten Program (age 4)

Our academic program provides basic skills, fostering a love of learning, while challenging students at their levels of learning with opportunities for success. We encourage the children to grow at their own pace while being taught to love and accept themselves and others.



Our academic program consists of the following elements:

- **Religion:** Religious instruction *ABC Jesus Loves Me* Program, daily prayer, caring for others, dealing with feelings and morals while providing lived examples of a loving Christian community. Children are encouraged to love and accept themselves.
- **Reading & Language Arts:** We work on recognizing names, sounds of letters and capital and lowercase recognition. We read Nursery rhymes and classical stories. Learning continues at circle time, singing class songs, chants, finger plays, and exploring phonic activities. We also use *Handwriting Without Tears* and *Zoo Phonics* programs. We offer *Lexia Core5 Reading* and *Waterford* for pre-literacy. These programs offer personalized learning for each student.
- **Math:** Students concentrate on recognizing patterns, sorting, recognizing and counting numbers 1-20. Simple addition and subtraction problems are taught at this age as well. We also use *Building Thinking Skills*; this book encourages the students thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Writing:** In class we work on our fine motor skills: drawing, coloring, painting, and cutting activities. We focus on proper pencil grasp and letter formation of upper and lowercase letters of the alphabet. We practice left to right and top to bottom. We practice basic letter formation, explore letter formation on lines, and ease into manuscript letter formation when fine motor skills have been mastered.
- **Social Studies:** Students will learn and explore their environment, while learning about their family and neighborhood. They will recite the Pledge of Allegiance daily and learn about famous people.
- **Science:** We focus on five senses, body/health, weather, seasons, plants/farms, life cycle of a butterfly, space and dinosaurs. We use *My Big World with Clifford* which is a fun non-fiction magazine for early-childhood. This tool helps brings our themes to life with color photos activities.
- **Art:** Students explore water coloring, painting and playdoh play. A variety of art media is used and incorporated into our daily work.
- **Music/PE:** Weekly classes.

**IGNITING** faith, knowledge, creativity and service

Revised July, 2021

## Kindergarten Program (age 5)



We teach general studies and academics, with a great focus on social skills, manners, respect, responsibility, resourcefulness, and learning to be a young person with a love and desire to learn.

**Religion:** The religion book/program Kindergarten uses is called *God Loves Us* by Loyola Press. We use a workbook and we do and act out many other religious activities. We learn that God loves us and all the many good things in life such as: family, friends, body, weather, animals, and feelings. Kindergarten attends Mass weekly and has one Mass they help lead with their buddies. Many themes are religion based and we cover holidays such as: All Saints Day, Advent & Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, & Easter. We spend a good part of the month of May talking about Mary. We are introduced to a few Saints. Religion is tied into our behavioral issues and everyday experiences.

**Phonics/Reading/Writing:** In this academic area, students move at their own pace.

(1) Beginning readers study and learn to understand each letter of the alphabet; what the letter looks like, how to write it, how to read it, the sounds it makes, and automatically recognizing it. The students learn to rhyme and differentiate between beginning and ending sounds. They learn to blend letters/sounds together to form words and memorize sight words. (2) For children who are reading as they come into Kindergarten, we work on fluency and comprehension

Students use books in the classroom as well as in the second half of the school year the students can check out books from the school library.

We continue learning D'Nealian print that was started in Prekindergarten. We focus on correctly forming and writing each letter. Students learn to differentiate between letters and words, how to write left to right, and top to bottom correctly on paper. They use their creativity to match pictures/stories with words, phrases, and sentences. They begin spelling and sounding out words. By the end of the year the class will have published a class book and will have completed the writing process. Every day the children write in a daily journal and develop their writing skills. We use computer programs such as *Lexia Reading CORE5* and *Waterford* to supplement skills.

**Mathematics:** Kindergarten uses the *Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley* math book. We focus mainly on number sense. Students practice recognizing, reading, writing, and counting to the number 31. Counting by 1s, 5s, and 10s to the number 100 and by 2s to the number 20. Simple addition and subtraction, beginning to count and identify money (coins) and tell time to the hour, daily time sense skills, such as calendar skills and time of day concepts are all introduced. Geometry shapes, measurements, patterns, and fractions skills are also introduced.

