



PRAYER AND LITURGY

St Joseph's Mission Statement

Father,

You call your children to walk in the light of Christ,

Free us from darkness and keep us in the radiance of your truth.

At St Joseph's School we wish all our children to enjoy learning.

Our teaching will develop the pupils' strengths, interests and experiences.

We aim to develop their confidence in their own capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively.

Through our teaching we will endeavour to equip all our children with the essential learning skills and instil in each pupil an appreciation of education as a life-long and enjoyable process.

We aim to develop enquiring minds and the ability to think rationally.

By means of interesting and varied experiences we wish our pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills.

But most of all to develop an awareness of God's love for each person in the school community through the way we care and value others and ourselves.

UN Rights of the Child

Article 14 and 30

Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

All children have the right to practise their beliefs and customs.

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Introduction

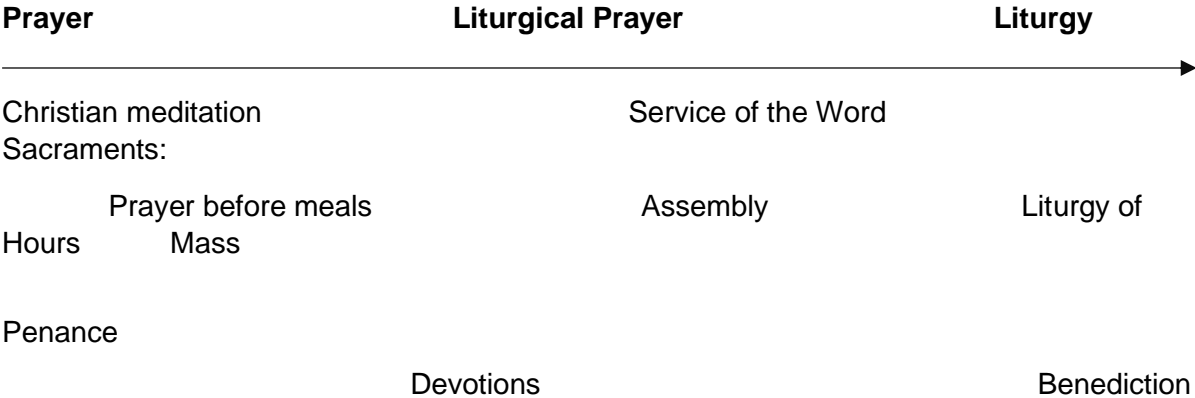
Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

(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 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 Joseph's Catholic Primary 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 Joseph'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 Joseph'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.

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.

The staff meet weekly for a briefing which begins with Staff Prayer

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

The Timetable of Collective Worship

- Weekly whole staff worship-weekly briefings start with a spiritual focus.
- Assemblies including collective worship and liturgy.
- Whole School-Monday (Picture News focus), Wednesday (Wednesday Word Focus) and Friday (Includes Achievements)
- Phase assemblies when applicable Tues-Phase Leaders
- Class Liturgical Prayer and Collective Worship-Thurs approx 15 mins-relating to Sunday's Gospel, topic or seasons of the Liturgical year-feast days etc
- Daily Class Prayer-Morning, Lunchtime and evening.
- Various whole school collective worship in relation to the Liturgical Year-Easter Service/Carol Service/Harvest Festival/Whole class assemblies

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. *The Deputy Head leads once a week and all other teaching staff are timetabled to lead once a*

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

week. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Recording

All classes have a Class Collective Worship Folder. Class Liturgical Prayer is recorded on the school liturgy planner proforma which includes the 4 aspects of liturgy. A record is kept of pupils' involvement including planning and leading and sharing the Liturgical Prayer Bags with Year 6. Worship is also recorded on power points which are shared with the children and are kept centrally for staff to use.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Collective Worship is monitored using the Collective Worship monitoring form which is based on the Diocesan proforma and informally. The Collective Worship lead aims to share the weekly Class Worship with individual classes and the Collective Worship Governor, and any other governors, are welcome to attend.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified, and outcomes used to inform CSED.

