



Fourth Grade Curriculum

Religion

Our religion curriculum is taught using *Spirit of Truth The Kingdom of God Jesus Teaches Us How to Live* by the Sophia Institute. Students learn about the Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit, and how he guides the Church, and how Jesus continues his mission through the Church. In 4th grade, students focus on moral life. Additional topics include:

- What it means to be created in the image and likeness of God, and how we should respond to His grace so we can spend eternity with Him in heaven
- Conscience formation, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Golden Rule, and the Great Commandment
- The reality of sin and the necessity of virtue
- Children attend Mass on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Adoration
- Mass Buddies
- Prayer Buddies

Math

In fourth grade, we use *Progress in Mathematics* by Sadlier. Progress in Mathematics, Sadlier 4th Grade is a comprehensive math curriculum designed to build conceptual understanding through student-centered lessons, with a focus on multi-digit multiplication and division, fractions, and place value. The program includes both print and digital components, offering rigorous content, teacher support, and various practice opportunities to build confidence and proficiency.

We supplement our Sadlier curriculum with IXL including online access for at home and in class instruction. IXL is a learning platform that lets students practice skills they're learning and guides them to material that will help them grow the most with differentiated lessons.

Language Arts

The language arts curriculum includes multiple resources and formats. Sadlier's *Grammar Workshop, Grade 4* is a consumable work text designed to teach grammar, usage, and mechanics in the context of writing. Key features include a three-step lesson format (Learn, Practice, Write), six units covering grammar, usage, mechanics, and the writing process, and online resources like interactive quizzes and games.

Our spelling program includes two courses of action. One option uses the resources *Words Their Way* and *Word Journeys* for a focus on spelling principles. Once students have shown success in learning developmental spelling principles, they focus on a second option which includes words commonly misspelled by fourth graders nationally.

These words, along with skills taught in grammar are practiced and enforced in our writing curriculum. Our writing curriculum is based on Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Writing. Skills taught and practiced are paragraph structure, various types of writing, and the benefit of writing conferences to address individual needs.

Reading

Students use novel studies to strengthen their reading and thinking skills. Through reading novels, they practice comprehension by summarizing events and making inferences. They also explore literary elements such as character, setting, plot, and theme. In addition, students identify and analyze figurative language like similes, metaphors, and personification to deepen their understanding of the text.

Vocabulary

Students use an online platform (vocabulary.com) as a way to enhance and practice their vocabulary skills. The students are able to apply their vocabulary words through definitions, multiple meanings, synonyms, antonyms, and in context. The vocabulary words are based on the novel studies students are reading in the classroom.

Social Studies

Our social studies curriculum is taught using various resources including *Tennessee Through Time* by Gibbs Smith Education. Topics include:

- Native Americans
- European Exploration
- Colonial times
- Revolutionary War
- Government
- Study of Tennessee
- States and capitals
- Geography

Science

Our science curriculum is taught using a variety of resources. Examples of the standards topics covered include:

- Earth's Layers
- Geological features and their patterns-mountain ranges, ocean trenches, volcanos, and earthquakes
- Erosion and weathering
- Fossils
- Fresh water/salt water
- Solar system-Earth's interaction with the sun
- Phases of the moon
- Ecosystems and their interactions
- Plants and animals/life cycles
- Vertebrates and invertebrates
- Food chains/Food webs and the roles of producers, consumers and decomposers
- Energy and Energy Transfers
- Waves and their Application for Information Transfer-Sound waves, Light, and Lenses

We use Mystery Science, Generation Genius, National Geographic Kids and various other websites to enhance the curriculum.

Handwriting

Our handwriting curriculum is taught using Universal publishing's *Writing Our Catholic Faith*. In 4th grade, review of cursive basic strokes, letters, and numerals. Extended cursive writing activities help students develop fluency and automaticity. Detailed stroke descriptions help students understand proper letter formation. Special pages on joining cursive letters. 3/8" writing lines with midline and descender space.

Technology

St. Matthew is an Apple Distinguished School. Technology is used in whole group and small group center instruction. Students attend computer class twice a week, where they have access to a full set of iPads and keyboards. This course offers an in-depth exploration of word processing and presentation software fundamentals, alongside skills in keyboarding, coding, 3D printing, robotics, stop motion animation, as well as video editing and podcasting. Technology is used in a developmentally appropriate way in our 4th grade program.

Field Trips

Fourth graders experience opportunities to engage with real-world learning when they take a trip to The Hermitage and serve as docents for the day. Additional "in house" field trips such as authors, scientists, and community professionals are scheduled throughout the year as well.