

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

November 2022

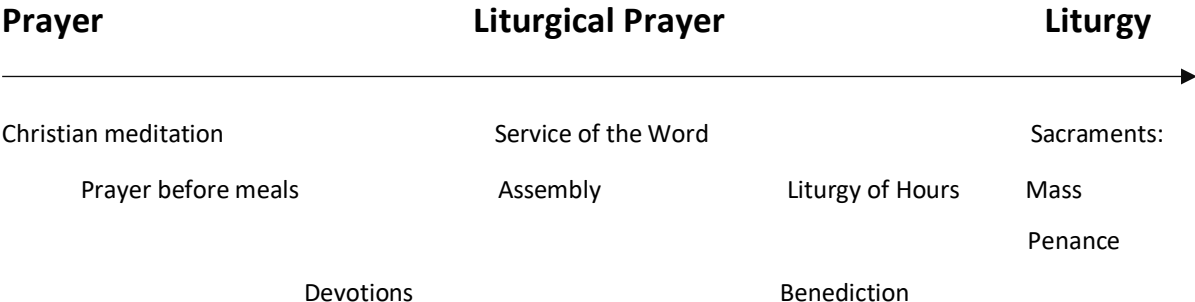
Introduction

**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 Aidan's Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission Statement

Our vision is that St Aidan's is a place where every member of our community experiences the deep joy of God's love, through following the teachings of Jesus Christ; that every member of our community serves God in every word, action and all that they do.

"Come in and learn with Jesus; go out and serve with love."

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 Aidan'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 Aidan'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 Aidan'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.

Weekly staff meetings begin with staff prayer. Training days begin with staff liturgical prayer.

Staff Stations of The Cross – Lent Journey with Wallsend Family of Schools and Fr David Governors meetings begin with Trust Prayer and a moment of reflection.

Staff attend Annual Catholic Family Conference with liturgical prayer and reflection

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Mass: Termly Whole School Mass in school

Masses: Y4/5/6 can attend Wednesday Mass with parish

Y6 attend Youth Village Mass, Wallsend Family Mass and N Tyneside Catholic family Leavers' Mass

Whole school liturgical prayer led by staff Monday and Friday – Based on Statements To Live By

Whole school liturgical prayer led by children – Wednesday – Based on Week's Gospel ; Parents invited

Tuesday – Class child led class prayers

Thurs –Teacher led class liturgical prayer (planned with children)

End of each unit of curriculum RE – Liturgical prayer is planned with children and parents invited

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Lent and Advent – Daily Prayers: Parents invited weekly for Liturgical Prayer service
October: Daily Rosary – whole school
Weekly – ‘Rosary Club’ (child-led)
Faith In Action Liturgical Prayer/Retreats x3 annually

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. Monday and Friday using Statements To Live By as framework. 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...
Children’s books, STLB Files, Chapel Liturgical Prayer Book

Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior Leaders regularly attend liturgical Prayer services to monitor. Record sheets are kept.
Prayer and liturgy is monitored using prayer and liturgy monitoring form.

Children also evaluate their liturgies (see attached)
Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school’s CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

Resources

Each class has a prayer focus table and sets of liturgically seasonal cloths
Bibles, crucifix, holding cross, rosary beads, statues,
Mission basket
Planning tools, and range of resources such as pebbles, candles, pine cones for focus
Budget is set aside for ad-hoc focused materials e.g. beads for threading/lego etc
John Burland and CJM Music
Prayer journals
Prayer cards/resources
10:10
Pray2gether Liturgy Planner
Books of Prayers
Prayer resources shared by other children

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

Year 6 Faith In action x 3 annually
Year 6 Holy Island Annually
Staff – Wallsend Catholic Family Day of Reflection and Conference

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Other opportunities

Parish Masses held each week. Children can attend with class (not leading worship)

Ash Wednesday – Headteacher and Year 6 distribute ashes to other children in chapel after attending service in church

Eucharist

The whole school share in the celebration of the Eucharist through Masses in school:

September – beginning of the year

December – Advent/Christmas

End of March/April – celebration of Holy week and Easter week

July – end of year thanksgiving Mass

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Rachel Lalor – See 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 two 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 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

[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.]