Developing Parish Links

St Joseph's Church is part of St Thomas of Canterbury Parish, Billingham which also includes the churches of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary and St John's. Catechists from across the parish run the Sacramental Programme where pupils from all 4 schools (including St Paul's) are prepared to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist together. The final gathering is the First Holy Communion Mass where the Parish and schools work together to plan a shared Mass and celebration. The Mini Vinnies engage with the SVP to support with charity events within the Parish Community.

The school makes contributions to the parish bulletin to keep parish members informed about school collective worship events of which members of the parish are welcomed. Parishioners are also invited to the weekly Mass which currently takes place in the school hall whilst essential restoration work is completed at the church.

*Weekly Sunday Mass is planned for 6.00 pm on a Sunday (this is on hold at the moment due to the restoration work in the church).

Prayer

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion. The staff share a weekly reflection which is led by the Collective Worship coordinator and the teaching staff. Pupils have the opportunity to pray throughout the day with age appropriate prayers.

Daily Worship

Refer to Prayer, The Timetable of Collective Worship, Feast Days and Holy Days and Holy Mass and Celebration of the Sacraments.

Resources

There are a variety of resources in the RE file in the Staff shared documents on the computer. This includes:

- Music and Hymns including Taize, Bernadette Farrell etc
- A bank of appropriate prayers
- Prayers and references for Seasons of the Liturgical year
- Ppt presentations inc Stations of the Cross for children,
- God's Story and Church's story Bks 1-3
- Variety of religious pictures

All classes are equipped and continually develop the resources for their Class Worship Areas and Liturgy Displays including:

- Class Collective Worship Folder
- Prayer stones/Crosses etc
- Resources for different Liturgical seasons including Advent and Lent
- Variety of pictures
- Prayer books, bibles etc

- Worship Area cloths for different Liturgical Seasons

The school also uses the Wednesday Word which is provided for the pupils weekly. In addition to this, resources from Ten Ten are also used to support Collective Worship throughout the school.

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

The school engages with the Youth Village to allow Y6 to attend a day retreat during the Summer Term. There are now plans for Year 5 to also attend the Residential Retreat during the Summer Term.

Feast Days / Holy Days of Obligation

Holy Mass will be celebrated (in school whilst restoration work is completed) or focused Collective Worship will take place in school.

St Joseph's Day starts with a whole school Collective Worship followed by celebrations throughout the day.

Sacred Spaces (Primary)

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school reflect the liturgical season and reference Come and See topics, the school values and the Wednesday Word. In this way they are an outward sign of the school's ethos. All prayer areas will have the correct liturgical colours and follow the Church's Liturgical Year.

Charity

The school has regular fundraising activities which support many charities including CAFOD, Mission Together, Macmillan and Wear it Pink Cancer Support, Food Bank and Poppy Appeal. The resources from the CAFOD and Mission Together charities are regularly used to support in the planning of Collective Worship particularly during Advent and Lent. There are annual fundraising activities for the Food Bank, 'Wear it Pink' and Fairtrade which are launched with whole school Collective Worship. The Mini Vinnies engage with the parish SVP to support in the local community which has included Carol Singing and prayers at the local nursing home and making Christmas Cards to be delivered to those most in need in the parish. The school also works closely with the parish and SVP to provide support for our families that are most in need which includes food and clothing hampers.

Holy Mass & Celebration of Sacraments

Eucharistic celebrations, which are celebrated by the parish priest, take place every week in the school hall at present. This is timetabled so that all KS 2 classes attend mass twice a month with Year 2 once a month. Hymns, Readings, Bidding Prayers and the offertory are led by the children therefore opportunities for children to participate are maximised. There are also whole school masses arranged linked to the liturgical year, e.g., Advent and Lent. There are additional Eucharistic celebrations for First Holy Communion children and Year 6 leavers. Parents and parish members are invited to every celebration.

All children from Year 2-Year 6 attend Holy Mass on Ash Wednesday and during Advent.

Sacramental Preparation: Supporting Parishes

The Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Eucharist are prepared for and celebrated with children in Year 4. This is alongside other children from the schools which are part of St Thomas of Canterbury Parish which are OLMHR, St Paul's and St John's. The school works well with the catechists of the parish.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

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

Ruth Whyte

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.

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

[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.]