

September 2015

Dear Parents,

Here is a summary of the Music Curriculum for the children of St. Ambrose Catholic School.

Our PreK

program presents music through rhythm and movement. The children are introduced to songs that encourage them to follow directions and to hear musical sound. We work in small groups and full group. Percussion instruments are presented to them when appropriate. The instruments we work with are: triangle, drum, sticks, tambourine, and sand blocks. Building their confidence, we have them come up in front of the class to perform and to lead. They all love it. Along with the regular selections of classroom music, we introduce Sacred music from Mass. Some of these selections might be This Little Light, Jesus in the Morning, and God Is So Good.

Kindergarten

builds on the PreK concept and expands the experiences of enjoying and performing music. Boys and girls are encouraged to perform in small groups and whole group activities. I use school music texts and music materials I have purchased. The children use percussion instruments; they dance; and they develop expressive movements in the classroom. Music videos are presented to enrich the topic of the week. Some of the videos are AniMusic, Fantasia, Wee Sing series, and more.

First grade

again builds on the prior experiences but now we add a text just for their grade level. Music from the text gives a rich array of selections of seasonal and favorite song selections. We dance, listen to all types of music, sing Mass music, and perform in class. The students begin a series of theory of music. We begin this section by introducing the treble clef and high and low sounds. I have in-class books that we read and many of these books have recordings to go with them.

Second Grade

continues the music curriculum pattern with text books for this grade level . We work with the children on a mini-play in the text about Friends. Children this age love to sing, dance, and perform on a higher level than before. If children are studying music privately they are encouraged to perform for the class. Theory at this level presents the children with treble clef, bass clef, whole notes, and half notes. We present line notes and space notes. Music for Mass is also encouraged and presented. We also read stories and listen to music from the stories. Choir is offered to these students if they are ready.

Third and Fourth Grade

use all the disciplines listed above and build on them. We sing, perform, have a text for these students, sing Mass music, and use videos and recordings appropriately. We study composers and begin to be able to report on the lives of these composers. The videos we use are lives of the composers, Wee Sing themes, and seasonal films. Third Grade students study the recorder; our Fourth Grade students can join band. Both classes can join choir, which meets on Wednesday after school. Their Theory learning is expanded to include the staff, the scale, and notations on the staff. We learn about dynamics--soft and loud.

Fifth Grade

also builds on the music concepts learned in the grades described above. Students may sing in our choir, join the band, and/or perform in the classroom. Individual performances are encouraged. Theory at this level covers the scale, notation, dynamics, composers and their music, liturgical music, and writing melody lines of their own. They sing from classroom texts. I use hand-copied music from various sources. Music for Mass is very important. Choir membership is encouraged.

The Junior High

continues with the growth and development of music concepts and applications . The students build on all the concepts learned to date and add to their skills and knowledge in melody writing, chords, families of instruments, composers, and styles of music. Boys and girls in the Junior High are expected to pass a test of general knowledge of music facts. We play MUSIC Bingo, Jeopardy with Music, and other music games. These students may join choir. I encourage small-group performance participation.

Overall

Students are encouraged throughout our program to grow in their love of music, perform when they are ready, and sing/dance/create music in the classroom and beyond. We now have a School Musical Play. Mrs. Moreno, the director, and I have worked together on the play for many years. Every year for the past fifteen years she has produced a play. I feel blessed to be able to help her. Students will be asked to try out for these plays.

I am blessed to be able to teach your boys and girls.

Thank you for these amazing children.

Sincerely in Christ,

Mrs. Pat Fitzmaurice