

St. Isidore Catholic School's curriculum is fully aligned to the Diocesan Learning Standards and the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools. Furthermore, our curriculum is vertically aligned from grades preK through 8. Our curricula is strengthened even more by using a continuous improvement framework based on Response to Intervention / Multiple Tiered System of Supports, scientifically based instructional strategies, formative and summative assessment, and positive behavior management.

## *The Whole Child*

A complete Grade Eight experience revolves around developing the skills of the whole child. At St. Isidore Catholic School, it is our goal to provide an opportunity for children to grow not only academically, but spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically as well. We will instruct the children in Christian values, social skills and manners, independence, and the structure and routine of school. It is our quest to build a foundation for the children to become not only life-long learners, but loving and caring individuals. Through partnering with parents, we are able to meet these high goals.

## *Religion*

Jesus is at the center of everything we do at St. Isidore Catholic School. All 5th through 8th grade students focus on different topics in Religion throughout the year, but also participate in some joint service projects and activities, such as:

- Adoration
- Reconciliation
- Living Rosary
- Plan and participate in weekly liturgies
- 8th grade celebrates a special mass for Mary: "May Crowning"
- 8th grade participates in a Faith Formation retreat, in preparation of receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation
- 8th grade receives the Sacrament of Confirmation

The Religion program for Eighth grade students focuses on the Church; from beginning at Pentecost, through her

history, and encompassing her teachings and tradition. Students will also focus on their role in living out their faith.

Major units of study include:

- Catholic morality
- Moral issues faced by an Eighth grader
- Evangelization
- The Second Vatican Council
- Teachings and Traditions of the Church
- The Liturgical Year
- Our relationship with Jesus
- Prayers and Practice
- Acceptance and use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation
- A particular Saint, chosen by each student for Confirmation
- School, parish, and community opportunities for service

## *English Language Arts*

The English Language Arts program is all encompassing and includes reading, phonics, writing, speaking, listening, and the study of literature. The components of the program emphasize the development of those skills that allow students to read with fluency, comprehend and interpret written materials, communicate well, and listen and speak effectively.

Two affective goals of our Middle School ELA program are to:

1. Encourage students to discover the intrinsic joy of reading and
2. Foster independence in an environment that nurtures community and empowers students to grow in wisdom.

As a part of our ELA program, students will use literary texts and materials to:

- Seek God's Truth, Beauty and Goodness
- Identify ways to practice Christian virtues
- Live out the social teachings of the Church

All 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th graders will:

- Write three major pieces of writing each year: one narrative, one persuasive | argument, and one informative | explanatory
- Write routinely
- Demonstrate a command of the conventions of standard English, punctuation, capitalization
- Determine meanings of words and phrases used in literary and Biblical texts, including Greek and Latin roots
- Study literary devices like figurative language, allegory, and personification

- With an appropriate Catholic response, read, comprehend, and defend literature, stories, dramas, poems, and other fiction

**Eighth graders** will read multiple central texts in a variety of genres that will be part of the text sets that will be connected to other content areas. For example, Catholic Social Teaching, Church Scripture, and Catholic Virtues will be connected to literature. Interdisciplinary connections will be made to the American Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War. All Diocese of Joliet Standards for reading, language, speaking and listening, and writing will be achieved in addition to other Diocesan Standards as needed (e.g., Faith Formation Standards). Students will read, discuss, write, listen, and produce visuals, use technology, ask questions, and present to classmates.

## *Mathematics*

Middle School students will develop their mathematical ability while learning to value mathematics and its uses in daily life. Solving problems using a variety of approaches and communicating ideas clearly and logically are emphasized. Technology is integrated through ALEKS, a web-based assessment and learning system. Select students participate in an advanced mathematics course, including possible attendance at a local high school.

### **MATHEMATICAL PRACTICAL STANDARDS:**

Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them  
Reason abstractly and quantitatively  
Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others

- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning
- Use mathematical vocabulary

- Reconstruction
- Westward Expansion
- Immigration
- Industrialization
- World War I
- World War II
- Holocaust
- And more...

**Eighth grade** students will be able to:

- Identify irrational numbers, as well as approximate them by rational numbers
- Work with radicals and integer exponents
- Understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations
- Analyze and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations
- Define, evaluate and compare functions
- Use functions to model relationships between quantities
- Understand congruence and similarity using physical models, or geometry software
- Understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem
- Investigate patterns of association in bivariate data
- Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving volume of cylinders, cones, and spheres

## Science

Science is a gift of human intellect, which is given to us by God to help us understand His Creation. Science is the study of interdependent relations in our Earth's systems and structures that reflect God's Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Students participate in interactive discussions and hands-on experiences through lab work and demonstrations to understand physical science, life science, and earth science. Students identify problems, formulate and test hypotheses, and evaluate experimental results to better understand the scientific method and experimental design. Students demonstrate proficiency by identifying relationships, asking questions, developing and using models, and constructing explanations of the core ideas.

In **Eighth grade**, through the study of Physical Science, students gain content knowledge, as well as understand the following concepts, skills and processes. Including:

- Structures and Properties of Matter
- Patterns in the Periodic Table
- Chemical Reactions
- Motion and Stability: Forces and Interactions
- Energy
- Waves and their Applications

## Social Studies

Social Science is the study of society and the relationship of individual members within a society, which we use to uncover the truth of our connection with one another through time and across geographic barriers. This study also helps to discover the deeper truth of each one's relationship with God.

Seventh and Eighth grade students prepare for their role as informed citizens by studying United States History beginning with European colonization through modern day U.S. History.

Units studied are:

- Colonization
- American Revolution
- Constitution
- Civil War

**Eighth grade** students take both the Federal and Illinois Constitution test. They will also visit our state capital, Springfield, after studying the Illinois Constitution.

## Physical Education

In Fifth through Eighth Grade, our students learn and explore factors that affect a healthy lifestyle. Students will maintain personal fitness, develop muscle strength, endurance, and flexibility; use rules, safety, and strategies of sports and games; and demonstrate sportsmanship and participation in sports and games.

Seventh & Eighth grade students explore the dimension of the Wellness Wheel.

## Technology

As part of our STEM focus, **Eighth grade** students will begin to develop digital skills enabling cross curricular activities that integrate technology in the classroom. Students will engage in STEM activities that emphasize the creative use of multiple technologies.

- All fifth through eighth grade students will:
- Produce digital content including text, images and video using a variety of digital tools
- Solve simple and complex problems using various technologies
- Continue to expand and develop computer programming skills
- Responsibly use the internet for research purposes
- Become proficient in keyboarding skills
- Continue to understand what it means to be a good digital citizen

## The Arts

All Middle School students have the opportunity to express themselves through various art forms. Elements and principles of art are practiced and artistic expression is encouraged. Students are encouraged to use vocabulary throughout their curriculum. Different artists, cultures, and their effect on society are explored and studied in various subjects. Technology is used to promote understanding and express ideas.

## Foreign Language: Spanish

The study of a foreign language allows students to develop a global perspective while broadening their knowledge of the world around them. Learning a foreign language allows students to be introduced to cultures different from their own. Students in Sixth, Seventh & Eighth grade will take Introduction to Spanish three times per week. Students will complete Spanish I by the end of their 8th grade year.