**Science/Social Studies:** We have weekly themes through the school year that are science and social studies related such as: plants, flowers, space, oceans, fish, seasons and weather, and dinosaurs. There is a 6-week long unit about health, nutrition, the human body, the 5 senses, and dental care. Social skills adapting to our world around us and working together as a community are a major part of the social studies curriculum. Holidays, Presidents, family, occupations, friends, safety, manners, and our community are some we cover. We take a few field trips as well as meet with our buddies about once a month to work together on activities.

**Music/PE/Art:** Kindergarten has Music and PE four times a week, and a formal art class once a month, though there are many art activities in any given week.

**Basic Daily Skills/Social Skills:** “Recess and Free Choice Play” are times set aside specifically for students to practice their social habits. They have imaginative play and interaction with their peers. Students work through problems and ask for adult help only when needed. They implement taking turns and sharing. Every morning the class as a whole (with the help and guidance of the teacher) does “calendar”. We focus on day of the month and week, weather, calendar pattern, counting on an ascending timeline and place value. There is a morning message the students read and talk about. We say a daily prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance as well as sing a patriotic song. After lunch each day, we have “Show and Tell” where the child has her/his day to “shine”. We rest and learn how to quietly listen to part of a chapter book story. There are several times throughout each day when a picture book is read and discussed.

“Education of the mind  
without education of the  
heart is no education at all”.

- Aristotle

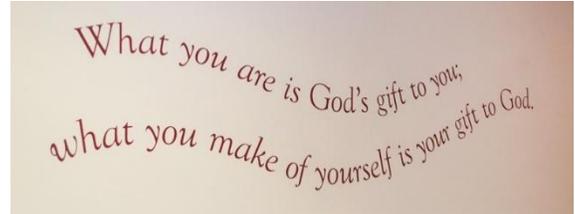
## First Grade Program:

The basic academic program is enhanced with many different enrichment and faith activities throughout the year to provide an environment that promotes excellence in learning.



### The focus for first grade is to:

- Foster a love of learning.
- Learn and develop all basic skills in math and language arts.
- Develop a sense of pride in doing work to the best of our abilities.
- Learn to work effectively, independently and cooperatively in groups and individually.
- Encourage a sense of community.
- Nurture and value individual differences.
- Use our curiosity to learn about our world and environment in science and social studies.
- Deepen our faith and put our faith into action in how we treat one another and through service projects in our community and beyond.



**Religion:** The religion curriculum that is used throughout the school is *Finding God* by Loyola Press. Every chapter in *Finding God* is accompanied with a hands-on activity to deepen students' understanding of the text and to put knowledge into practice. Each student is introduced to prayers that are learned by heart as well as time to experience God speaking with each one in his/her heart. We put our faith into action by the way we treat one another and by carrying out different service projects to help those in need.

**Math:** The focus is on understanding and using basic operations, especially addition and subtraction. We practice math facts to develop speed and accuracy. We also work on problem solving, estimation, number families, time, measurement, number patterns and money. The math curriculum is enriched with *IXL* (self-paced math computer program). Children are challenged to master math facts at their own pace, allowing even some children to begin work on multiplication facts. The first-grade class has a large collection of math manipulatives for the children to use as needed and to help reinforce the concepts we learn from our mathematics book, Scott Forsmann and Addison Wesley's *First Grade Mathematics*, and *IXL*.

**Language Arts: (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Phonics, and Grammar):** Reading and writing is integrated throughout all subject areas. For example, when we are studying animals in science, we will read non-fiction books about animals and write about what we have learned. Reading instruction is carried out individually, in small groups, and with the whole class. Reading books from the large classroom library are sent home weekly in book baggies. The reading material is matched to the needs and strengths of the individual child. Children also select reading books from the school library. Our spelling program is based on the *Phonics, Level A* textbook by Pearson Education. Our phonics program is enhanced with *Lexia* (self-paced reading computer program). We study short and long vowel patterns and beginning and ending blends. The students spend time each day drawing and writing in their journals and working on using standard punctuation, capitalization, and conventional spelling.

