Course Descriptions

English

English 7

The seventh-grade English class will provide an essential foundation in literature, grammar, composition, and vocabulary so that students develop oral and written communication skills. The exploration of a variety of genres will expose students to different literary forms that can convey Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. The foundations of grammar and writing will be stressed so that students learn to respond effectively to questions and discussions.

English 8

The eighth-grade English class continues the foundation begun in seventh grade. Students will continue to develop grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills and will complete writing assignments of greater length and variety. Students will continue to study literature of various genres; they will learn how to identify textual evidence for literary devices such as symbolism, tone and point of view and to analyze works for character development and theme.

Fine Arts

St. Cecilia is the patron of the arts, our school, and our students. Our junior high students will be exposed to the fundamentals of artistic expression which are grounded in a proper understanding of true beauty. Exposure to different disciplines will provide girls with an appreciation of the arts and allow them to cultivate their talents. These courses will not meet daily, but be in a rotation. Our plan is to use some of the high school facilities for these classes:

Music – Junior High Choir, String Ensemble, Band

Dance

Art

Latin Foundation

Latin 7 and 8 comprise the year-long Latin I course so that students may enter Latin II as ninth graders.

Latin 7

Seventh grade students will be introduced to the fundamentals of the Latin language, especially grammar, vocabulary, and translation. Students will also study Roman history and culture,
English derivatives and root words, and prayers of the Church in Latin. Students will encounter Latin’s enduring appeal in the beauty of accessible primary sources.

Latin 8

Eighth grade students continue to master Latin roots, syntax, and vocabulary, while translating increasingly complex sentences and stories about Roman history and mythology. Students continue their studies of Roman culture with a focus on Roman values, mythology, daily life, and basic Roman history. Students will also continue to deepen and broaden their knowledge of Roman history and culture, English derivatives, and prayers of the Church in Latin. Students will encounter Latin’s enduring appeal in the beauty of accessible primary sources.

Math

Pre-Algebra A

This seventh-grade math class allows students to master the fundamental math skills needed for Algebra. Students will work with topics such as integers, solving equations and inequalities, decimals and equations, operations with rational numbers, the coordinate grid, ratios, proportions, and percents.

Pre-Algebra B

This eighth-grade math class follows Pre-Algebra A, and students continue to master essential mathematical concepts. Students will work with equation solving, operations with rational numbers, proportions, graphing, measurement and conversions, and right triangles.

Pre-Algebra AB

This accelerated math class is for seventh grade students who have demonstrated a solid understanding of basic arithmetic with fractions, decimals, and integers and have demonstrated strong problem solving skills. Students in this class will complete both the Pre-Algebra A and B curricula in this accelerated course. This class will include rational numbers, evaluating expressions, solving equations and inequalities, writing equations and inequalities to solve problems, measurement and conversions, linear graphs, surface area and volume, and data analysis and probability.

Geometry

This class is for eighth grade students who have completed the accelerated Pre-Algebra AB course. This course mirrors the Geometry offered at St. Cecilia but is taught in the junior high classroom. This course leads students to the mastery of inductive, deductive, and statistical reasoning through problem solving, hands-on activities, and assiduous study of Book 1 of Euclid's Elements. Students master the essential topics of Euclidean geometry—plane and solid geometry, triangle trigonometry and transformations—as well as elements of descriptive statistics, including graphical displays of one- and two-variable data sets of both categorical and
quantitative variables. Most importantly, students learn to reason logically and critically as a foundation for higher mathematical thinking.

With permission, a student who has demonstrated exceptional mathematical progress may be able to take this course as a seventh grader.

Algebra 1

Algebra 1 stresses both the structure of algebra and the development of problem-solving skills. Students gain competence in working with real numbers to solve problems. The concept of a function is introduced, and students learn about a variety of parent functions. Topics include algebraic language, operations with signed numbers, inequalities, exponents and radicals, polynomials, factoring, functions and graphs, domain and range, quadratic equations, and exponential functions. This is offered in the 9-12 program at St. Cecilia Academy; with permission, a student may be able to take this course as an eighth grader.

Religion

Religion 7

Seventh grade religion focuses on the Gospels, the New Testament, and the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. Students will focus on the person of Jesus Christ as the Savior, Who reveals us to ourselves and study the sacraments as the ways that God draws us into His Trinitarian life through the Church. Students will be introduced to the idea of the dignity of the human person and Christian anthropology. Students will seek to explore the questions: Who am I and who is Jesus Christ? Students will be introduced to the role of the virtues. They will study St. Cecilia and explore her virtues and witness. Students will study parts of the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles while recognizing what it means to live as missionary disciples of Jesus. Themes studied throughout the year will be integrated and deepened through age-appropriate study of Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body.

Religion 8

Eighth grade religion consists of four integrated parts, culminating in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Through the study of Faith in the Triune God, Church History, and Catholic Social Teaching students will be invited to connect the study of the Trinitarian communion to their relationship with God, the saints, and those with whom they share this life with its contemporary challenges. They will study the meaning and effects of Confirmation and the call to respond to God’s grace through this sacrament that strengthens the Christian in the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Science

Life Science

Seventh grade students study living organisms and how they function. Topics will include characteristics of living organisms, relationship between organisms, cells, bacteria, viruses,
fungi, plants, animals, the basics of genetics, muscular and skeletal systems, diseases, and growth and development. Students will explore the fundamental principles and concepts of the created world and study the handiwork of the divine Creator. This course provides a strong foundation for topics students will engage with more deeply in high school, especially in biology and human anatomy and physiology.

Introduction to Physical Science

In Physical Science, eighth grade students learn the fundamental principles of chemistry and physics including the properties and classification of matter, atomic structure, elements and compounds, chemical bonding and reactions, the periodic table, Newton’s laws of motion, force, and energy, and electric charges. Particular attention is also given to reinforcing units and uses of the metric system in anticipation of physics in the ninth grade.

History

Foundation (7th)

Geography

Students will acquire, organize, and analyze geographic information utilizing maps, statistics, graphs, and illustrations. They will explore geographic features which characterize regions.

Foundations of US History

Students study the founding documents of the United States, including the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, in depth. Students will explore key principles in these documents and how they were written.

Civics

Following after Foundations of US History, students will learn how authority and responsibility are shared and limited by government, the place of law in the American constitutional system, and which rights the American government guarantees its citizens. Students will gain a basic understanding of civics, politics, and government.

An American Century (8th)

In eighth grade history, students develop a deeper understanding of some key time periods of American History. Students study the century 1850-1950 of American History. They will focus on the American Civil War and Reconstruction, Industrialism, the Progressive Era, World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II.

The Art of Living

The title for this course is inspired by the words of Pope Benedict XVI in an address to catechists. This class is aimed at providing a holistic human, emotional, and intellectual formation so that junior high girls can flourish in the fullness of their potential and find the path toward true happiness. Students will be taught social skills, an understanding of the emotions
and how to work with them, life skills and strategies for balancing the demands of life, organizational and study skills, how to grow in virtue and in friendship with others, healthy habits, and true happiness – all tailored for a girl in junior high.

**Physical Education**

Physical education will be scheduled for both seventh and grade students to help develop coordination as well as provide opportunities for strengthening and conditioning and maintain a healthy body.