

# Prayer and Liturgy Policy



St. Joseph's Catholic Academy, Norton

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**Introduction**

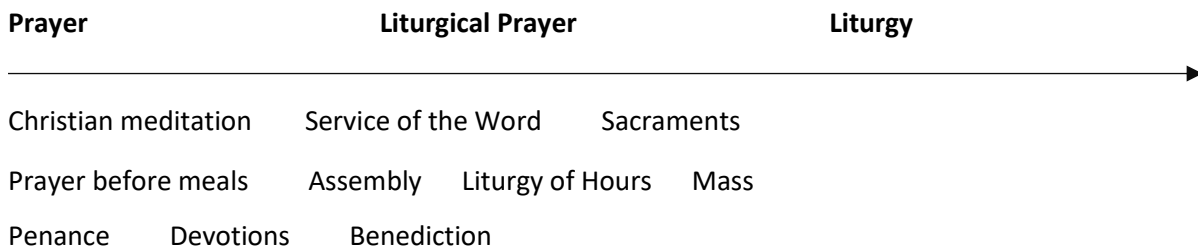
**Understanding Prayer and Liturgy**

**(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. Joseph's Catholic Academy, 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.'<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, 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. Joseph's Catholic Academy**

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. Joseph's Catholic Academy aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues

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

- 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. Joseph's Catholic Academy 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 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. Staff prayer occurs at the beginning or end of all staff meeting and briefings.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Monday – Class based Collective Worship.

Tuesday – Class based Collective Worship.

Wednesday – Whole school Collective Worship.

Thursday - Key stage 1 and Key stage 2 Collective Worship or mass.

Friday - Candle time – Class based Liturgy. (Parents invited)

Mass in St. Joseph's Church – Key Stage 2 every three weeks (Thursday). (Parents invited)

Mass in St. Joseph's Church – Key stage 1 every three weeks (Thursday). (Parents invited)

Class assemblies – Every class shares their learning with the school and parents once a year.

Easter Liturgies – (Parents invited)

Christmas liturgies – (Parents invited)

### **Leading Prayer and Liturgy**

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Senior Leaders 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**

Liturgy planning sheets are used by the teachers and children. (Age related)

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in classroom Candle Time files.

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

Whole school prayer and liturgy is electronically stored.  
House pastoral groups prayer and liturgy is recorded in house files.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Prayer and liturgy is monitored using a prayer and liturgy 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**

All books and photocopy resources supporting RE, liturgies, collective worship, FHC, reflections, prayer, and world religions are situated in the meeting room in clearly labelled boxes.

Each teacher follows the 'Come and See' programme of study.

Come and See resources and assessment materials are provided for all teachers.

All teachers have access to the Come and See website which supports the full RE Curriculum and is full resourced.

The 'Wednesday Word' is distributed to every family in the school to support them in the celebration of Mass.

God Story pictures and resources can be found on all computers: START-RE –God Story Resources

RE Provide can also be located in the same folder on all computers: START-RE – RE Provide

### **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.

### **Retreats**

First Holy Communion children go on retreat to The Lady Chapel in Osmotherley, North Yorkshire.

Year 5 children go on an overnight retreat to the The Emmaus Youth Village.

### **Other opportunities**

House masses linked to their Saint Feast Day

Whole School Mass at the start and end of term

School chaplains - working towards PIN Award

Mini Vinnies

Rosary prayers on Monday lunchtime.

### **Eucharist**

House masses linked to their Saint Feast Day.

Key Stage masses every 3 weeks.

Whole School Mass at the start and end of term.

### **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

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<sup>3</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- 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**

Angela Birrell is the prayer and liturgy coordinator; a model job description is included in Appendix 1.

### **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.]*

## Monitoring Collective Worship

### Focus

Planning (discussed with teacher before or after celebration)

- Have the children been involved in the planning?
- Has the Act of Worship been planned around a theme/feast?

### Structure (If Liturgy)

- 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?

### Leadership

- Child or adult led?
- Depending on the age of the children were they as involved as possible in leading?

### Engagement

- Were children fully engaged and participating enthusiastically?
- Was it a prayerful experience?

### Creativity

- How creative was the Act of Worship?
- Did it include different prayer styles/dance/music etc to enhance the experience?

### Prayer Space

- Were children able to create focal point, atmosphere for prayer, appropriate for their age?

Resources

- Were liturgical resources used appropriately e.g correct liturgical colours, artefacts?

### ICT

- Was ICT used to support and enhance the Act of Worship or was it a distraction?

### Agreed areas for development

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