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**Program of Studies**

**2021-2022**

**August 25, 2021**

**St. Paul’s Choir School**

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# General Description

The educational program at Saint Paul’s Choir School and its associated policies and expectations may change at any time. This document as written does not limit our authority to alter its policies and procedures to suit any changed circumstances. As appropriate, significant changes made after the publication of this document will be communicated to students and parents as they occur.

The Curriculum and essential elements of an educational program are designed to ensure that St. Paul’s Choir graduates successfully complete a course of study in a specific range of disciplines and skills that, in the judgment of the faculty, provide the appropriate foundation for a classical liberal education and professional music formation. Topics, texts, and materials occasionally may not win the full approval of all students or parents. However, they will be selected carefully and thoughtfully within our academic faculty, then presented and considered in managed contexts.

# The Curriculum

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## Introduction

Rooted in the faith that we are created in the image and likeness of God with the capacity for reason and the ability to know the Truth as revealed to us by God, the Saint Paul’s Choir School Program of Studies is designed to inculcate in students a love of learning and an attentiveness to growth in musical and intellectual virtue. Students are introduced to music and academic disciplines as giving them unique lenses through which they can vigorously engage with the deepest and most profound questions about the world that human beings ever asked. Attention is given to forming students with a solid background knowledge in each discipline while also helping them begin developing independent thinking skills in reading analytically, asking profound questions, thinking logically, solving problems, and expressing their thoughts in clear writing. The approach is broadly interdisciplinary, helping to show students the interconnectedness of all human knowledge. Students who successfully complete the Program of Studies are well-prepared to enter competitive high schools. They leave Saint Paul’s with a strong musical and academic foundation and with the skills and habits necessary to pursue further work in high school, college, and life.

## Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum is based on a solid understanding of numeration and problem solving, developing the ability to demonstrate the function of mathematics in life. Throughout the curriculum students are introduced to habits of mind that foster algebraic and geometric thinking. The culmination of the program is Geometry in grade eight. Geometry is introduced throughout all grades and more specific skills are taught for students to use formal logic to support mathematical conjectures and proofs. With the assistance of technology to aid in graphing and visualizing mathematical relationships, students develop a strong mathematical foundation and advance their algebraic and geometric habits of mind that will lead to success in high school. A strong emphasis is placed on understanding the logical reasoning of mathematics and the classical origins of mathematical inquiry.

* **Grade 3 & 4** Course concentrates on mastering mathematical numeracy skills with whole numbers, fractions and decimals and applying them to real world situations. Students transfer their knowledge of fractions and decimals to use with percentages and probability. Geometric concepts of 2-dimensional figures are introduced discussing differences/ similarities and categorizing them. Perimeters and areas will also be introduced. Measures of central tendencies will be introduced.
* **Grade 5** This course is designed to increase proficiency in math numeracy skills and expose students to a wide variety of math topics. Computation skills with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions will be reviewed and algebraic operations with integers will be introduced. Students will be expected to demonstrate competency in these computations without the aid of a calculator. They will develop an understanding of ratio, proportion, and percent, and apply these skills in probability and other real-life situations. Integration of their study of graphs and data assessment will be demonstrated through everyday life situations. Students will also apply measurement skills, conversion of units, and the principles of area and volume in the study of basic geometry. The naming of a variety of 3-dimensional geometric shapes, along with finding the surface areas of a rectangular prism and various pyramids is covered. Volume of complex rectangular prisms is studied. Linear equations will be introduced through rate of change, dependent and independent variables.
* **Grade 6** **Algebra -** After ensuring that students have mastered the necessary arithmetic skills, we begin our study of Algebra I.  We often look at ways of representing equations visually using graphing calculators or Geogebra (an online math application). Further we look at the many ways that equations, fractals, and proportions occur in nature.  It emphasizes the study of linear and exponential functions (graphing, writing and solving algebraic systems) while discussing rate of change. Quadratic equations are covered through solving equations using factoring, substitution and the quadratic formula. Mathematical concepts for working with rational numbers, various expressions, analyzing and solving multi-stepped equations and inequalities, data analysis, and operations with polynomials are also covered. Students will develop an understanding of simplifying radicals, exponential decay and growth. Students will end the year having mastered symbols and expressions, linear equations, functions, the algebra of polynomials, the common types of word problems. Further, they will have a basic understanding of quadratic equations.
* **Grade 7/8 Geometry -** is a course designed to prepare students for Algebra II in high school or to be well prepared for a high school level course in Algebra or Geometry. As students progress through the curriculum, they are challenged to produce conjectures and demonstrate with proofs their observations of invariant qualities they observe in mathematical geometric formulations. Geometry asks students to notice mathematical patterns and relationships that are invariant and to use this quality to prove conjectures or theorems.