**Social Studies:** Our focus is the fundamental needs of human beings – food, shelter, clothing, family and community – and how these needs are met depending on time and place. Topics covered in our social studies curriculum, *My World* by Harcourt Brace, include following maps, living in a community, protecting the earth and our resources, laws that keep us safe, the founding of our country and American heroes, and cultures around the world. We celebrate family traditions and holidays throughout the year integrated with art and other subject areas.

**Science:** Our science curriculum is from Harcourt Science, beginning the year with life science. Topics covered include living and non-living things, plants and animals, characteristics of the vertebrate animals, and habitats. We study earth science including land, water, weather, and seasons. Lastly, we investigate matter, heat and light, and energy and forces including magnets. We focus on making observations and predictions, and recording our predictions, observations, and results of simple experiments with words and pictures.

**Other activities: are:** **Art:** We have periodic art lessons. We learn about a featured-artist through kid-friendly documentaries and articles. We analyze their techniques, then create our own work influenced by them. Art is often integrated into other subject areas to enhance or reinforce a lesson. **Music:** The children have music lessons two times a week from a certified music teacher. They also participate in two whole-school musical productions throughout the year. **PE:** Physical Education lessons, from a certified physical education teacher, are held four times a week. The emphasis is on developing skills, playing as part of a team, good sportsmanship and fitness for life.

## Second Grade Academic Program



While our academic program follows the approved Idaho Department of Education guidelines for second grade, we greatly enhance and supplement our program with many different enrichment and faith activities during the year to provide an environment that promotes excellence in learning.

### **The Focus of grade 2 is to:**

- Foster a love of learning.
- Develop, learn, and grow in basic skills in math and reading.
- Develop of sense of pride in doing work well.
- Learn to work effectively in groups and individually.
- Increase our faith and the knowledge of our faith as we participate in the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- Develop a sense of community in our class and school as well as live our Student Learning Expectations (SLE's): **Respect, Responsibility, and Resourcefulness.**
- Use our curiosity to understand and learn about our world and environment in science and social studies.
- Our religion is integrated into all facets of the curriculum. We are called to act like Jesus and treat each other the way Jesus would.

**Religion:** This is a special year in your child's life. We participate in two Sacraments; Reconciliation and Eucharist; we learn about the Mass, and how we fit into a larger church. The class prays for each other and for people in our community and their needs all during the year. We sing, we are prayer leaders at Mass, and we try to serve our school, community, and the larger community. We participate in several school service projects during the year.

**Math:** We learn our addition and subtraction facts, work on estimating, problem solving, fractions, probability, measurement, telling time, money, and geometry. Multiplication and division are also introduced. We enrich our curriculum with the IXL Math program and other math activities, allowing students to progress

**Language Arts:** (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Phonics, Grammar, and English): Our curriculum fosters a love of reading as well as basic skills. We teach phonics and spelling rules as well as sentence structure, word study, grammar, and usage. We learn how to write sentences correctly but also write for content and the ability to express our thoughts in a variety of areas. We write poems during the school year. A love of books and reading is shared with books read to the class such as special stories like Ramona, Little House on the Prairie, The Chronicles of Narnia, and selected biographies. The Accelerated Reader program helps students maintain and improve reading levels.

**Social Studies:** The focus of second grade is community, why we have rules, community service and workers. We also learn about our country studying George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and symbols of our country.

**Science:** We explore our planet in the areas of life science, earth science, and physical science. Second grade also studies matter, space, the earth, sound and motion, rocks, and our environment. Our second graders are encouraged to participate in the Moscow Community Science Fair. This year we are working on Coding with Ozobots.

