



# Parent Guide to Catholic Education

2025-2026



**SAINT MARY**  
**SCHOOL**

Academically Excellent, Passionately Catholic

## An Education for Life

## An integrated curriculum following the natural development of both children and history

At Saint Mary School, our students experience the wisdom of two thousand years of Catholic thought, history, culture, and arts so that they might understand themselves and their world in the light of the truth and acquire the personal character to live happy and well-rounded lives in the service of God and others.

At each stage of their educational journey, there are things we want children to know, things they ought to be able to do, and habits, dispositions, or aptitudes they ought to have acquired or be acquiring. Teachers at each stage can see how one stage builds upon the previous stage and how their work contributes to the “finished product” of a well-formed and educated child.

# Educating in the



## Little Saints

- Different programs designed for 2 and 3 year olds provide an enriching experience tailored to developmental stages
- An early introduction to the Catholic faith in a loving and supportive environment
- Our experienced teachers foster confidence, curiosity, and independence

**A nurturing environment where little ones embark on a journey of wonder and growth.**

## About the Program

- Students learn through guided play, gaining essential social, emotional, academic, and spiritual skills
- Flexible half- and full-day programs, with convenient after-care options
- Located on the serene campus of the Parish of Saint Mary's
- 3-year-olds are introduced to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The CGS is a Montessori-based religious experience which young children instinctively grasp.

# Truest and Fullest Sense



## Pre-K – 4

- A curriculum designed to ignite the innate curiosity and wonderment within each child
- Hands-on experiences foster active engagement, exploring, experimenting, and communicating
- A supportive environment where they can flourish academically, spiritually, and socially

**Where faith and learning intertwine to nurture the young hearts and minds of our future leaders.**



## Kindergarten

- The beginning of the Grammar stage where the foundations of language, faith, and the sciences are laid
- A time of group activity and fun, with an emphasis on the wonder of God's creation
- Reading, Language, Math, and Religion are often integrated, strengthening learning

**A transitional year from the play-based learning of Preschool and Pre-K to the expectations of elementary school.**

### About the Program

- Pre-K – 4 prioritizes the development of literacy and math skills while fostering a deep connection to our faith
- Our dedicated educators guide students on a journey of discovery
- Students develop holistically through specials like Art, Music, and Gym
- Children continue their exploration of faith through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. They begin their exploration of the wonders of language through the Orton-Gillingham literacy program.

### About the Program

- Kindergarten's academic theme is Ancient Civilizations. Students will hear the stories and participate in activities related to this foundational time in world civilization.
- Children continue their exploration of faith through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The multi-sensory Orton-Gillingham method is used to teach all components of language development.
- Each day students participate in either Latin, Art, Music, Gym, or Library.
- Students begin hearing the stories of Western Civilization and also begin learning the language of that civilization, Latin.

# Building Lifelong Learning



## 1st Grade

- First grade's academic theme is Ancient Greece
- Students develop their knowledge and love of language through vocabulary, phonics, spelling, the beginnings of grammar and oral reading
- A traditional, sequential approach to mathematics instruction, emphasizing things like patterning, mental math, memorization, and critical thinking

**Students are given an invitation to know, love, and trust God.**



## 2nd Grade

- Second grade's academic theme is Ancient Rome
- Through a systematic approach, students develop critical reading and writing strategies and skills needed for success
- Students strengthen listening skills and imagination by hearing stories and reinforcing through an engaging activity book.

**Students prepare for First Reconciliation and First Communion, participating fully in the prayer life of the school.**

### About the Program

- Nature walks, material gathering, and nature crafts introduce students to the beauties and wonder of God's creation
- Students learn ancient history by listening to and discussing stories, and doing related activities
- Each day students participate in either Latin, Art, Music, Gym, or Library.
- With a developing grasp of language, students begin expressing themselves through the use of the written and spoken word.

### About the Program

- The mathematics curriculum provides rigorous content focused on building deep conceptual understanding of key skills and concepts in an orderly, natural format
- In this stage, the solid development of language skills is paramount
- Students begin using and learning from a traditional reading program where the skills they've mastered come together.

# ers Grounded in Faith



## 3rd Grade

- Third grade's academic theme is The Middle Ages
- In science, exciting and engaging activities promote curiosity and foster the development of science inquiry skills
- *Writing Our Catholic Faith* now moves into teaching cursive handwriting.

**Students continue to develop their understanding of God's love and mercy through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.**



## 4th Grade

- Fourth grade's academic theme is Early Modern Times
- Through a unique and orderly method of analyzing the parts of speech, students will find the mastery of grammar achievable and meaningful
- Using a traditional, sequential approach to mathematics instruction students learn grade appropriate algebraic reasoning and problem solving

**Students delve deeper into the narrative of salvation history and learn that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises.**

### About the Program

- Using a traditional, sequential approach to mathematics instruction students learn grade appropriate algebraic reasoning and problem solving
- Using Catholic words, sentences, and pictures, students begin to learn cursive basic strokes, letters, joining, and numerals.
- Students strengthen listening skills and imagination by hearing stories and reinforcing through an engaging activity book
- Both the 3rd and 7th grade students study the Middle Ages and work cooperatively in developing a medieval experience for the entire school. In 3rd grade, students are introduced to the many aspects of grammar, utilized in both speaking and writing.

