



Prayer and Liturgy at St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Introduction

At St Mark's, Prayer and Liturgy is integral to developing the children's relationship with Christ. Gospel values are embedded in all that we do with Christ at the centre. Prayer and Liturgy is central to our Catholic ethos and we expect all staff to lead and model good practice in prayer. It provides an opportunity for all to reflect on God's word and to celebrate and respond to the beliefs and attitudes, which characterise Christian life.

At St Mark's we strive to provide a rich variety of prayer and assemblies, which will deepen the pupil's sense of belonging to the faith community of our school and to the wider church. Children take an active role in planning, leading and evaluating Prayer and Liturgy. We believe worship remembers and celebrates God's work in our lives. It celebrates his presence amongst us today and allows children and staff the opportunity to be joined with Him.

In our school, Prayer and Liturgy takes many forms including prayer, song, assemblies and liturgies. We strive to provide many opportunities for the children and our school community to develop their relationship with God. Children are encouraged to pray and reflect deeply on the Gospel Values and carefully consider how these will impact on their lives and the lives of others

Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

At St. Mark's, we strongly believe that Christian 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.

Legal Requirements

At St. Mark's, we acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. The law requires the act of worship be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' and under recent Government instruction (Nov, 2014). We aim to include opportunities in Collective Worship for students to explore and learn about British Values and other faiths. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Acts of Prayer and Liturgy will take place at school or in church. We also acknowledge that Prayer and Liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

The place of prayer and liturgy in our school

Prayer and Liturgy is inclusive at St. Mark's and takes into account the religious and educational needs of all our pupils. We aim to include:

- Those who form the worshipping community in our St. Mark's parish
- Those who do not attend church
- Those from other Christian traditions or of no faith
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

All pupils have the opportunity to contribute to and gain from Prayer and Liturgy in our school. It is an integral part of our school life.

The Aims of prayer and Liturgy

At St. mark's we believe that Prayer and Liturgy aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce 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 and 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
- 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.

In order to achieve this, celebrations will:

- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be succinct to ensure attention span and enjoyment of pupils

Organisation of Prayer and Liturgy

Type	Involves	Frequency	Location	Led by...
Gospel Assembly	Whole School	Every Monday	Hall	SLT/ RE Lead with pupil participation
Praise and Sing	Whole School	Every Wednesday	Hall	Chaplaincy and Music Teacher
Class celebration assemblies	Whole School	Every Friday	Hall	Each Year group leads one per year.
Class Mass	Each year group	Once per term	St. Mark's Church/School	Pupils in each respective class
Class Prayer and Liturgy	Whole school in classes	As per timetables	In class	Pupils under teacher direction
Harvest Mass	Whole School	As per Liturgical Year	St. Mark's Church/School	Pupils under direction of RE Lead.
Stations of the Cross	Whole School	As per Liturgical Year	Hall	All pupils under direction of RE Lead
Advent Mass	Whole School	As per Liturgical Year	St. Mark's Church/School	RE Lead and pupil participation.
Ash Wednesday	Whole School	As per Liturgical Year	Hall	RE Lead
Reconciliation	KS2	As per Liturgical Year	Hall	RE Lead and pupil participation.
Leaver's Mass	Whole School	End of Year	Hall	Year 6 pupils under

Planning

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:

- following a structure of the Church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be a focus in most acts of Prayer and Liturgy.
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
- with opportunities for children to listen, reflect and be prayerful.

Delivery

An Act of Worship will always begin and end with the Sign of the Cross to remind students and staff that Christ is at the centre of our faith community and that we are in the presence of God the Father and the Holy Spirit. In all Acts of Worship, it is important that an appropriate atmosphere representative of the liturgical season is established. Notices and announcements will all be given out before the Act of Worship begins and where possible the students will be dismissed in a prayerful and meaningful way to carry the spirit of the experience into their day. Acts of Worship will be delivered with reverence and respect for the spiritual and liturgical content and, if appropriate, for the sacred spaces in which they are celebrated. Use of the altar/ focus is encouraged as a focal point

Recording

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- planning proforma for class Prayer and Liturgy

- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos, floorbooks etc

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and Liturgy is evaluated by staff, parents and pupils using a template. Prayer and Liturgy is monitored frequently by SLT.

Resources

Each class has their own toolkit to help to plan and evaluate Prayer and Liturgy including liturgical cloths and artefacts and other resources to help promote child-led Liturgy. Other resources available include:

- Graphic Bibles
- TenTen materials
- CAFOD materials
- Chaplaincy to support with Class Prayer and Liturgy
- Candles
- Access to different prayers
- Rosary beads

Mass and Class Liturgical Prayer

Eucharistic celebrations form a very important part of our Collective Worship. Opportunities for children to plan and participate are maximised and parents and other members of the school and Parish communities are encouraged to attend. The dates of Whole school or class masses are published as part of the whole-school calendar at the beginning of the academic year. The celebrations will take the following forms:

- Whole school Masses, ensuring we celebrate Holy Days of Obligation when they occur during the school year.
- Class Liturgical Prayer – for KS1 – prepared by the children and for the children. These are smaller and more personal to the children
- Class Mass – for KS2 – prepared by the children and teachers for the children and parents. These masses are smaller than the whole school and give the children the opportunity to gather in their class to worship, learn about and pray for their school, family, friends etc.
- Whole school liturgical prayer

- Class Liturgical Prayer are held at least twice a week. Liturgical prayer is prepared by the children and celebrated in their own class.
- Children will be encouraged to participate in school-lead Sunday masses.

Collective worship celebrates and shows the very best of our faith and offers a tangible articulation of God’s love for all regardless of our differences, cultures, or beliefs.

Prayer and Liturgy wider themes

Term	Key Theme	Virtue	Dedications/Wider Themes
Autumn 1- Harvest	Harvest	Respect	Black History Month St Francis of Assisi
Autumn 2- Advent	Advent	Resourcefulness	October – Month of the Rosary
Spring 1- Lent	Lent	Reasoning	
Spring 2- Easter	Easter	Resilience	May – Month of Mary
Summer 1- Pentecost	Pentecost	Responsibility	
Summer 2- Corpus Christi	Corpus Christi	Reflection	