### **Extra Activities:**

- ✚ Vandal Pen-pals – as part of the language arts curriculum we write to pen-pals at the University of Idaho weekly during the school year.
- ✚ Enrichment Days – Several times during the year when we are not following Covid restrictions, we have special people enrich our curriculum with a variety of activities.
- ✚ Ozobots – We do robotics with ozobots at least twice a month.
- ✚ Music/PE – our music program is well noted in our community and our children excel in band and choir as well as regular classroom music. Our physical education program provides a strong foundation in movement skills, fitness, and a lifetime love of activity. These skills provide a strong foundation to future sport competition as well as life-long activities. All students participate in music and physical education from certified teachers.

## Third Grade Curriculum



Your child's **THIRD GRADE YEAR** will be focused on increased independence in reading, creative writing, and math. New areas of study will be introduced and include (but are not limited to) cursive handwriting, keyboarding, multiplication, division, critical thinking, and scientific exploration. Also, students will experience band, choir, physical education, computer study, and art. In order to better individualize learning, your child will have computer time on several programs as listed below with a quick summary of intended subject matter. Several fieldtrips, guest speakers, and videos are scheduled throughout the year. These are used to further explain and supplement classroom instruction.

**Religion:** Third graders focus on God as our creator and Father, what it means to follow Jesus, leaders of the Catholic Church, four of the seven Sacraments, and Christian morality as it applies to third graders. Integrated into our units are studies on specific Saints, and discussions on numerous Bible stories. Throughout the school year, students participate in School Masses, prayer services, and Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. We watch the Animated Bible Stories New Testament video series to enhance our understanding of those stories and relate more personally.

**Language Arts:** Third graders focus on reading to learn. They practice comprehension skills and enhance their writing skills to write opinions, narrative, and persuasive pieces. Students learn how to write a complete paragraph, as well as learning how to "ACE" short answer questions using the Answer, Cite, Elaborate strategy. Vocabulary skills are strengthened as students learn words based on their root, prefix, or suffix meaning. Grammar skills are reviewed and expanded on, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns, as well as common punctuation and spelling rules.

**Mathematics:** Computational skills are very important in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Students must master all four operations (addition subtraction, multiplication, division) which helps them with more advanced operations/concepts in the future. Third Grade concepts include multiplication and division facts, measurement, fractions, geometry, probability, elapsed time, counting money/making change, and place value through hundred thousands.

**Science:** Students engage in many hands-on experiences as they learn the scientific method, science tools, weather/climate, rocks & minerals, the solar system, plants & animals, energy & forces, matter, and the human body. Many lessons begin with a hands-on, small-group investigation, then followed with instruction, class discussions, and review activities.

**Social Studies:** Third graders focus on the study of the United States. Students explore the history of the early United States, from Early Americans through the Thirteen Colonies. They explore each region, learning about the Native Americans who lived there, resources and historical places and people. Students learn map skills and locate each state and identify and locate its capital.

**Featured software includes:** Google for Education Suite (tech), Accelerated Reading, typing.com, LEXIA Core 5 (ELA), IXL (ELA & math), Kids A-Z (spelling), eSpark (math), Adobe Spark (tech), and Ozoblockly (tech).

Our third graders are encouraged to participate in the Moscow Science Fair. And all our third graders participate in the following programs: **music and physical education** from certified specialty teachers throughout the week. In music, the students learn to play an instrument.

*Revised July 2021*

## Fourth Grade Academic Program

In the **FOURTH GRADE** we continue to develop skills presented in the primary grades, as well as introducing skills that prepare students for more advanced work in fifth grade and beyond. One area that is unique to fourth grade is the study of **Idaho history**. Students learn about the geography Idaho as well as the history of its settlement, and the diversity of the people who make up our state.



of

In **Religion** the main focus is on the Ten Commandments, and the Beatitudes. We also review the Sacraments with the students as well as talking about the Saints as role models for their lives. We help students develop their relationship with God via prayer and Living Faith Booklet for Kids.

**Language arts include reading, English, Spelling and Writing.** The students are exposed to a variety of areas within the field of reading, including comprehension, genres, literature appreciation through novels, reading strategies and word recognition. We also use Accelerated Reader, on a regular basis in fourth grade. The mechanics of grammar are emphasized, with applications, such as reports, poetry, letters, essay and creative writing.

