



St. Bridget's Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy / Collective Worship Policy

Written by Jane Summerson

Approved by Governors:

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Mission Statement:

Learning to Love, Pray and Grow Together as a Community in the Light of Jesus Christ.

St Bridget's is a Christ centred school which endeavours to be recognised in the community as a centre of Christian values based on a commitment to the Catholic Faith, where Governors, staff, parents and Parish work in close co-operation to ensure that each child is developed to his/her full spiritual, social and academic potential. Of prime importance is the development of a personal relationship with God through prayer and the Sacraments.

Prayer

"Prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for God" [Catechism of the Catholic Church 2560]

"Prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy." [Therese of Lisieux]

At the heart of the Christian faith is the belief in a God who communicates with people. God calls every human person into a loving relationship and as with every relationship, our relationship with God can only grow through communication. Prayer is the way in which we engage in communication with God. Christians believe that prayer is essential to human fulfilment for it is only in God that we can discover ourselves, our meaning and our purpose.

"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You" [St. Augustine]

In St Bridget's prayer consists of:

A quiet and calm atmosphere where everyone shows reverence and respect, then:

listening - being attentive to the voice/word of God.

speaking - expressing our heart's deepest longings and desires to the One who knows and understands us better than we know and understand ourselves.

reflecting - thinking about our relationship with God. Pondering on the actions of God in history and in the unfolding mystery of our lives.

resting – simply being consciously in the presence of God, knowing that we are loved.

One of the Early Fathers of the Church described prayer as “... *the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.*” These words of St John Damascene have become a classical definition of prayer and they point to the reason why, in a Catholic school, we begin and end each session of the day in prayer. Prayer can have a variety of forms and styles and express different things.

- Blessing and Adoration – the prayer which blesses God for the goodness which has been shown to humankind
- Prayers to express sorrow – the prayer which asks for forgiveness and which calls for the establishment of the Kingdom of God
- Intercession – consists in asking on behalf of another and ourselves
- Thanksgiving – acknowledging the gifts which God has given
- Praise – the prayer which praises God simply because God is

[CCC 2623 –2649]

Liturgy

The liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows

[This is the Liturgy 10]

“Liturgy” literally means, “work of the people”, and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action. Liturgical celebration therefore should be brought all human symbols of expression - art, dance, poetry, music, gesture, stillness.

The ‘Liturgy of the Word with Children. Guidelines’ [1996 The Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales] lists the General Principles of Liturgy:

- Liturgy is the praise and worship of God.
- Liturgy is the source and summit of the Church’s life and our lives.
- It is the right and duty of all baptised, both children and adults.
- The function of the liturgy is to build up members of Christ’s body, to strengthen us in Christ.
- Liturgy is action and symbol; it speaks to the whole person, it involves all the senses: sight, touch, sound, taste and smell.
- Participating in liturgy forms our habits because we are ritual people and learn through repetition and copying.
- In liturgy we discover the riches of prayer, through word and gesture, silence and stillness.
- The purpose of adapting liturgy for children is to lead them into full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy of the parish.
- Liturgy with children, as with adults, demands dignity, clarity and simplicity.

Prayer and Liturgy

God is present and active in all authentic human experience. We already have a blessed life and worship is recognising and celebrating this reality in the Christian tradition. God is reached through the world and adored within it. Creating a sacred space for worship is to create a space where the unity of God and creation is reverently symbolised and celebrated. Worship and the words and rituals we use should not sever us from the ordinary circumstances of our lives but rather unite us more closely to them.

- Worship remembers and celebrates the marvellous things God works in our lives. It celebrates God’s presence in our lives. Worship should not feel like an interruption from a different world. It is a response to life and can be spontaneous.
- Prayer and Liturgy 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 strength of the Holy Spirit.

- Worship is at the very heart of our school and will reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities.
- Prayer may be an individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.
- All liturgies involve the praise, thanksgiving and adoration of God and are, therefore, acts of worship. However, not all worship will be liturgy as it may or may not include symbol and action.
- An assembly is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship. A whole school assembly/worship does not take place due to COVID-19 restrictions. Worship takes place daily within our own classes.

Liturgy/worship in school

In light of this and our school mission statement, we understand prayer and worship to be central. We use the Ten Ten online resource to support worship.

Through liturgy and worship we encourage the development of a personal relationship with God. As a result of this the following occur:

- develop an understanding of what it means to belong to a community;
- provide opportunities for enhancing spiritual growth and personal development through Catholic prayer and reflection;
- reinforce positive attitudes;
- provide experiences of sharing values and celebrating significant events in the lives of individuals and the community, a shared ethos;
- develop knowledge of and experience seasons within the Church's year;
- develop knowledge and understanding of scripture and what we can learn from it;
- develop and celebrate skills of creativity.

Good worship takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it. Worship / Prayer and Liturgy happens when everyone is fully involved in the preparation and celebration. Time for worship is in addition to the 10% curriculum time for classroom Religious Education, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

At Key Stage 1 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies and prayer times
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word
- the occasional celebration of the holy Eucharist in church.
- a range of types of prayer
- a range of styles of celebration
- Opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies and prayer times
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite
- the occasional celebration of the holy Eucharist in church.
- a range of types of prayer
- a range of styles of celebration
- opportunities for pupils to take an active part in worship
- opportunities for pupils to take leadership roles in worship
- opportunities to plan their own worship
- opportunities to share their planned worship with other classes

Prayer Experiences

Pupils are introduced to a variety of forms and styles of prayer, which are developed in ways which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. We use the Ten Ten online resource to support daily prayer. Due to COVID-19, whole school worship is not possible. All Prayer and Liturgy, all collective worship takes place in classrooms, led by the class teacher or pupils until further notice.

Resources and learning environment

Each class has their own Prayer and Liturgy file to record and plan their class Prayer and Liturgy. Some planning is also online (Ten Ten). It is monitored through observations, pupil interviews, looking at prayer and liturgy folders and auditing resources. Each class also has a box of resources to be used for Prayer and Liturgy. They can choose items and readings from the box when leading their own worship.

Type:	Example:
Praying the psalms ‘	I thank you for the wonder of my being’ [Psalm 139]
Traditional prayers	Glory be to the Father, Our Father, Hail Mary
Repetitive prayer [mantra]	‘Jesus, I love you’, repeated several times, slowly
Meditation	Scripture reflection with use of imagination
Bodily prayer	raising hands in praise, bowing, dancing, genuflecting
Prayer of the heart	Stillness to listen to God: ‘Be still and know that I am God.’
Contemplation	looking at trees, a sunset, an icon etc.
Gestures	the sign of the cross, the sign of peace
Hymns	traditional and modern hymns
Music	listening to quiet, reflective music
Litanies For all creation:	Thanks be to God
Processions	Gospel procession with sung ‘alleluia’
Prayer services and liturgies	formal and spontaneous prayer using holy water, candles, incense and other symbols
Celebrations	prayer, song, sharing food and drink, celebrating work done

Reviewed on 06/09/20

By Mrs J Summerson

To be reviewed next in
September 2022

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Collective Worship

- Formulating a written policy for Collective Worship.
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Collective Worship included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils.
- Ensuring that Collective Worship 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 Worship
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship 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 Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

Communication

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

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- 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 Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently.