



Bishop
Hogarth

Catholic Education Trust

St Gregory's Catholic Academy



PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

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Introduction

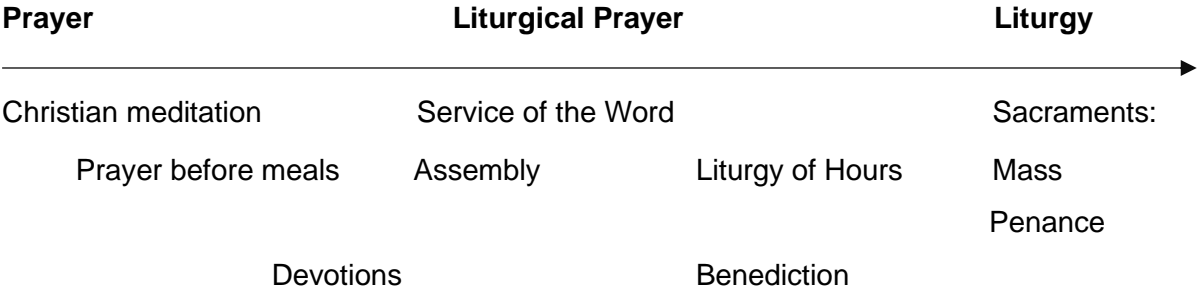
Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

(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 model policy addresses the shift in vocabulary and is an interim response to the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory. When the Directory is published it will contain a model policy which the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle will adapt for schools.

St Gregory's Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Vision & Mission Statement

Our Catholic ethos and support for one another as a family of schools drives all that we do. Our mission is guided by a collective culture and vision where:

'Our schools are places of excellence –providing service and witness to children, their families and the wider Catholic community, adding value as a family of schools and enriching the learning and experience of all our young people, so they may achieve their full potential.'

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.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Gregory's 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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St Gregory's 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 Gregory's 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.

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.

Daily opportunities for prayer take place at the beginning and end of each day and before and after lunch. These include formal and informal prayer, in line with expectations for prayers taught at each key stage, periods of stillness and silence. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own prayers which are role modelled by the adults working in that room.

All staff meetings / gatherings begin with a prayer including the staff briefing held each Monday.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Liturgical Prayer Overview



Day	Time	Responsibility	Liturgical Prayer
Monday	10.30am	HT	Gospel Reflection/ Virtue/ Statement to Live By
Tuesday	10.45 – 11.00am	CT supported by A Mash	Class Liturgical Prayer – Child Led (age appropriate)
Wednesday	10.45 – 11.00am	CT supported by A Mash	Mass / Key Stage Liturgical Prayer
Thursday	9am 1pm	AMW/ A Mash	Hymn Practice KS2 Talking to God
Friday	10.15am	DHT Head Boy/Girl	Gospel Liturgical Prayer & Celebration Assembly

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy.

- There will be whole school collective worship every Monday morning led by the Headteacher. This will be a reflection on Sunday's Gospel and an introduction to our Trust Virtue and statement to live by of the week.
- There will be Key Stage collective worship each Wednesday led by teachers on a rota system.
- On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, all pupils participate in short collective worship (15 mins) or 'Talking to God' a time for individual reflection, in their class groups. It is expected that the children will take an increasing lead in the planning of these liturgies. Records of collective worship are kept in class liturgical prayer files.
- On Friday morning, there will be a whole school collective worship led by the Deputy head. This will be based on the Sunday gospel. This is followed by our 'Celebration Assembly.
- Individual class groups lead worship on different themes across the year, for example Harvest, The Rosary, Remembrance, Advent, Lent and parents are invited.
- Daily opportunities for prayer take place at the beginning and end of each day and before and after lunch. These include formal and informal prayer, periods of stillness and silence. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own prayers which are role modelled by the adults working in that room.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in...