In **Math**, students extend skills in the basic operations, as well as work with decimals, fractions, time, graphs, and measurement. Daily math review is used to solidify skills learned and cumulative review on a regular basis. IXL is used for practice and enrichment.

In **Science** we cover animal and plant growth and adaptations, soil, water in the oceans, electricity and magnetism, motions, force and machines. Our fourth graders are encouraged to participate in the Moscow Science Fair.

All students participate in **music and physical education** from certified specialty teachers for several days throughout the week.

**“CATHOLIC SCHOOLS PREPARE EVERY STUDENT  
TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THEIR FUTURE  
BY DEVELOPING THEIR MIND, YES, BUT ALSO  
THEIR BODY AND THEIR SOUL AND SPIRIT.”**

DAVID VITTER

**IGNITING** faith, knowledge, creativity and service

Revised July2021

## Fifth Grade Academic Program

In **FIFTH GRADE** students work on projects and tasks where they draw on the skills and strategies they have learned in previous years.

**Religion:** Religion is woven into the fabric of daily life at school. We follow the program that covers Church teachings and scripture, Liturgy and Sacraments, community, morality and service to others. Students plan and present our weekly community Mass. Social justice is a major focus.



**Language Arts includes reading, spelling, English and writing:** Students will learn and use strategies for improved comprehension in both fiction and nonfiction materials in reading. All genres of literature will be presented, and related projects will be assigned. Students use Readworks for comprehension development and practice in written response to content. Vocabulary development is a large part of the language arts curriculum; we study spelling and make use of those learned words in written assignments. We will focus upon the correct use of language, sentence structure, parts of speech, fluency and proper spelling. We then learn and practice correctly using those skills in written work. Oral presentations will also be a regular part of all subjects.

**Math:** Mastery of operations with fractions and decimals will be a major part of the math program. We will continue to work on measurement, geometry, collection and interpretation of data and presentation of the material in charts and graphs. Cumulative review will be used regularly throughout the year with a particular focus on problem solving.

**Social Studies:** Students study American History from the early civilizations and cultures through the Revolutionary War and the beginnings of government. World geography and current events have particular emphasis.

**Science and Health:** Topics in life, earth and physical science will be covered. Students will participate in the Moscow Science Fair and the annual Outdoor Days at Spring Valley. We make as much use as possible of visiting science experts and events in the community.

**Across the Fifth-Grade academic program** we make use of real-life situations to enhance the learning experience. Enrichment activities are used in all subjects. A heavy emphasis is placed on greater personal responsibility towards schoolwork with increased independence in homework and projects and strong work, study, and organizational skills.

All students participate in **music and physical education** with certified specialty teachers throughout the week.





## St. Mary's Parish School

*Our goals at St. Mary's Parish School for grades 6 through 8 are centered on the growth of our students: academic growth through deep curiosity and engagement, and growth in their understanding of the Catholic faith and how it illuminates everyday life.*

Research indicates that a **K-8 middle school format**, rather than having students grouped together in a middle school (Grades 6-8 only), was **most beneficial** in preparing students for high school. Having the middle grade students on site also sets an excellent example for younger students at St. Mary's.

The focus of our middle grades is to:

- **Build the students' confidence:** Both confidence in their practiced skills and confidence to tackle new skills in the future.
- **Provoke the students' curiosity:** Spark their interests in order to trigger creativity and deep analysis of the subjects studied.
- **Provide a Catholic classroom culture:** Support the students' adolescent development through a joyful environment rooted in the profound generosity of Jesus.

### RELIGION

The primary goals of the religion curriculum for students in St. Mary's Parish Middle Grades are three-fold:

1. to enhance students' knowledge and appreciation of the Catholic Faith,
2. to encourage living out the call of Christ in their daily lives, and
3. to grow in one's love for their God and one another.

