



# **St Mary's Catholic First School**

## **Prayer & Liturgy Policy**



**Bishop Wilkinson**  
Catholic Education Trust  
Through Christ, in Partnership

Part of the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust  
Company Registration Number 07890590

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<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Mrs. S. Oakes</b>

## Introduction

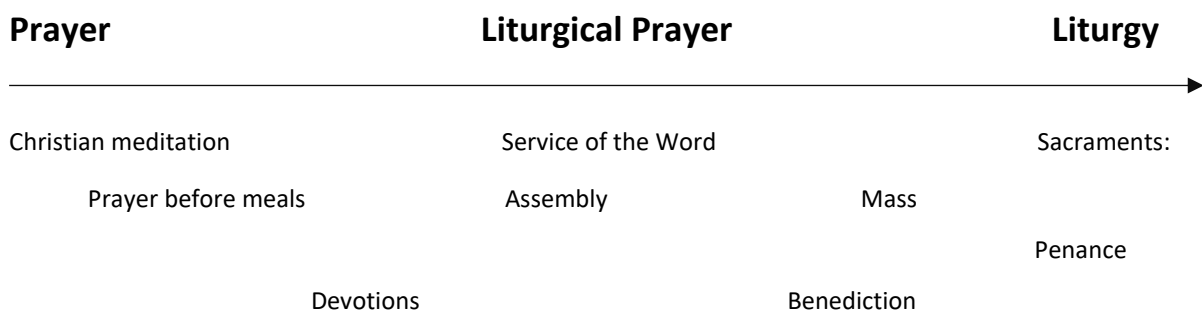
### Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

#### (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 First School Prayer and Celebration of the Word

## Mission Statement

'We Live, We Love, We Learn as followers of Jesus'

### 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 the word 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.'<sup>1</sup>

### 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, Celebration of the Word 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 Local Governing Committee (LGC) 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.

### The Place of Prayer and celebration of the Word in the Life of St. Mary's Catholic First School

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

Prayer and Celebration of the Word 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

### **The Aims of Prayer and Celebration of the Word**

Prayer and Celebration of the Word in St. Mary's Catholic First 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 First 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.<sup>2</sup> Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

### **Planning, content and celebration**

Prayer and Celebration of the Word 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. Every half term at least one class will class participate in a whole school Celebration of the Word where parents, governors and parishioners are invited.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion. Children are involved in two whole school prayer and Celebration of the Word celebrations each week. In addition, every pupil is involved in planning and delivering pupil-led Celebration of the Word and class prayers with their class.

Each class participates in Mass once every half term and parents and carers are invited to this event. Staff Mass is held at 8am in school once a half term, all staff are invited to attend.

All meetings & briefings commence with a joint prayer.

End of term whole school Mass take place each term in St. Mary's Church, parents/carers, governors and parishioners are invited.

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<sup>2</sup> Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Our significant events calendar outlines and maps out all Celebration of the Word and prayer events, this is shared with all staff at the start of the year.

