



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Love God... Love Others... Love Ourselves...

Prayer and Liturgy Guidance

Date of Ratification:	Summer 2026
Review Date:	Spring 2028



Love God, Love others and Love ourselves...

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we aim to help children develop in their journey of faith in a positive learning environment where the gospel values of Faith, Love, Hope, Forgiveness, Courage, Justice and Service to others are all at the heart of what we do.

We provide opportunities for our children to develop spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically and emotionally, and share their qualities, abilities and ambitions thus fulfilling individual potential.

As a worshipping community, we respect all people and create a loving, caring atmosphere which overflows into an ethos of warmth and welcome towards parents, parish and the local community.

“In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could lead to a hardness of heart, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of boundless love of God, in order to experience his tenderness.”

Pope Francis

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 a 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.'

Christ at the Centre, Rev Marcus Stock 2005

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 the Religious Education Directory; *To Know you more Clearly*.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in school life at St. Mary's

Just as Our Lord Jesus Christ is at the heart of all our prayer and liturgy, so too he is at the centre of our school. His Gospel is the reference point for its ethos and values; he offers the definitive example of the educator. Joining Christ in praise of the Eternal Father and united by the Holy Spirit in making intercession for the world through prayer and liturgy lies at the heart of the daily life of the school. The quality of the prayer and liturgy in school not only gives honour to God but forms the spiritual and ethical life of pupils and staff alike.

There is a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, and 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.

Responsibility

(a) Governance

The governors, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is a named person(s) who is responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school (the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator)
- the prayer and liturgy policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- there is a budget for prayer and liturgy that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

(b) Headteacher

The headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- they work in partnership with the leader(s) for prayer and liturgy
- those responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school have been given appropriate training and formation to ensure that all guidance is followed and adhered to
- there are suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

Those responsible for prayer and liturgy ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is an Annual Plan of Provision for prayer and liturgy across the school year which identifies liturgical seasons and key celebrations, as well as opportunities for the celebration of the Sacraments.
- there is daily planned prayer for all pupils, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory

- pupils are supported in their liturgical formation to take an active role in the planning, preparation, and delivery of prayer and liturgy according to their age and capacity, and in a manner which facilitates their progressive participation
- resources to support the planning of prayer and liturgy are appropriate and readily available to staff and pupils
- induction on prayer and liturgy takes place for new members of staff as required
- staff have access to effective training and formation opportunities
- monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy take place regularly and feed back into planning for future liturgies
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the headteacher and governing body to support whole-school development and the Catholic life of the school there is collaboration with local clergy and parishes
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

Principles

All acts of prayer at St. Mary's 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.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Monday	throughout the week – two sessions*		Friday
Whole School Assembly & Worship through song	Celebration of the word – led in class by prayer leads	Celebration of the word - led in class by prayer leads	Celebration assemblies – parents invited.

*These times can vary depending on daily class timetables.

During Celebration Assemblies class teachers celebrate children's achievements, offering their good deeds and work to God in a Collective act of worship. Star of the week awards and mission statement awards linked to our school virtues are awarded. Members of the school community are invited to join the celebration. Parents are also regularly invited to join these assemblies.

At the most human level, we invite all who are present at celebrations of the word and liturgy to engage in four related actions:

- **To be present:** pupils bring themselves to the celebration, with all that is going on in their lives and in the world. Being alert to this is the first step in engaging with any form of worship.
- **To experience:** to engage in what is happening through the senses – at the most basic, to see and to hear.
- **To reflect:** to ask what has been experienced, and what it means to their lives.
- **To respond:** to ask how to take forward what has been experienced into living a good life.

Leading Prayer and Liturgy



GATHER



LISTEN



RESPONSE



MISSION

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy, shared with the Deputy Head Teacher. The class teachers will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age as per the progression document below.

Planning and Delivery

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Prayer and Liturgy Directory (PLD) *To Love You More Clearly*.

Planning of Prayer and Liturgy takes into account events in the Catholic Calendar and is often linked to The Catholic Social Teaching Principles and the Religious Educational Directory.

One of the distinctive aspects of Catholic prayer and liturgy is the centrality of scripture. Scripture has its proper place in all liturgy or celebrations of the word. This is most evident in the proclamation of readings, but will also be found in the prayers we say and the chants we sing. In doing this we open ourselves to listen and respond to God, who is present among us when scripture is proclaimed.

Prayer and Liturgy at St. Mary's follows the following Liturgical structure:

Gather and be present- the children come together and they are present in the room.

Listen and experience– The Word of God is proclaimed.

Reflect and respond – Time to think, feel and respond is offered.

Go forth – The children are encouraged to hold on to something from their prayer experience and take it into their daily lives.

Eucharist

Eucharist celebrations form a very important part of our Collective Worship. Opportunities for children to participate are maximised and parents and other members of the community and Parish community are encouraged to attend. The celebrations will take the following forms:

- Whole school & key stage Masses in church on Holy Days of Obligation
- Class masses for celebrations of Saints Days.

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'

Christ at the Centre, Rev Marcus Stock 2005

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference RED topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos. Symbols and statues of Our Lady reflect our school saint.

Key Stage	Celebration of the word: Skills Progressions	Prayer Progression
EYFS Planning link EYFS	Gather Children can: ● Recognise that prayer and liturgy are special times when we gather to be with God. ● Select appropriate liturgical colours for the Church season with support. ● Help prepare a prayer focus by choosing and placing: ○ a crucifix ○ Bible ○ candle (real or electric) ○ religious artefacts ● Make the Sign of the Cross reverently. ● Gather quietly and respectfully for prayer and liturgy. ● Begin to understand that the Sign of the Cross marks the beginning and end of prayer. Children are beginning to understand: ● God is always with us. ● We gather together as God's family. ● Prayer helps us talk and listen to God.	By the end of the year, as well as the Sign of the Cross, children are encouraged through teacher modelling to generate their own spontaneous sorry, asking and thank you prayers Morning Prayer Lunchtime Prayer End of the Day Prayer

	Listen Children can: • Listen attentively to a short scripture passage. • Recognise that the Bible is a special book. • Handle the Bible respectfully with adult support. • Respond to simple questions about what they have heard. • Recall key words or messages from a scripture story. Children are beginning to understand: • The Bible is God's special book. • God speaks to us through scripture. • Jesus teaches us how to live. Respond Children can: • Join in simple prayer responses. • Offer simple spontaneous prayers of: ◦ thanks ◦ praise ◦ sorrow ◦ asking • Participate in actions, songs and symbolic responses linked to scripture. • Take part in prayerful reflection supported by adults. • Begin to explain how a response activity links to the scripture theme. • Engage in moments of silence and stillness for up to one minute. Children are beginning to understand: • We can talk to God in our own words. • Prayer can help us think about others. • Silence is a special way of listening to God. Mission Children can: • Identify one simple action they can take after prayer. • Make links between scripture and their behaviour. • Respond to simple mission challenges.	Grace after meals Hail Mary Advent Prayer Lent Prayer Easter Prayer
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	- Recognise when they have shown kindness, love or forgiveness. Children are beginning to understand: - Jesus wants us to love others. - Prayer helps us become more like Jesus. - What we hear in scripture can guide our actions. Evaluation Children can: - Talk about how prayer and liturgy made them feel. - Say what they enjoyed about the experience. - Share what they remember from the scripture. - Identify a prayer, song, symbol or reflection that helped them think about God. Children are beginning to understand: - Prayer and liturgy are important parts of school life. - Different people may experience prayer differently. - God loves and listens to everyone.	
KS1 Planning link year 1 Planning link year 2	Gather Children can: - Gather reverently and respectfully for prayer and liturgy. - Help prepare an appropriate prayer focus linked to the liturgical season or theme. - Select and explain the purpose of: - a crucifix - Bible - candle - prayer cloth - religious artefacts - Make the Sign of the Cross confidently and reverently. - Begin to plan and lead simple ways of gathering for prayer and liturgy in small groups. - Recognise the importance of creating a calm and prayerful atmosphere. Children are beginning to understand:	Morning Prayer Lunchtime Prayer End of the Day Prayer Grace after meals Hail Mary Advent Prayer Lent Prayer Easter Prayer Our Father Glory Be

	● Prayer and liturgy bring us together as God's family. ● Different liturgical seasons have different colours, symbols and themes. ● Gathering helps us prepare our hearts and minds to be with God. Listen Children can: ● Listen attentively to scripture passages and Gospel stories. ● Recognise that the Bible is the Word of God. ● Show respect when scripture is proclaimed. ● Recall key messages from scripture. ● Begin to select appropriate scripture passages with adult support. ● Respond appropriately to the Gospel by making the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips and heart. Children are beginning to understand: ● God speaks to us through scripture. ● Jesus teaches us how to live. ● Scripture helps us grow closer to God. Respond Children can: ● Join confidently in traditional prayers. ● Offer spontaneous prayers independently. ● Write simple prayers with support. ● Choose and participate in a range of prayer responses, including: ○ silence ○ reflection ○ prayer writing ○ song ○ symbolic actions ○ artwork linked to scripture ● Begin to explain how a response links to the scripture or theme. ● Participate in silent prayer and meditation for up to two minutes. Children are beginning to understand: ● There are different ways to pray.	Act of Contrition Guardian Angel Prayer Lord make me a Messenger
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	● Prayer can include words, silence, music and actions. ● Prayer helps us respond to God's Word. Mission Children can: ● Identify a mission linked to the scripture or liturgical theme. ● Suggest practical ways of living out Jesus' teachings. ● Reflect on how they can show: ○ kindness ○ forgiveness ○ service ○ respect ○ love ● Participate in simple acts of service and charity inspired by prayer and liturgy. ● Share examples of how they have lived out a previous mission. Children are beginning to understand: ● Following Jesus means putting faith into action. ● Prayer should influence the way we treat others. ● We are called to live out Gospel values every day. Evaluation Children can: ● Reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy. ● Say what helped them pray or reflect. ● Explain how the scripture made them think or feel. ● Share what they have learned about God. ● Suggest simple ways prayer and liturgy could be improved. ● Contribute to whole-class evaluations of liturgy. Children are beginning to understand: ● Prayer and liturgy help us grow in our relationship with God. ● Different people may respond to prayer in different ways. ● Reflection helps us deepen our understanding of faith.	
LKS2 Planning link year 3	Prayer and Liturgy Leadership Year 3	Morning Prayer Lunchtime Prayer

