

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School



Catholic
Primary School
Congleton
A Voluntary Academy

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

*Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School is a Christ centred learning community,
where all are safe, valued and loved."*

Policy Schedule	Date	Signed
Approved by the Governing Body:	6/10/2025	Headteacher: Amy Butterfield Chair of Governors: Val Bridge
To be reviewed:	September 2028	

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School, Congleton

POLICY FOR PRAYER & LITURGY WORSHIP

**“Ask, and it will be given you;
seek, and you will find;
knock, and it will be opened to you.”**

Matthew 7:7

The Nature of Prayer & Liturgy

We believe that Christian worship 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 Place of Prayer & Liturgy in the Life of our School

Prayer & Liturgy in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Prayer & 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;
- Those from other faith backgrounds or no faith background.

It will be a positive experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

The Aims of Prayer & Liturgy

We believe that Prayer & Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To worship God
- To consider spiritual and moral issues and explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening and joining in the worship offered
- To develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All Acts of Prayer & Liturgy in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in children skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.¹ In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - thought through carefully and appropriately paced;
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Prayer & Liturgy in our school will be:

- properly prepared
- adequately resourced
- recorded in a class prayer book
- monitored by the Senior Leadership Team

Gospel assembly is held every Monday, led by a teacher. Children listen to the week's Gospel reading and reflect upon it.

Prayer & Liturgy takes place daily at Saint Mary's in a variety of forms which includes a Gospel assembly on Monday morning each week led a teacher, hymn practice which is linked to the liturgical calendar and understanding of the gospel, and class Prayer & Liturgy (which may be planned and led by the children or an adult and which may include a Bible teaching, a song of praise, liturgical and common prayer, and some form of instruction). In addition, there are daily prayers in the morning, lunchtime and at the end of each day (see Appendix 3) and both staff and children are encouraged to pray spontaneously.

Eucharist

Mass is an integral part of worship at Saint Mary's and takes place in school at least once a term. In addition, Years 2-6 will celebrate Mass at St Mary's Chapel during key seasons of the liturgical year. In the event that we can't join together as a school community, we will continue to celebrate Mass remotely.

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with all children. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. The GIFT team will share responsibility to prepare and organise whole school Mass. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to the *'Directory for Masses with Children'* as a basis for our practice.

¹ Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Co-ordinator of Prayer & Liturgy

The RE Co-ordinator leads all areas of R.E. including Prayer & Liturgy. They will work in partnership with the Parish Priest and the Headteacher to make sure that all Prayer & Liturgy is both Catholic in organisation and content. They inform and enable all members of staff and the children to fully engage in following the Catholic faith. The Co-ordinator works with governors and meets regularly to discuss aspects of Prayer and Liturgy at the school.

(This role is further discussed in Appendix 1.)

Appendix 1

The Role of the RE Co-ordinator for Prayer & Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for Prayer & Liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Prayer & Liturgy which may at times form part of the School Development Plan
- Ensuring that Prayer & Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Prayer & 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'
- Assisting the governors to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Prayer & Liturgy

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Ensuring Acts of Prayer & Liturgy are taking place through monitoring of planning and timetabling
- Undertaking learning walks with Local Governing Body involvement to observe Acts of Prayer & Liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Prayer & 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 & Liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Prayer & Liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with Parish Priest
- Liaison with Diocesan representatives

Professional development / Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Prayer & Liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service Diocesan courses and reporting back
- Keeping up-to-date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- To Love You More Dearly, Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- Developing the resources available for Prayer & Liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

Appendix 2

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.)

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.

As a rule, acts of worship will take place on the school premises. However, the governing body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere.

In this school, responsibility for arranging Prayer & Liturgy rests with the Local Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Prayer & Liturgy. However, given the importance of Prayer & 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. However, we would like to emphasise that Acts of Prayer & Liturgy at Saint Mary's will always aim to be a positive experience from which all children can benefit.

Appendix 3 Prayers used at the school

Morning Prayer (Nursery-Y6)

Father in heaven, you love me,
You are with me night and day.
I want to love you always
In all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father,
Bless me through the day. Amen

Home-time prayer (Nursery-Y1)

Hands together softly so, little eyes shut tight
Father just before we go, hear our prayers tonight
We are all God's children here, this is what we pray
Keep us when the dark is here and through every day.

Home-time prayer (Y2-Y6)

God our Father, I've come to say
Thank you for your love today.
Thank you for my family
And all the friends you give to me.
Guard me in the dark of night
And in the morning send your light. Amen

Grace before meals (Nursery-Y6)

Bless us, O Lord, as we sit together.
Bless the food we eat today.
Bless the hands that made the food.
Bless us, O Lord, Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit (Y5-Y6)

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and there will be a new creation
And you will renew the face of the earth.
Let us pray:

O God, you instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may choose what is right and ever rejoice in his consolation, through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

The Angelus (Y3-6)

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary
And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary.....

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary.....

And the Word was made flesh

And dwelt among us

Hail Mary.....

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Pour forth we beseech you, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts;

that we to whom the incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by

the message of an angel, may, by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection.

Through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Hail Mary (R-Y6)

Hail Mary, full of grace
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
Now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Our Father (R-Y6)

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Glory Be (R-Y6)

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Eternal Rest (R-Y6)

Eternal rest, give unto him/her O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon him/her.
May he/she rest in peace. Amen

The Prayer of St. Richard of Chichester (Y2-Y6)

Thanks be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which you have given me,
for all the pains and insults which you have borne for me.
O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
day by day.
Amen.

A range of other prayers are used at Saint Mary's when appropriate throughout the liturgical year.