## English Language Arts

The goal of the English and Language Arts program at St Paul’s Choir School is to form competent and capable readers and writers who find enjoyment in reading for wisdom and take pride in their ability to express their thoughts in clear written form. Students develop as readers by actively engaging with high-quality texts. They are taught strategies for decoding the meaning of the written word, discerning the structure of an argument or a narrative, and evaluating the message the text is communicating. The deep connection between literature and virtue is explored as students read to begin discovering answers to essential questions such as “What is justice?” and “What is friendship?” Writing is taught using a workshop model following a methodology from the Institute for Excellence in Writing. Emphasis is given to narrative and persuasive writing. Interdisciplinary reading and writing is also emphasized as students read scientific, theological, and historical texts and workshop their writing in those domains. In the younger grades, handwriting and cursive are also taught, with the goal of producing students capable of writing by hand in clear, legible script. Students emerge from the reading and writing programs with a rich, contextualized vocabulary and a strong sense of grammar. They leave the program well-prepared to enter high school as competent analytical readers who can convey their thoughts in writing logically, clearly, and precisely.

The Choir School’s English Language and Literature curriculum is challenging and stimulating, drawing on the literary canon as the basis for our reading and writing. We explore texts from a range of periods, a wide range of poetry and drama (including many Shakespeare plays), as well as significant American literature from the 19th and 20th centuries; particular emphasis is placed on Catholic literature and texts with a moral content that supports our school ethos.

We respond to our reading with expository and creative writing; speaking, listening and drama are also assessed. We engage in a range of activities to develop accuracy and variety in grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary; our aim is for each boy to graduate with a mature, fluent, accurate prose style, and the ability to express himself articulately and with confidence in conversation. In the upper grades students receive training in the use of rhetorical skills and are prepared for public speaking and debate. Writing workshop are used throughout all grade levels to increase boys’ abilities to communicate in various genres, with a particular emphasis on persuasive writing in the upper grades.

**Grade 3** The English Language Arts curriculum comprises study of spelling, vocabulary, grammar, literature, and composition. Third graders will learn, practice, and employ the mechanics of the English language, with special emphasis on parts of speech, punctuation, and capitalization. Through study, immersion, and application, students will expand their vocabulary and spelling proficiency. Working with texts from a variety of genres, including narrative, informative, persuasive, and poetry, students will continue to develop their reading fluency, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. Third graders will practice analyzing text infrastructure, identifying main ideas, locating evidence to support arguments, comparing, contrasting, and predicting. Furthermore, students will themselves practice and workshop writing in each genre -- as exemplified by a model text -- focusing on craft and the processes of notetaking, outlining, drafting, collaborating, revising, and editing. Over the course of the academic year, students will grow into increasingly competent and confident readers and clear and effective communicators.

**Texts:**

*Institute for Excellence in Writing: Structure and Style, Level A, Year 1, Student Book*

*LePanto Grammar 3*

*Word Wisdom 3*

*Spelling Connections 3*

Narrative fiction model texts will include, but are not necessarily limited to:

*The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, by C. S. Lewis

*Treasure Island*, an abridged classic, by Robert Louis Stevenson

Informative writing model texts will include, but are not necessarily limited to:

*Mesmerized: How Ben Franklin Solved A Mystery That Baffled All of France*, by Mara Rockliff

Persuasive writing model texts will include, but are not necessarily limited to:

*The Perfect Pet*, by Maggie Palatini

Poetry model texts will include, but are not necessarily limited to:

*The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*Guyuku: A Year of Haiku for Boys*, by Bob Raczka

**Grade 4** Using the Writing Units of Study from the Institute for Excellence in Writing ([www.iew.com](http://www.iew.com/)), ELA 4 consists of several subtopics: literature, composition, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. In literature, we will read novels, informational texts, poems, and plays, analyze each text’s structure and ideas, and discuss the overarching meaning of each text. In composition, students become skilled note takers by first analyzing master works of composition. They then learn to outline notes, compose drafts, edit, stylize, and rewrite. Compositional works will include narratives, non-fiction writing using references, inventive writing, and formal essays. Grammar lessons address parts of speech, word relationships, and sentence structure. In order to grow their vocabulary, students learn to decipher word meaning in context. When completing spelling work, students become familiar with new words each week and come to recognize word patterns in creative ways each class. Through this array of language disciplines, students will emerge as persuasive speakers and eloquent writers.