More specifically, the curriculum seeks:

- To promote students' awareness of the relevance and importance of Catholic Christian values and practices for *daily living*.
- To extend students' knowledge and appreciation of Catholic doctrine, liturgical practices, social teachings, and prayer.
- To increase students' interest in learning more about our Catholic faith, as well as to appreciate and respect other faith traditions.
- To help students share the Good News and our Catholic faith, both within our church community and outside.
- To engage in service activities and projects in charity and humility.

## LANGUAGE ARTS, HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Excellence in Reading, Thinking, Writing, and Speaking are the pillars of the Humanities section of the St. Mary's Middle Grades program. Students will learn to evaluate complex reading material, to write concisely within their journals and essays, and be prepared to speak their ideas based on facts.

To meet these requirements the Language Arts, History, and Social Studies curricula are integrated with each other. The literature studied in Language Arts directly relates to the material studied in History and Social Studies.

Students may expect frequent opportunities to practice writing, including short reflections, longer essays and research papers, and answering open-ended questions that arise during class discussions. Students will be able to follow complex requirements to meet writing objectives and to fuse source material into their writing to support their main ideas and thesis statements.

Vocabulary is pulled from the middle grade's academic program in Science, Math, Religion, and Humanities. Students will know the word's meaning in context as well as the proper spelling. Vocabulary is also highlighted as the students learn how to develop more complex and nuanced writing in print.

Students will receive explicit coaching in study skills such as note-taking, research, and time management. Class time is often spent building concept maps, gathering research, reading, and expressing ideas to the larger group and in smaller collaborative groups.

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**2021-2022 Social Studies/Humanities:** This year we will cover American history from the Civil War present, emphasizing Catholic social teaching in what we learn about civil rights, amendments to the Constitution, and the interactions between the different cultural and ethnic groups that call the U.S. home.

**2021-2022 ELA:** Our literature for the year will begin with Mark Twain and progress through the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, acting as both grist for analyzing literature and supplementary material for History. While 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades will have intensive practice with grammar and writing fundamentals in English Language arts this year, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will have a project-based learning assignment Fall semester and a service-learning assignment Spring semester. Both these 8<sup>th</sup> grade projects will include several written components including a proposal, study plan, routine reflections, and a final project summary.

## MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Math and Science in the Middle Grades at St. Mary's Parish school is dedicated to developing mathematically and scientifically knowledgeable students who make connections between what they learn and the world in which they live.

Math is taught in order to enable each student to reach his or her potential in a supportive, academically rich environment. It is our belief that students will reach their potential in mathematics by using critical thinking skills, engaging in discovery activities, and developing connections among topics. The mathematics curriculum is developmentally solid and ensures that each student is prepared to meet

the challenges at the next level. Our math curriculum is strong, with students typically entering high school a grade ahead in math.

### **Mathematics:**

Sixth Grade:	Pre-algebra: Course 2
Seventh Grade:	Algebra 1
Eighth Grade:	Algebra 1

*Depending on a student's ability and completion of the middle grades' math curriculum, s/he may be enrolled in Geometry.*

For **Science**, the focus is **STREAM**, an integration of **Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Art and Math**. Students take part in hands-on science learning experiences framed around answering questions or addressing challenges that guide instruction and serve to organize their learning progressions. As students pursue answers, they conduct investigations, make models, collect and analyze data, weigh evidence, write explanations, and discuss and present findings.

Students practice science in the classroom the way that scientists and engineers do. They work in collaborative groups to solve problems and explore challenges.

Science in the middle grades covers:

- Life Sciences
- Physics and Chemistry
- Earth and Space Sciences

In the past, sometimes each grade level studied a different branch of science, and sometimes the branches were rotated yearly to accommodate combined-grade classes. This year we will continue with combined-grade classes.

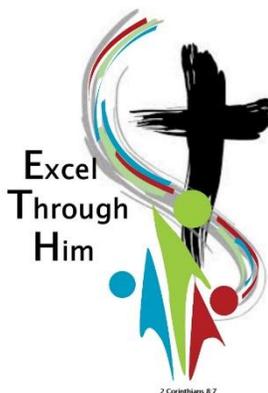
### **2021-2022 Science:**

Physical Sciences in Fall semester

Environmental Sciences (integrating Earth and Life Sciences) in Spring semester

In addition to the academic program for the middle grades, all students take four classes throughout the week in music and physical education.