- the whole School and Key stage Collective Worship Liturgy planner and class liturgy files.
- displays, collections of children's' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos *etc*

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

- To ensure our children are participating in high quality, meaningful worship the RE Leader follows Diocesan guidance.
- Collective Worship is evaluated through pupil voice.
- Modelled by Headteacher, DHT and Chaplain – termly observation of SLT
- Collective Worship is monitored using the Hexham and Newcastle Diocese Collective Worship monitoring form (Appendix 2)

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

Resources

The school has a wide range of high-quality artefacts, books and music resources to support and enhance the prayer life of the school which are kept in the R.E. cupboard and class liturgy boxes. Resources are managed by the RE coordinator and Chaplain

- Coloured cloths for each season are available in each classroom (a box for each classroom).
- Each classroom has a focal point (Sacred Space) designated in the classroom – this is monitored by the Pupil Chaplains supported by the School Chaplain.
- 'God's Story' and 'Church Story' resources are available in each classroom and in digital format on the school IT network.
- A good selection of bibles are available in each classroom.
- Useful website addresses have been distributed by the RE Leader - "Come and See logins, Ten:Ten worship resources and links from sites to support Collective Worship.
- Electronic R.E. resources are also held on the staff shared area.
- Staff have passwords for access to the Come and See website.
- Staff have access to Ten:Ten website for Collective Worship and Liturgy/Prayer support.
- Liturgical dance is incorporated into shared prayer experiences, such as the Christmas Carol Service.
- The Wednesday Word is shared (electronically) with all families each week. Advent, Lent and Month of May bags are shared with families.

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

Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to attend a residential retreat and the Diocesan Primary Youth Festival at the Emmaus Youth Village in Consett.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Other opportunities

Whole school Mass takes place every half term. Classes from across school also attend Mass on a weekly basis to join with the parishioners. (A rota system is in place).

Eucharist

Feast days and Holy days of Obligation

Role of Trust Head of Catholic Life

The Trust Head of Catholic Life acts as a resource to support to Lay Chaplains and Chaplaincy Teams. Their role is to provide:

- Training and support
- Point of contact
- Identify and meet the training needs of those involved in chaplaincy in our schools
- Oversee spirituality timetables
- Assistance with sacred spaces
- Opportunities to meet and discuss ideas and problem-solve together
- Assistance with the planning and preparation of key Liturgical celebrations including major feasts and seasons across sectors
- Resources for websites

The Trust Head of Catholic Life will work with school Chaplains and those with responsibility for co-ordinating collective worship to develop ideas to:

- Make prayer engaging and meaningful
- Increase involvement of our young people in the prayer life of their school
- Develop whole Trust MAT spirituality events including retreats and liturgies

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy (Appendix 1)

Anne-Marie Wilson (Deputy head) Alyson Mash (Chaplain)

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 three years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

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

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]

Year Group:

Monitoring of Collective Worship

Date:

Appendix 2

Focus	Comments
<p>Planning (discussed with teacher before or after celebration)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the children been involved in the planning? • Has the Act of Worship been planned around a theme/feast? 	
<p>Structure (If Liturgy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the four parts (Gather, Word, Response, Mission) be distinctly identified? • How did children gather? • Was the Word appropriate and treated reverently? • How did children respond to the Word? • Was there a clear Mission, an evident message at the end of the liturgy? 	
<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or adult led? • Depending on the age of the children were they as involved as possible in leading? 	
<p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were children fully engaged and participating enthusiastically? • Was it a prayerful experience? 	
<p>Creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How creative was the Act of Worship? • Did it include different prayer styles/dance/music etc to enhance the experience? 	
<p>Prayer Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were children able to create focal point, atmosphere for prayer, appropriate for their age? 	
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were liturgical resources used appropriately eg correct liturgical colours, artefacts? 	
<p>ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was ICT used to support and enhance the Act of Worship or was it a distraction? 	
<p>Agreed areas for development</p>	

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to the class teacher

Coordinator ...

Class Teacher ...