***Texts***

*Institute for Excellence in Writing: Structure and Style, Level A, Year 1, Student Book*

*Lepanto Grammar 4*

*Word Wisdom 4*

*Spelling Connections 4*

***Literature***

*The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo

*The Cricket in Times Square* by George Selden

*The Blue Fairy Book* edited by Andrew Lang

*Love that Dog* by Sharon Creech

*Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry

*The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick

**Grade 5 -** In ELA 5, students continue to develop as articulate and thoughtful young men. They strengthen their capabilities as strong communicators through the school’s writing program, learning the necessary skills of listening, note taking, outlining, drafting, and making final compositions. They read daily, immersing themselves in the world’s literary classics where they explore the beauty and depth of the human condition. They study word relationships in lively grammar sessions and learn to diagram sentences. They participate in vocabulary and spelling lessons, learning skills such as context clues and word patterns. In short, through these various disciplines, students become young people knowledgeable of the English language and the world around them in a truly exceptional capacity.

**Primary Texts**

*IEW: Structure and Style: Year 1: Level A*

*Lepanto Grammar: Level 5*

*The Diagramming Dictionary*

*Spelling Connections 5*

*Word Wisdom Five*

*Homer Price*

*The Blue Fairy Book*

*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*

*My Side of the Mountain*

*A Christmas Carol*

*Dangerous Journey*

*Aesop’s Fables*

Selections from *Just So Stories*

Selections from *The Wind in the Willows*

*A Children’s Garden of Verses*

**Grade 6 -** In English Language Arts (ELA)6, students become accomplished thinkers and communicators in written and oral form. ELA 6 consists of several subtopics: literature, composition, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. In literature, students study great works of poetry and prose of past and present of various genres and cultures, from Aesop to William Shakespeare to Charles Dickens to Langston Hughes. In composition, students become skilled note takers by first analyzing sample texts and outlining them. They then learn to outline their own notes, compose drafts, edit, stylize, and rewrite. Compositional works will include narratives, references, writing from pictures, inventive writing, formal essays, and critiques. Grammar lessons address parts of speech, word relationships, and sentence structure through exercises and sentence diagramming. In order to grow their vocabulary, students learn to decipher word meaning in context. When completing spelling work, students become familiar with new words each week and come to recognize word patterns in creative ways each class. Through this array of language disciplines, students emerge as persuasive speakers and eloquent writers.

**Primary Texts**

* *Institute for Excellence in Writing: Structure and Style, Level B, Year 1, Student Book*
* *Lepanto Grammar 6*
* *The Diagramming Dictionary*
* *Word Wisdom 6*
* *Spelling Connections 6*
* *The Bronze Bow*
* *The Blue Fairy Book*
* *My Side of the Mountain*
* *A Christmas Carol*
* *Dangerous Journey*
* *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*
* *The Gold Bug and Other Tales*
* *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*
* *Aesop’s Fables*
* Selections from *Just So Stories*
* Selections from *The Wind in the Willows*
* *A Children’s Garden of Verses*

**Grade 7-** In English Language Arts (ELA) 7, students become accomplished thinkers and communicators in written and oral form. ELA 7 consists of several subtopics, namely, literature, composition, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. In literature, students study great works of poetry and prose of the past and the present of various genres and cultures, from Aesop to William Shakespeare to Jack London to Langston Hughes. In composition, students become skilled note takers by first analyzing sample texts and learning to retell them, first orally and then on paper. They learn the essential skills of outlining notes, composing drafts, editing, stylizing, and rewriting. Compositional works will include narratives, references, writing from pictures, inventive writing, formal essays, and critiques. Grammar lessons address parts of speech, word relationships, and sentence structure through exercises and sentence diagramming. In order to grow their vocabulary, students learn to decipher word meaning in context. When completing spelling work, students become familiar with new words each week and come to recognize word patterns in creative ways each class. Through this array of language disciplines, students emerge as persuasive speakers and eloquent writers.

**Primary Texts**

* *Institute for Excellence in Writing: Structure and Style, Level B, Year 1, Student Book*
* *Lepanto Grammar 7*
* *Word Wisdom 7*
* *Spelling Connections 7*
* *The Bronze Bow*, Elizabeth George Speare
* *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,* Washington Irving
* *The Gold Bug and Other Tales,* Edgar Allan Poe
* *The Tempest,* William Shakespeare
* *The Pearl*, John Steinbeck
* *The Red Badge of Courage*, Stephen Crane
* *Beowulf*
* Selections from *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*
* Selections from *Sherlock Holmes* stories
* Selections from *The Harp and the Laurel Wreath*

**Grade 8 -** In English Language Arts (ELA) 8, students become accomplished thinkers and communicators in written and oral form. ELA 8 consists of several subtopics, namely, literature, composition, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. In literature, students study great works of poetry and prose of the past and the present of various genres and cultures, from Aesop to William Shakespeare to Jack London to Langston Hughes. In composition, students become skilled note takers by first analyzing sample texts and learning to retell them, first orally and then on paper. They learn the essential skills of outlining notes, composing drafts, editing, stylizing, and rewriting. Compositional works will include narratives, references, writing from pictures, inventive writing, formal essays, and critiques. Grammar lessons address parts of speech, word relationships, and sentence structure through exercises and sentence diagramming. In order to grow their vocabulary, students learn to decipher word meaning in context. When completing spelling work, students become familiar with new words each week and come to recognize word patterns in creative ways each class. Through this array of language disciplines, students emerge as persuasive speakers and eloquent writers.

**Primary Texts**

* *Institute for Excellence in Writing: Structure and Style, Level B, Year 1, Student Book*
* *Lepanto Grammar 8*
* *Word Wisdom 8*
* *Spelling Connections 8*
* *The Bronze Bow*, Elizabeth George Speare
* *The Tempest,* William Shakespeare
* *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,* Washington Irving
* *The Gold Bug and Other Tales,* Edgar Allan Poe
* *The Pearl*, John Steinbeck
* *The Call of the Wild*, Jack London
* *Beowulf*
* Selections from *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*
* Selections from *Sherlock Holmes* stories
* Selections from *The Harp and the Laurel Wreath*

## History/Social Studies

The goal of the Social Studies program at St Paul’s Choir School is to form students with a deep appreciation of the beauty of human cultures, a solid knowledge of the basic shape of local, national, and global history, and the ability to identify and form nuanced and prudential judgments about historical development and change. Following the basic outline of the Massachusetts state frameworks, students begin their time at SPCS exploring local and Massachusetts state history. Emphasis is placed on the role that geography plays in shaping local culture and society. Students then explore the broad diversity of civilizations around the globe, examining the variety of factors that contribute to the formation of human culture and society. Students then turn their attention to the study of Western civilization and end with a deep study of American history. Throughout the curriculum, students engage in experiential learning through field trips and hands-on projects and demonstrations. They also learn to work closely and attentively with primary sources.

The Social Studies program is deeply interdisciplinary. Students use tools from mathematics and science to analyze social change; they explore history through fiction and literature; and they pay close attention to the role of religion in shaping human societies. In collaboration with the English/Language Arts curriculum, students also develop their skills as historical writers. By eighth grade, students should be capable of utilizing primary and secondary sources in constructing an original thesis, defending their argument with logical supporting details, and expressing their argument in clear written form. Students leave the program with a solid framework of factual and conceptual knowledge and with the ability to think critically about the development of history. They enter high school well-prepared to explore historical concepts in more nuance, rigor, and depth.

**Grade 3/4 Year 1 – Regions of the United States and Native Groups** **-** Students in this class will begin with a study of the regions of the United States of America and their respective geographies. Students will also examine these varied geographic regions’ roles in the development of Native Peoples in the United States and the rest of North America. In this class, students will also become familiar with the culture, history, and regional impact of the great pre-Columbian civilizations, the Aztec, Maya, and Inca. We research specific facets of the Mayan Civilization, among others, and visit the Peabody Museum to learn from experts in the field.

**Grade 3/4 Year 2 - Colonial Massachusetts and Regional Geography -** We then turn our investigation to the history of the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies during the years of 1620 – 1776. Our exploration builds on an introduction to the students in a deep study of the Wampanoag people and culture, comparing and contrasting them to the Ancient Mayans. Then, we look at what happens when Europeans arrive in the land settled by the Wampanoags and we consider the collaboration and conflict between these groups. We also learn about the Massachusetts colonists’ growing tensions with England and we come to understand the Patriots’ eventual determination to separate.

**Grade 5 World History: Pre-History to Roman Republic.** The study of Pre-History (“cavemen”) introduces boys to historical concepts as well as the roles of archaeology, museums, and historians in the construction of historical understanding. Additionally, this will include familiarity with the basic “tools” of history: latitude and longitude, an introduction of geographic themes, critical reading of primary sources, and observation/analysis of archaeological fragments and artifacts. Students will be able to describe the “Big History” of how the universe and solar systems came to be and how human life on Earth began and developed into specific societies and civilizations with particular examples and historical evidence.

* Cosmic History, the Solar System, life on Earth
* Students will study the growth of humanity from small, family-based groups into large civilizations (specifically, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and the Roman Republic).
* Early Human Societies, the Agricultural Revolution: They will understand the role of agriculture in the growth of humanity and possess an understanding of what makes up culture and civilization.

**Grade 6 World History: Roman Empire to Enlightenment.** Students in this class pick up where they left off during their study in the previous year.   Students will be able to describe how Eastern and Western Civilizations developed into distinct identities with particular examples and historical evidence. Students will be challenged by critical thinking, including being exposed to areas of history where historians disagree.