*In summary*, St. Mary's upper grades 6-8 curricula are designed to use the students' own innate curiosity to motivate their learning. A happy and interested student is a successful student, and that success builds their confidence for life-long learning.

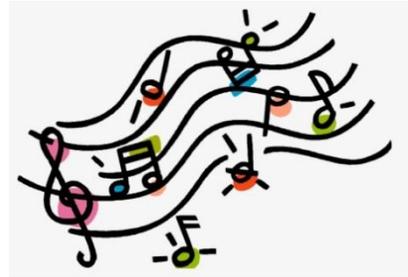


*Revised August 2021*

**IGNITING** faith, knowledge, creativity and service

# St. Mary's Parish School Music Program

St. Mary's School places value in a well-rounded education that includes a music program that supports excellence and creativity. This program provides an immersive musical experience for students in preschool through grade 8.



Throughout the year students are learning and applying music basics such as:

- note reading
- rhythm
- solfeg
- music theory
- music history
- and more

In the St. Mary's Music Classes, students have additional opportunities to learn singing, handbells, ukulele, desk bells, creative percussion, and more...

All 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students learn to play a band instrument (flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, electric bass, or drums) and participate in a variety of events throughout the year.

St. Mary's students also have a strong and beloved tradition of bringing high quality musical theatre productions to the community.

In addition, students have the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive band and choir program that includes genres such as jazz, marching, concert, movie, and popular music.

The St. Mary's music groups have a history of performing at: the University of Idaho homecoming parade and pregame show, Christmas and Spring Concerts, Festivals – (Jazz and Concert), and Disneyland in California.

All in all, the musical experience provided to students at St. Mary's is extraordinary and inclusive.

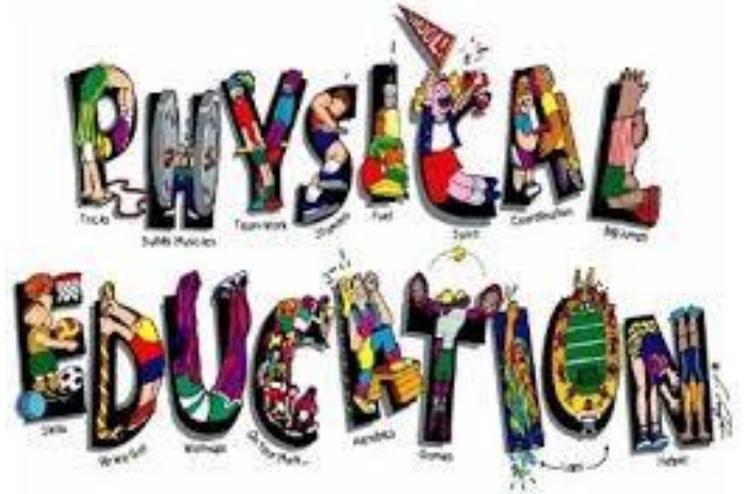


**IGNITING** *faith, knowledge, creativity and service*

Revised March 2021

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education classes are provided for all students in Preschool through Eighth Grade as a core subject.



Physical Education is integral not only to our curriculum but overall for a wholistic educational approach. We believe in the importance of physical activity for our students on a regular basis. Why do we do this?

Research proves that students who participate regularly in a physical education course have:

- ❖ lower levels of stress,
- ❖ better self-discipline,
- ❖ are physically healthier, and
- ❖ do better in their classroom studies.

Research further shows a strong correlation with:

- ❖ fundamental motor skills;
- ❖ verbal, memory, quantitative reasoning; and
- ❖ perceptual awareness.

Our engaging PE program is dynamic and exciting, with high levels of participation. We work to develop gross and fine motor skills, sport strategies, and whole-body fitness.

St. Mary's promotes a life-long love of physical activity and sports, and helps the students grow in multiple areas such as leadership, sportsmanship, teamwork, respect, attitude, and goal-setting.

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Revised July, 2021