



ACADEMICS

Kindergarten

Holy Redeemer Kindergarten is a developmental program with an emphasis on hands-on learning. As such, the program acknowledges, affirms, and builds on the specific pace of each child's learning within the contents of the Archdiocesan curriculum and Holy Redeemer's mission statement. In addition to Open Court and Orton-Gillingham reading programs, students are exposed to a variety of experiences such as: dramatic play, oral expression, and storytelling to aid in the acquisition of early reading skills.

Pattern blocks, unit cubes, balance scales, and other hands-on activities are used in the math program. These experiences provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of pattern, to sort and classify, to categorize, and to think logically, all of which are essential in the development of mathematical thinking.

Each classroom has a maximum of twenty-eight students and is staffed by a teacher and a full-time teacher assistant. Two reading specialists provide daily support during language arts instruction. In addition to learning the fundamentals of reading and math, students study religion, science and social studies. Foreign language, technology, library, music, physical education and art are also part of the kindergarten curriculum.

Participation in religious activities such as: masses, prayer services, and age-appropriate service projects help to plant the seeds of faith and community service early in the primary grades.

Grade 1

In first grade, the child at Holy Redeemer begins a more formal approach to learning. Children continue their progress from emergent readers to independent readers through whole group and small group instruction. Flexible grouping is utilized to allow for individual growth and progress. Phonemic awareness, auditory processing, phonics, and literature combine to form the reading program. The Open Court and Orton-Gillingham programs are used to develop phonetic and decoding skills which are necessary for independent reading.

Sadlier, *Progress in Mathematics* is the text used in the primary grades. Critical thinking, problem solving, and analysis are emphasized through the use of manipulative and direct instruction. The children study new concepts through hands-on experiences and exploration. This program allows the children to deepen their mathematical understanding while they develop basic skills. Ever cognizant of the importance of fluency in computation, teachers reinforce with drill and practice.

Each classroom has a maximum of twenty-eight students staffed by a teacher and a full-time teacher assistant. Two reading specialists provide daily support during the language arts instruction. In addition to learning the fundamentals of reading and math, children study religion, science, social studies and foreign language. Religious education is further supplemented through liturgical and prayer experiences as well as service activities. Music, art, physical education, technology and library complete the first grade experience.

Grade 2

Our second grade students continue to grow both academically and spiritually. Direct reading instruction is maintained through small, flexible grouping. Reading for meaning, critical thinking, and comprehension are stressed through the on-going methods and strategies of Orton-Gillingham and Open Court.

Second grade language is taught using the Shurley English Method, a unique program incorporating traditional skills with an innovative approach to learning these skills. Shurley English provides a solid foundation on which to build advanced writing and speaking proficiencies.

In second grade, Sadlier Mathematics is combined with Simple Solutions, a daily mixed review of previously taught math concepts and skills. Through teacher-directed instructions, hands-on-learning, and ongoing practice, children deepen mathematical understanding while developing problem solving skills.

Each classroom has a maximum of twenty-eight students and is staffed by a teacher and a full-time teacher assistant. Two reading specialists provide daily support during language arts instruction. Reading, math, religion, social studies and science are core subjects in the second grade. Foreign language, technology, art, music, library and physical education complete the second grade curriculum. Throughout the year students participate in service projects, masses, and liturgical celebrations, with emphasis on sacramental preparation.

Grade 3

Students entering the third grade advance into the intermediate level at Holy Redeemer. Classes at this level have a maximum of twenty-eight students staffed by a full-time teacher. Third grade instruction continues to emphasize the fundamental skills in math and reading. Increasing emphasis is placed on the study of science and social studies. Religion is core to the curriculum. Classes in technology, foreign language, physical education, art, music, and library provide increase learning opportunities.

Reading and writing skills are linked through the study of literature. A variety of independent and group activities are used to enhance the learning process. English is continued to be taught using the Shurley English method. Students are assigned daily writing activities to support the learning process. Novels are an integral part of the program and are interspersed between reading units in the student anthology.