* Students begin with the Roman Empire, studying its rise and fall.
* They continue with all major civilizations from then until the Enlightenment (Byzantine, Islamic World, Empires of Africa, Medieval World, and Renaissance Italy).
* Students continue their study of the role that archaeologists, museums, and historians play in reconstructing history, as well as continuing to hone their use of the historical skills mentioned above.

**Grade 7 World Geography.** Students in this class will explore American history from its beginnings as Europe’s “New World” to Reconstruction following the Civil War. Students will also explore the personal attributes of curiosity, resilience, charm, and courage and the role that figures possessing these played in the formation of our country, as well as the philosophical underpinnings of liberty, justice, and a rule of law to our nation’s governing principles.

* Major events such as the build up to hostilities with Britain, the writing of the Declaration of Independence, the War for Independence,
* Troubles in forming the new nation, the Constitution,
* Wars and strife: the War of 1812, the lead up to the Civil War, and the continuity of slavery and a growing regionalism throughout it all.

**Grade 8 American History: Colonies through Reconstruction.** Students in this class will explore American history from the Civil War & Reconstruction through the 19th Century. Students will be challenged by critical thinking, including being exposed to areas of history where historians disagree. Students will also explore the cardinal virtues of justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude and the ways in which such qualities have been expressed (and at times not) by our nation.

* Major events and themes such as global trade, the opening of Asian markets to the U.S.,
* Imperialism, wars, the transportation revolution, the communication revolution, the Gilded Age, etc.

## Science

The goal of the Science program at St Paul’s Choir School is to give students the ability to look at the created world with eyes of wonder, to ask vigorous and precise intellectual questions about the world, and to explore the world using the tools and vocabulary of science. Students explore life science, physical science, chemistry, earth science, and astronomy cyclically throughout their time at SPCS, with topics introduced in the third and fourth grade at a developmentally appropriate level and then reexamined in more depth as students gain experience and skill as scientific thinkers. Demonstrations are used throughout the curriculum to draw connections between science and the real world. Students are given the opportunity to conduct scientific research, to engage in scientific writing, and to practice scientific problem-solving through experimentation and engineering. The Science program is interdisciplinary, with connections made to the history of science and to the need for strong mathematical skills in conducting reliable scientific work. Students leave the program with an appreciation for scientific discovery and the ability to skillfully deploy scientific methods, concepts, and vocabulary. They enter high school well-prepared to explore the scientific disciplines in even more depth.

* **Grade 3/4 Year 1 -** Students will observe carefully to find patterns and ways of categorizing as they hypothesize how and why.  The transfer of matter and energy between objects (both in space and on Earth) and between organisms will the be the major theme for the year.  Students will learn how to make measurements, use units appropriately, and record scientific their observations. In particular, students will learn about landscape formation, the layers of the Earth and how heat is transferred through it , rock types and fossils, renewable and nonrenewable energy resources, plant and animal structures, kinetic energy and energy transfers, and especially waves. Further, students will consider the size, shape, and weight of materials as they try to build the best prototypes of structures.
* **Grade 3/4 Year 2-** Students will observe and hone their skills at obtaining, recording and charting, and analyzing data.  Students will use these practices to study the interactions between humans and earth systems, humans and the environment, and humans and the man-made world.  Topics of study will include weather patterns, climate, magnetism, balanced and unbalanced forces, friction, basic heredity, and ecosystems.
* **Grade 5/6 Year 1-** Through the integration of Earth and space, life, and physical sciences, students will relate structure and function by analyzing the macroscopic and microscopic world.  Students will study such topics as the Earth’s features and processes, the lunar phases and eclipse of the Sun and Moon, the role of cells and anatomy in supporting living organisms, the properties of materials and waves, and chemical reactions.
* **Grade 5/6 Year 2-** Students will gain an ability to describe, analyze, and model connections and relationships of observable components of different systems while coming to understand the natural world as well as the man-made world.  Students will study such topics as ecosystems, the Earth’s water cycle, photosynthesis, cell respiration, phase changes, physical and chemical properties, substantial change, and new technologies.
* **Grade 7/8 Year 1-** Students will be encouraged to observe and wonder “why?” and “how?” before using abstract thinking skills to explain causes and their effects.  Students will study the causes for planetary orbits, seasons, the tides, the movement of tectonic plates, weather (especially extreme), climate, atomic and molecular interactions, gravity, and especially motion.
* **Grade 7/8 Year 2 -** Students will use their knowledge and understanding gained in earlier years to investigate systems and cycles less concretely and more abstractly.  They will gain experience with plate tectonics, the interactions of humans and Earth processes, ecosystem dynamics, motion and energy systems, the basics of chemistry, and key technologies used by society.