St. Mary's also involved itself in prayer events arranged in conjunction with St. Mary's Parish Social committee.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Whole School Celebration of the Word Planned Opportunities			Pupil led class Celebration of the Word theme overview (example Autumn 2023)		
Month	Year group	Celebration of the Word Theme	Wk Beginning	Theme	Act of Worship
Sept	4	International Day of Peace-Whole School	4/9/23	Planning Week	
Sept	Rec	Welcome Mass-Whole school	11/9/23	Global Family: Fratelli Tutti	<a href="#">Act of Worship CAFOD Fratelli Tutti liturgical prayer.pptx (live.com)</a>
Nov	3	Armistice Day-Whole School	18/9/23	N/A	Whole School Liturgical Prayer-Led by Year 4: International Day of Peace <a href="#">Primary Peace liturgy.pptx (live.com)</a>
Dec	All	Class Advent (RE Topic) End of topic - Parents invited into classes.	25/9/23	MacMillan Cancer Care	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> I can support and help important causes for the greater good
Dec	All	Christingle Service	2/10/23	Harvest (CAFOD Family Fast Day)	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> I know how to brighten the lives of others (CAFOD 'Brighten Up' Fundraiser)
Dec	All	Advent Mass	9/10/23	World Mental Health Day	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> 10. I think before I make choices that affect others
Jan	Rec	Whole School -Water of Life	16/10/23	World Food Day	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> (27) I know when to help others in need
Feb	2	Whole School - Fairtrade	23/10/23	Looking after Ourselves	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> 9. I can tell you how I can look after myself
Feb	All	Ash Wednesday Mass	<b>Half Term</b>		
Mar	1	Whole School -Lent	6/11/23	N/A	Whole School Liturgical Prayer-Led by Year 3: Armistice Day
Mar	All	Class Lent/Easter (RE Topic) End of topic Parents invited into classes	13/11/23	Kindness	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> 13. I try to love others as I love myself
Apr	All	Easter Mass	20/11/23	World Toilet Day	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> 33. I know what human dignity means & I can show that respect to others
May	All	Ascension Thursday Mass	27/11/23	COP26 UN Climate	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> (20). I try to appreciate and look after the beauty of our world
May	All	Pentecost (RE Topic) End of topic Celebration of the Word-Parents invited into classes	4/12/23	N/A	Class Liturgy-Parents invited (End of RE topic) Advent
June	KS1	World Environment whole School (Parents invited)	11/12/23	World Gifts	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> 12. I know simple things can make us happy
June	KS2	Whole School - Laudato Si' anniversary (Parents Invited):	18/12/23	Meaning of Christmas	<a href="#">Act of Worship</a> I can share the message of Christmas with others
Jul	4	Y4 Leavers Mass			

Each Class attends Mass at St. Mary's Church. Each class attends Mass at least once a half term for a class Mass. All Masses above occur take place in St. Mary's Church.

Weekly					
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
AM	Prayer Journal Daily (Creative Prayer)				
	Whole school Celebration of the Word (20 mins)	Class Collective Worship (5-10 mins)	Pupil-led (7 Planned) Celebration of the Word (15 mins)	Class Collective Worship (5-10 mins)	Whole school Celebration of the Word. Wednesday Word Focus/Celebration Assembly (20 mins)
	Prayer before Lunch				
PM	Class collective Worship (5-10 mins)				
	School Prayer-how we will lead the mission (Vision & values)	Holding Prayer	Meditation	Hymn Practice	Holding Prayer
Home Time Prayers					
Termly					
<p>Mass celebrated at St. Mary's church (at least twice a term) for each class.</p> <p>Class celebration of the Word-parents invited.</p> <p>Mass at significant liturgical events of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lent/Easter</li> <li>• Advent</li> <li>• Pentecost</li> <li>• New beginnings (end of year)</li> </ul>					
Annually					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome Mass (St. Mary's Church-all invited)</li> <li>• Whole school Celebration of the Word-planned &amp; led by each class (St. Mary's School hall-all invited)</li> <li>• Christingle Advent service (St. Mary's catholic Church-all invited)</li> <li>• Holy days of obligation: Ash Wednesday Mass/Ascension Thursday</li> <li>• Leavers Mass (St. Mary's Church-all invited)</li> </ul>					

### Leading Prayer and Celebration of the Word

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher 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 the significant events calendar as well as the shared staff calendar. Mass times are also shared with staff in the significant Events folder on the shared TEAMS folder.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Prayer and liturgy is monitored termly and feedback given to staff.

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

### **Resources**

Each class teacher has been provided with a box of resources (housed under focal point in classroom) alongside relevant documentation in a shared TEAMS folder. Additional reading material is also available from the RE coordinators office e.g. Book about creative prayer ideas etc.

### **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'<sup>3</sup>

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.

### **Other opportunities**

We regularly participate in Parish events and participate in Mass and significant events at St. Mary's Catholic Church. In addition, staff Mass is also held half termly. All meetings and briefings begin with prayer opportunities. We regularly leave prayer intention cards at the back of Mass and prayer for those intentions in school.

### **Eucharist**

*Every child participates in class Mass every half term, In addition, we attend Mass for Holy Days of obligations as well as end of term Mass and special significant events such as the Welcome and Leaver's Mass at the start and end of each academic year.*

### **The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy**

Sarah Oakes is the coordinator for Prayer & Liturgy (see Appendix).

### **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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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 inservice 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