



Learning for All

*Engage. Educate. Empower.*

Dear Family Members,

Starting in a couple of weeks, students will begin a unit on Ancient Rome. They will learn more about the contributions of this civilization, as well as about the life and contributions of famous Roman leaders—Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, Constantine the Great, and Justinian. They will be introduced to Rome’s engineering feats, including their network of roads, Roman architecture, and aqueducts. Your child will hear about the eruption of Mount Vesuvius over Pompeii, and will learn some reasons why the powerful Roman Empire declined.

As part of this unit, students will learn about the movement away from the belief in Roman Mythology to Christianity. It is during the Roman Civilization that the religion of Christianity began and it affected the empire in numerous ways.

The Core Knowledge Language Arts program, our reading curriculum, introduces students at various grade levels to the major world religions as part of their study of world history. The intent is to provide the vocabulary and context for understanding the many ways that world religions have influenced ideas and events in history. It is important to understand that the religions your child will hear about in third grade are not being singled out or presented in any way that suggests the merits or correctness of specific religious beliefs.

The historical events and ideas leading to the development of each religion are presented in a balanced and respectful manner. If students have questions about the truth or “rightness” of any beliefs or religions, we will encourage them to discuss their questions with you at home, by saying, “People of different faiths believe different things to be true. These are questions you may want to talk about with your family and the adults at home.”

The Core Knowledge Language Arts program’s inclusion of world religions within the teaching of world history is comprehensive and balanced over the course of the elementary grades, presenting historical knowledge from around the world from ancient times to the present. The reading about Christianity that your child will hear in third grade will be elaborated on in later grades. In addition, students in later grades will be introduced to other religions as they learn about historical events in other parts of the world.

Please contact one of us below if you have any questions or if you would like to see any of the readings we are using.

Thank you,

Sarah Schmidt, Director of Teaching and Learning

Sara Johnson, Lakeside Elementary Principal

Jason Riebe, Taylors Falls Principal