## Religion

The goal of the Religion program at St Paul’s Choir School is to form students who are knowledgeable about the core teachings of the Catholic faith and who are committed to their own personal spiritual growth and moral formation. In full fidelity to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, the curriculum lays out a clear understanding of the key tenets of the Catholic faith in an integrative and developmentally appropriate way. Students are taught Scripture, the life of Jesus, the history and development of the Church, the doctrines expressed in the Creed, and the responsibility of a moral life of discipleship. Growth in virtue and the formation of personal character is also emphasized as students learn, through modeling and practice, how to become responsible members of the human community. The beauty of the faith is brought to life using narrative, art, and the lives of the Saints. To reinforce the boys’ daily participation in the liturgy, careful attention is paid to integrating the rhythms of the liturgical year, including the feast days of the Saints and the major holy days and seasons of the Church. Seventh- and eighth-grade students are also introduced to the theology of the body.

In recognition of the importance of prayer in order to grow in relationship with God, Holy Mass is celebrated each school day. It is the hope that through the singing of the Mass and understanding the rich musical tradition of the Church, students will appreciate at a deeper level the power of God in his life, and thus respond as faith-filled individuals.

An education at the Choir School is enhanced and strengthened through formation and study of the Roman Catholic faith. The desire for each student choir boy is that he grows in his knowledge and love of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – so that he may recognize both the importance of God in his life and his God-given talents, to place those talents at the service of the Church and the community in which he lives. Students leave the program with a strong sense of faith, spirituality, and virtue as critical dimensions of human life and history, and they are well-prepared to engage skillfully the moral challenges of adolescence and adulthood.

**Grade 3/4 Year 1 - The Kingdom of God and the Church** Students learn what the Catholic Church is, who the Holy Spirit is and how He guides the Church, and what it means that Jesus continues His mission through the life of the Church. Along with the basics of the Trinity and all seven Sacraments, they learn about prayer, and explore what it means to live as children of God. This year also focuses on Jesus’s Parables of the Kingdom, and Mary as the Mother of the Church.

**Grade 3/4 Year 2 –** **The Mass** Students learn basics of the Catholic faith and to support our understanding of the Mass. Topics will include how to read sacred scripture, the first five books of the Bible, the Sacraments, the Creed, and how we can pray.

**Primary Texts:**

* *YouCat*by theAustrian Bishops' Conference (ed.)
* *YouCat for Kids* by Fr. Martin Barta, Michaela von Heereman, Bernhard Meuser, Michael

**Grade 5- Sacraments** Students will be able to explain and demonstrate how the Sacraments serve the particular function of allowing us to enter into the divine life as disciples of Jesus Christ through specific rituals and actions

* The Liturgy, the Liturgical Year (Calendar), other Liturgical Celebrations
* The Sacraments of Initiation and Healing
* The Sacraments of Communion and Mission

Primary texts:

* ***YouCat***(Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church)by Ignatius Press, 2011;
* **Y-Bible** (Youth Bible of the Catholic Church, YouCat Foundation), Ignatius Press, 2017
* The Catechism of the Catholic Church

**Grade 6 - Sacred Scripture** Students spend the year immersed in God’s Word in the Sacred Scriptures, and explore how the Bible, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, records God’s plan of salvation:

* The Bible - Revelation and Tradition
* The Structure and Format of the Bible
* Understanding the Bible within the Life of Faith

Primary texts:

* ***YouCat***(Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church)by Ignatius Press, 2011;
* **Y-Bible** (Youth Bible of the Catholic Church, YouCat Foundation), Ignatius Press, 2017
* The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Objectives:

* Familiarity with the basics of how to use the Bible
* Understanding the role of Magisterial authority
* Appreciation of how and why we should pray with Scripture
* Studying how the Bible is different from other books
* Interpreting Scripture in the four senses (literal, allegorical, moral, and heavenly)
* Comprehensive exploration of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation

**Grade 7 - Discipleship** Students will be able to explain the ways in which our Discipleship in Jesus Christ is expressed in our day-to-day lives along with in the example of the Saints

* The Dignity of the Human Person - Happiness, Freedom, & Responsibility
* Human Community - The Individual and Society, Social Justice
* The Church and the Commandments in Our Lives

Primary texts:

* ***YouCat***(Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church)by Ignatius Press, 2011;
* **Y-Bible** (Youth Bible of the Catholic Church, YouCat Foundation), Ignatius Press, 2017
* The Catechism of the Catholic Church

**Grade 8 – The Creed** Students will be able to explain what it is that we believe as Catholics and as Christians, what these sources of belief are, and how belief influences day-to-day life.

