

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy

2024 – 2025

Introduction

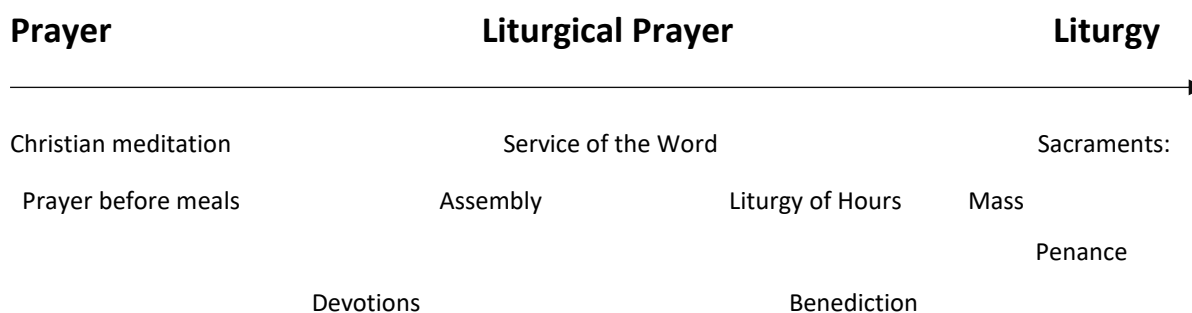
Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

(From the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory, September 2022)

In any school there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.



Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	Structured (often 4 part)	Taken from official books
One or two elements	Elements drawn from liturgy	Complex structure
Balance of familiarity & creativity	Places of Scripture	Many elements
	Contrasts and creativity	Range of ministry

In Catholic terminology ‘worship’ is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God’s world, and the

responsibilities that follow from this.

Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 there is a statutory duty to inspect and report on denominational education (that is religious education) and collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character. For this reason, the term 'Collective Worship' has been kept as the headline judgement by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate but throughout the framework it is referred to as prayer and liturgy. This policy addresses the shift in vocabulary and is an interim response to the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School Prayer and Liturgy Policy

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

'Work, Play, Pray together'

We will promote our mission statement through the following areas:

SPIRITUALITY

Forgiveness and reconciliation is at the heart of the school

Participating in daily prayer and reflection

Fulfilling the spiritual needs of the community

Supporting each individual on their spiritual journey

FAITH

Catholic ethos is at the heart of school life

Catholic faith is nurtured in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church

Our children are engaged in the sacramental life of the church

Christian values and a sense of justice for the whole world are evident in the actions of the whole community

TEACHING

Offering a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities

On-going professional development of staff

Delivering high quality education

Being good role models

Delivering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum

Providing children with consistent rules and consequences

Nurturing each child's God given gifts and talents

We aim through these areas to have:

CHILDREN

Children who are valued as individuals and encouraged to reach their full potential in a safe, loving and secure environment

Children who are confident and have high self esteem

Children who are well behaved, have good manners and feel valued

Children who have the freedom to express their opinions to enable a shared understanding of individuals' values and lifestyles

Children who take responsibility for their own learning

Children who are eager to learn and are prepared for the next stage in their school life

Children who respect the differences of others

COMMUNITY

A community where good levels of communication exist between staff, children, parents, parish

A community where positive friendships and relationships are developed

A community where everyone treating each other with respect

A community where difficult questions are explored without fear or recrimination

A community where people work together to support each other

A community where each person feels accepted and valued

A community who understand that with rights comes responsibilities

A community who celebrate achievements and successes

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'¹

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single 'act of worship' for all pupils, or separate 'acts of worship' in school groups. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

The 'act of worship' is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured, within Come and See RE curriculum.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Our Lady of the Rosary School

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Prayer and liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church;
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St Mary's Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All acts of prayer in St Mary's Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

We have a prayer room which can be accessed by all throughout the week. Staff prayer will take place in the prayer room before school each Thursday.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Monday	Liturgical Prayer-based on Sunday Gospel	Whole School	Hall	9:05-9:30am
Tuesday	Class Based-led by class teacher			
Wednesday	Child led liturgical prayer	Whole School	Classrooms/prayer room	9:05-9:30am
Thursday	Class Based-led by class teacher			
Friday	Class Based-led by class teacher			

One class goes to Church each Friday for Mass on a Rota. Whole school masses at key points throughout the year.

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Head of school will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in class prayer books

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is monitored using prayer and liturgy monitoring form.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

Resources

A bank of resources is kept in each classroom. Additional resources are kept in the prayer room.

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'³

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Retreats

Yearly two-night retreats take place at the Youth Village.

Our Year 6 children attend a retreat to Holy Island with the Jarrow Cluster.

Other opportunities

Parish Mass

Mass with Jarrow Cluster Schools

Bishop Chadwick Education Trust Mass

Eucharist

One class goes to Church each Friday for Mass on a Rota. Whole school masses at key points throughout the year.

Sacramental Preparation programme.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Mrs Colley

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources

- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently