

OMC – A Parish School Serving a Wider Catholic Community in Northwest Philadelphia  
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A disturbing trend started a few years back. First we heard of catholic high schools starting to close including longtime stalwarts like Cardinal Dougherty and North Catholic. Then a wave of catholic grade schools started to close each year before the big announcement in January that many grade schools were closing or merging.

Meanwhile, U.S. Census data shows that there are approximately 29,000 Catholics living in Northwest Philadelphia (including Chestnut Hill, Mount Airy, Roxborough, and the surrounding areas) and that 14% of them (4,000) are children of grade school age. That's a lot of Catholic kids with only a handful of Catholic parish schools in NW Philadelphia.

It was against this emerging backdrop that we initiated our search for a grade school four years ago. We looked at a wide range of schools, including the public elementary school and a number of private schools, both secular and parochial. Many of the schools we looked at offered the academic education we were looking for, but lacked a true sense of community for both our child and our family. Coming from a parish that doesn't have a school, we decided to look at Our Mother of Consolation. At OMC we found a small yet strong and thriving school that offers both a rigorous academic curriculum and the sense of community and service that provides an education in becoming an a person of character and morals.

We were also happy to find that (in addition to the families from OMC parish) there were many families that (like us) lived in nearby parishes that don't have a parish school. Here was a parish school embracing and serving a wider Catholic community.... diverse, vibrant, and thriving.

OMC offers a core curriculum of mathematics, integrated language arts, science, social studies and religion that would be expected at a parish school. In addition to the core curriculum, OMC also offers music, art, Spanish, library and technology classes plus additional programs and clubs such as forensics, horticulture, science explorers, to name a few. We have delighted in watching our child become exposed and excited about so many new subjects.

In addition to the academic preparation, each student in the school is guided by a "Code of Courtesy". As with their schoolwork, the expectations of behavior addressed in the Code of Courtesy becomes more encompassing with each new grade. It is quite common to have doors held open for you, to hear "please and thank you" in the hallways, and see older children helping younger ones at OMC.

After four years at OMC, we couldn't be happier with the academic and personal preparation our child is receiving. And we couldn't be happier with the genuinely warm and friendly family atmosphere at OMC. OMC is "Our Parish School". If your parish doesn't have a school, visit OMC and you might find that it's "Your Parish School" too.