* Sources of Belief, the Magisterium, Scripture, and Tradition
* God as Trinity - God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
* Holiness in our Lives - Belief into Action

Primary texts:

* ***YouCat***(Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church)by Ignatius Press, 2011;
* **Y-Bible** (Youth Bible of the Catholic Church, YouCat Foundation), Ignatius Press, 2017
* The Catechism of the Catholic Church

## Latin

The goal of the Latin curriculum at St Paul’s Choir School is to give students the ability to competently understand the basic elements of the Latin language, especially as it impacts their choral singing, their participation in the liturgy, and their studies of grammar, history, and theology. In an immersive environment, students master the ecclesiastical pronunciation of Latin and practice the skills of reading and translating while rigorously mastering grammar and vocabulary. Both classical and ecclesiastical texts are used as supplements, and the history of the ancient world and of the Latin-speaking Church are explored. An interdisciplinary approach is taken, as Latin is used to reinforce and enhance concepts taught in English, social studies, religion, and science. In conjunction with the students’ daily participation at Mass, the study of Latin enables them to understand more thoroughly the history and practices of the Catholic Church and to engage more fully with liturgical prayer. Students at all levels are invited to participate in the National Latin Exam. Students emerge from the Latin program with a rich appreciation for this beautiful language and its impact on the development of Western civilization and the Catholic Church. Students who successfully complete the SPCS Latin program are more than capable of entering high school at a Latin II level or higher.

* **Grade 3/4 -** This will enable them to both sing and pray in Latin. Using the immersion method, which provides a lot of experience with Latin, students will learn grammar, vocabulary, declensions, and conjugations while learning the basics of Roman culture and life.  Students will also learn basic prayers such as the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.
* **Grade 5/6 -** Students mastery of Latin will aid them greatly to sing and to understand what they are singing as Choristers. Using the immersion method, students will learn the workings of this ancient language.  They will study the grammar, vocabulary, declensions, and conjugations while learning about Roman mythology, customs, and architecture. Students will also learn basic prayers in Latin which will enable them to say the Rosary and the Angelus.
* **Grade 7/8 -** Using the immersion method, students will learn Latin grammar, vocabulary, declensions, and conjugations while learning about Roman mythology, customs, and architecture. Students will also study some original Latin aphorisms as well as selections from the Vulgate, especially Psalms.

## French

Students begin their French studies in grade three and develop the fundamentals of the French language to include comprehension, speaking, reading and writing. Students also learn and appreciate the rich traditions of the French culture. All students take part in the national French contest Le Grand Concours.

* **Grade 3/4 - This course uses Bon Voyage! 1A (Glencoe/McGraw Hill) to provide a foundation of basic phrases, everyday vocabulary, regular and irregular verb conjugations, possessive adjectives and negative structures. By the end of the year, students will be able to:**
* Introduce themselves and others
* Describe their family
* Ask questions
* Talk about their preferences and dislikes
* Order food at a restaurant
* Tell the time
* Know the alphabet, numbers and colors

Students will also learn about French culture and other Francophone countries.

* **Grade 5/6 -** Basic reading and grammar concepts are build upon from previous years. The text introduces additional vocabulary words. Students are taught adjective agreement at this level. Customs and culture continue to be discussed. Introduction to conjugation of verbs singular. Due to the extraordinary demands on many of our Chorister students, French is an optional course.
* **Grade 7/8 -**

## Rhetoric - Grades 5 to 8

Students participate in guided coaching sessions in the art and craft of public speaking. Training includes:

* Competitive Speech training,
* Intensive coaching and feedback
* The opportunity to choose and practice three speeches from five events (Impromptu, Volte Face, Monologue, Standup Comedy, and Persuasive)

Skills will build confidence (Public speaking is one of the most prevalent fears in the U.S. This course inspires students with the confidence they need to overcome this fear and succeed in any enterprise.); Communication (All of life’s endeavors rely on effective communication. The course creates an environment where students can grow as communicators with their peers); and Leadership (Students are trained to make strong impressions, meaningful conversation, and speak persuasively — indispensable skills to the modern leader.) Optional competitions are offered.

**Musicianship and Theory**

The Musicianship and Theory classes support and complement students’ effective performance of choral music and provide a foundation for music analysis and composition. Through studying music theory developed for the analysis of 18th century European music, students develop and practice musicianship skills that enable them to be confident, independent musicians in choir rehearsal, piano lessons, and extra-curricular musical pursuits. The classes support choral singing particularly by strengthening students' sight-singing, aural, and conducting skills. Written assignments reinforce the students' experiential learning of concepts found on standardized ABRSM exams. The pace of the classes takes into consideration the existing musical skills of individuals within each class. All students will take regular practical and written exams in class and at the end of the year.