The Sadlier math program focuses on application of computational skills along with problem solving strategies. Through whole group instruction and cooperative learning, children explore mathematical concepts and apply them to everyday life skills. Students work to maintain addition and subtraction skills as well as toward the mastery of multiplication and division facts. Simple Solutions provides mixed daily review.

Various instructional methods are used in the third grade classroom. The students transition from small to large group instruction and are encouraged to become independent learners. Assignments are longer with multiple activities and assessments. Study skills are developed and the focus begins to shift from memorizing facts to the ability to apply the knowledge learned. As the year progresses, more responsibility for learning is placed on the child.

Participation in religious instruction, liturgical celebrations, and service projects contribute to the faith formation of the students in the third grade at Holy Redeemer. The study of the Bible is a focal point in our weekly Bible Sleuth program.

Grade 4

Each fourth grade class consists of a maximum of twenty-eight students and one teacher. As developmentally appropriate, the fourth grade continues focusing on responsibility and independent learning.

Reading tools include a literature-based anthology and trade books. The emphasis in reading is on teaching the students strategies that will help to develop their comprehension skills including making inferences and predicting

outcomes. The Shurley English Method continues to develop grammar, vocabulary, writing and outlining skills.

Sadlier, *Progress in Math*, and Simple Solutions combine to solidify previously learned and newly acquired skills. Computation, application and problem solving are explored.

The students in fourth grade also study music, art, physical education, and foreign language. Weekly library and technology sessions are also scheduled. The children are encouraged to live their faith through the many opportunities provided to perform service and participate in liturgical celebrations.

Grade 5

Preparation of students for the transition into Middle School is a primary goal at the fifth grade level. Religion classes, liturgical celebrations and service projects are an important part of the spiritual experience for every child. In addition to learning the core subjects of religion, reading, math, social studies, science, and language arts, the students also study foreign language, technology physical education, music, art, and library.

Sadlier, *Progress in Mathematics*, and Simple Solutions continue to implement the Archdiocesan curriculum. These programs teach fluency of basic mathematics skills as well as application and critical thinking which paramount in grade five.

Concrete modeling through direct teacher instruction helps develop abstract understanding and critical thinking skills. Multiple methods and strategies for problem solving are used.

The fifth grade language arts program includes a diverse collection of resource materials as well as a literature-based anthology to enhance student learning. When reading at this level, students are taught comprehension and reading skills, which enable them to independently acquire and apply knowledge. Written expression includes the writing process, grammar, and mechanics. The Shurley English Method continues to develop and support language arts.

Grades 6-8

Grades sixth, seventh and eighth comprise the Middle School. The goal of the Holy Redeemer Middle School is to teach students to be focused, organized, responsible, and independent learners. In addition to refining the study and organizational skills taught in the intermediate grades, teachers work to develop time management and the setting of priorities as students learn to balance the commitments of academics and extracurricular activities.

The Middle School focuses on the student's ability to apply concepts. By using a variety of methodologies linked to different learning styles, teachers give all

students the opportunity to learn successfully. Having a clear understanding of the fundamental vocabulary in the content areas is necessary, but students are also challenged to apply those terms in situations that involve problem solving, critical thinking, and drawing inferences. Holy Redeemer graduates consistently demonstrate higher level skills such as the ability to formulate questions, clarify problems, observe patterns, draw relationships, identify assumptions, and weigh judgments.

The Middle School recognizes the importance of students possessing a full range of communication skills. Writing is emphasized across the curriculum. A staff-created rubric is in place for evaluating written responses in all subject assessments. Students are encouraged to hone their oratorical skills and are provided with many formal and informal opportunities to do so in classroom presentations and debates. Technology is integrated into all subject areas. Students work on projects in their subject area classes that require them to evaluate information and properly cite sources while conducting research.

Our students follow a rigorous academic schedule. Courses include religion, math, science, social studies, English, literature, computer technology, library and foreign language. Each grade level engages in service projects and worships together as a community in liturgical celebrations. The Middle School experience is enriched with the participation in of Fine Arts, including music and art, as well as, physical education. These studies and experiences broaden each child's faith and put into practice their beliefs.