### About the Program

- In science, students confidently build upon their experiences to develop a lifelong understanding of concepts
- Each day students participate in either Latin, Art, Music, Gym, or Library
- Students develop listening and recall skills and participate in appropriate and engaging projects
- Students continue their grammatical development through diagramming sentences and are introduced to the beauty and art of creative writing and speaking.

# Developing intellectual, physical



## 5th Grade

- Fifth grade's academic theme is America
- Students learn the tremendous part the Catholic Church has had in the development of western Civilization, including American civilization
- Exposed to various genres of writing, students learn how to collect, interpret, discuss, and apply information

**Students begin the transition to middle school by having enrichment and switching for a few classes.**



## 6th Grade

- Sixth grade's academic theme is the Ancient World
- New skills are developed that correspond to the developmental growth of the students from children into pre-adolescence.
- Students begin to ask deeper questions and make connections through the Socratic Seminar, deepening their ability to discuss and present in a more mature and professional way

**The beginning of the Logic Stage where students grow deeper in the understanding of what they are learning.**

### About the Program

- The mathematics curriculum provides rigorous content focused on building deep conceptual understanding of key skills and concepts in an orderly, natural format
- Students study The Creed as they understand they need to stand firm in their faith
- Each day students participate in either Latin, Art, Music, Gym, or Library
- Students receive their first exposure to enrichment courses including: Computer Science, Financial Literacy, Theology, Philosophy, and Writing & Rhetoric.
- Students may begin participating in the school choir.

### About the Program

- Middle school utilizes a multiple educator model while maintaining classical teaching methods
- Students begin to use and understand fractions within word problems, decimals, graphing, and other higher order mathematical skills
- Students participate in electives such as Computer Science, Financial Literacy, Theology, Philosophy, and Writing & Rhetoric.
- 6th grade students work cooperatively with their fellow students in the primary grades in developing an experience in the Ancient World for the entire school to enjoy.
- Students have their first experience of the Classical Learning Test (CLT) which uses meaningful mathematical examples and examples from classical literature to gauge student progress.

# I, social, and emotional growth



## 7th Grade

- Seventh grade's academic theme is the history of Christian Civilization from the Roman times to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution
- Students continue to develop their ability to comprehend, analyze, and critique novels through a Socratic Seminar
- Each day as well students participate in physical education, Latin, Music, or Art

**In 7th Grade, Honors English and Honors Math are introduced.**



## 8th Grade

- Eighth grade's academic theme is The New World and the American Venture.
- Several classical novels that relate to the historic theme of the year are discussed in a Socratic Seminar format.
- Students study *Algebra I* or *Algebra II* (and potentially *Geometry*) in Honors Math
- In Honors English, students delve deeply into the mind and message of the authors they study.

**Students begin their in-depth preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to be conferred in ninth grade.**

### About the Program

- Middle School Science is an integration of earth, life, and physical science taught each year at deepening levels
- During middle school students actively participate in the Mass as readers, servers, cantors, and may lead morning prayers
- Students participate in electives such as STEM, Theology, Financial Literacy, and Philosophy
- Both the 3rd and 7th grade students study the Middle Ages and work cooperatively in developing a medieval experience for the entire school. In 3rd grade, students are introduced to the many aspects of grammar, utilized in both speaking and writing.

### About the Program

- Involvement in the spiritual life of the school is strong with participation in daily prayers, weekly Mass, monthly confession, devotional practices, and service to others
- Science is an integration of earth, life, and physical science
- Students participate in electives such as STEM, Theology, Financial Literacy, and Philosophy
- During their years at Saint Mary School, students have studied in-depth God's presence in our world. They have also studied in-depth, Western Civilization from the Ancient Times to the present. Students will dramatically demonstrate what they have learned in a format they will decide upon during their 8th grade year.

# Following the gold standard of a classical Catholic liberal arts education – because it works.

- Saint Mary School is a Catholic school in the classical liberal arts tradition. We educate our children in the truest and fullest sense by giving them the necessary tools of learning and by fostering wonder and love for all that is genuinely true, good, and beautiful.
- The rich educational tradition of the Catholic church is the oldest and most successful educational system in the world. Education in this deep and comprehensive sense extends beyond the classroom – it encompasses and forms one's life.
- Jesus Christ is the bedrock on which everything else that we do is built. Prayer, religion class, Mass, service to others, and seasonal liturgical celebrations are as much a part of life and formation at Saint Mary as academics.
- Technology is used in all classrooms by both teachers and students. From Promethean boards, to iPads, computer labs, robotics, and STEM, technology supports our rich curriculum but does not supplant it.
- Because we want our students to read, speak, and – especially – think well, we have incorporated Latin into our curriculum for all students. Latin is one of the foundational languages of Western Civilization and trains the mind to think analytically.



**SAINT MARY**

**S C H O O L**

Academically Excellent, Passionately Catholic

**Discover Saint Mary School.**  
**Schedule a tour.**

Explore our outstanding pre-K through 8th-grade programs by scanning the QR code or contacting Head of School Jeff Johnson at (732) 671-0129.