## Handwriting and Penmanship - Grades 3 & 4

Students will develop basic skills needed for legible handwriting in both print and cursive.  Areas covered include: sitting posture for handwriting, activities to promote hand strength and dexterity, functional pencil grasp, accurate letter formation, appropriate letter size, and placement of words on the lines of the paper.  The Handwriting Without Tears curriculum will be used to learn printed letter formation, and a combination of programs (Loops and Other Groups, Getting it Write, etc.) will be used for cursive.

The group will include a pre-test and a post-test to ascertain progress.  Assessments will include standardized measures of visual motor skill and handwriting such as the Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration and the Handwriting Screener.  The pre-and post-tests will also include functional writing samples.

Structure of each session:

* Hand warm-ups – activities to develop hand strength and dexterity
* Structured practice of letter formation following a handwriting curriculum
* Functional writing including writing stories, descriptions, journal entries or engaging in writing games such as Mad Libs.

## Executive Functioning- Grades 3 and 4

Students are explicitly taught through a research-based academic performance through the development of executive functions—the ability to plan, strategically solve problems, self-regulate behavior, make decisions, pay attention, monitor and evaluate performance, and manage time.

These skills are controlled by the frontal lobe of the brain just behind the forehead. Teaching and reinforcing executive function skills helps students build organizational and time-management proficiencies for life.

Core Units:

* **Classroom Structures & Learning Environment**: This unit provides suggestions for how to manage a classroom, including room arrangement, homework distribution and collection systems, managing time, and helping students manage materials. Unit includes an overview and teacher resource.
* **Materials Management**: Learning how to keep track of papers and grades is essential to academic success. While these skills need to be taught and reinforced, they develop into lifelong habits that increase efficiency. Organizational systems help students become more aware of pressing work while making it easier for them to store and locate materials. Unit includes an overview, assessments and three lessons.
* **Time Management & Planning**: Students lead very busy lives with school extra-curricular activities, family, friend and homework assignments. Helping students become aware of how they spend their time, as well as giving them strategies to efficiently manage their time, will facilitate independence and a sense of control. Unit includes an overview, assessments and six lessons.
* **Study Strategies**: Study strategies like following directions and taking organized and coherent notes enhances students' ability to study and prepare for tests. Unit includes an overview, assessments and twenty lessons.
* **Goal Setting**: Goal setting requires the ability to articulate purposeful actions that enable students to predetermine what they want to accomplish, develop a plan to get there, monitor progress, ultimately achieve what is desired. Unit includes an overview, assessments and three lessons.
* **Decision Making & Problem Solving**: Students often make choices without even realizing that there are options. Sometimes these instant decisions have lasting consequences, while other decisions are made knowing they have long-term effects. These types of decisions require research and evaluation so that the optimal solutions can be found. Unit includes an overview, assessments and two lessons.
* **Learning Strengths**: In this unit, we conceptualize "intelligence" by distinguishing between learning potential and learning strength. Because each student has a unique pattern of learning strengths and weaknesses, we need to engage all learning styles and allow students the flexibility to express their knowledge in various ways. Unit includes an overview and two lessons.

## Writing Workshop (grades 5 – 8)

During Writing Workshop, students immerse themselves in their writing work using the Writing Workshop model from Teachers College, Columbia University. Students work in small groups and individually with their teacher in order to advance their writing style, maintain focus within their essays, demonstrate their critical thinking skills, and refine their written grammar. Conversations about writing are framed by essential questions and mini-lessons support what students need to know, do, and understand as writers. Writing for research is embedded in each type of writing. Students apply conventions through the editing component of writer’s workshop.  Students also engage in creative composition, studying the construction of storytelling and developing it through practice. During these sections of writing workshop, students will engage their passions both in and outside of the written word, developing their ability to describe it and to create compelling storytelling. Lastly, students will push their reading interests further through classroom visits to the Cambridge Public Library, where they will research topics they may be writing about from other classes, in addition to seeking out new books to read for their own enjoyment, while advancing their reading levels.

## High School Prep

Grade 8 students meet twice a week to aid students with managing the different components of high school applications. The class will guide students through the process of choosing and applying to schools. Admissions directors for various high schools (Boston College High, Xaverian, St. Sebastian’s, Belmont Hill, St. Joseph’s Prep, BU Academy, Roxbury Latin & Catholic Memorial) will come in to speak with the students and answer any questions they may have. Students will learn how to write a resume, write an essay and be guided through the application process. Test taking strategies and academic skills will be reviewed for the standardized test such as: HSPT, SSAT, and ISEE. Students will take multiple practice tests. As a final experience each student will work on the interview process.