Planning link year 4	- Children generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy. - Children help plan an appropriate mission linked to the scripture and theme. - Children begin to take responsibility for leading parts of the liturgy with adult support. - Whole class evaluates the liturgy and suggests ways it could be improved. Year 4 - Children independently plan and lead the Gather section. - Children plan and lead an appropriate response to the Word. - Children plan a mission that encourages others to live out the Gospel message. - Children contribute to evaluating the impact of the liturgy on themselves and others. Liturgical Formation As above, plus: - Children can explain the purpose of each stage of the liturgy: - Gather - Listen - Respond - Mission - Children understand that Jesus is present when scripture is proclaimed and can begin to explain why the Word of God is central to prayer and liturgy. - Children can select an appropriate scripture passage with support and explain how it links to the chosen theme, liturgical season or Catholic Social Teaching principle. - Children can choose suitable symbols, colours, music and artefacts to enhance prayer and liturgy and explain their significance. - Children can plan and lead spontaneous prayers including prayers of thanksgiving, sorrow, intercession and praise. - Children can compose simple written prayers linked to scripture and the liturgical theme. Reflection and Response - Children can plan a prayerful response to scripture such as: - silent reflection - guided meditation - spontaneous prayer - traditional prayer - symbolic action - song or hymn	End of the Day Prayer Grace after meals Hail Mary Our Father Glory Be Act of Contrition Guardian Angel Prayer Lord make me a Messenger Come Holy Spirit Prayer of St Richard of Chichester Prayer of St. Francis
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	- Children can explain why a chosen response helps people reflect on the scripture. - Children can participate in and lead periods of silence and meditation lasting up to three minutes. - Children can identify how scripture challenges them to live as followers of Jesus. Mission - Children can articulate how the Gospel message can be lived out in everyday life. - Children can suggest practical actions linked to the mission. - Children can reflect on how they have responded to a previous mission and identify ways they have lived out Gospel values. - Children begin to make links between liturgy, Catholic Social Teaching and their daily actions. Evaluation - Children evaluate prayer and liturgy respectfully and thoughtfully. - Children can explain: - what helped them pray - what helped them reflect - how the liturgy made them feel - what they learned about God - how the experience might influence their actions. - Children begin to make recommendations for future liturgies.	
UKS2 Planning link year 5 Planning link year 6	Gather Children can: - Independently plan and lead the Gather section of prayer and liturgy. - Select appropriate liturgical colours, symbols and artefacts linked to: - the liturgical season - the Church calendar - Catholic Social Teaching themes - the scripture focus. - Create a prayer focus that reflects the theme and supports prayerful participation. - Choose appropriate music, hymns or reflective pieces to support gathering. - Explain the significance of symbols and artefacts chosen.	Morning Prayer Lunchtime Prayer End of the Day Prayer Grace after meals Hail Mary Our Father Glory Be Act of Contrition

	Children understand: ● Gathering prepares us to encounter God. ● Prayer and liturgy unite us as a community of faith. ● Symbols help us enter more deeply into prayer. Listen Children can: ● Select appropriate scripture passages using: ○ the Liturgical Calendar ○ Ten:Ten resources ○ Open Bible resources ○ RED themes. ● Proclaim scripture confidently and reverently. ● Explain the context and key message of a scripture passage. ● Make links between scripture, Catholic Social Teaching and contemporary issues. ● Select scripture appropriate to the liturgical season or theme. Children understand: ● Scripture is God's Word. ● Jesus is present when scripture is proclaimed. ● The Gospel should be central to all prayer and liturgy.	Guardian Angel Prayer Lord make me a Messenger Come Holy Spirit Prayer of St Richard of Chichester Prayer of St. Francis The Magnificat Acts of Faith Acts of Hope Acts of Love Hail Holy Queen The Nicene Creed
	Respond Children can: ● Independently plan meaningful responses to scripture. ● Select appropriate forms of response including: ○ silence ○ meditation ○ spontaneous prayer ○ written prayer ○ music and hymnody ○ symbolic actions ○ scripture reflection ○ prayer stations. ● Lead periods of silent reflection and meditation. ● Compose prayers using different forms: ○ praise ○ thanksgiving ○ sorrow ○ intercession	

- petition.
- Adapt responses appropriately for different audiences and occasions.

Children understand:

- Prayer is our response to God's Word.
- Different forms of prayer help us encounter God in different ways.
- Silence and reflection are important parts of prayer and liturgy.

Mission

Children can:

- Plan meaningful mission responses linked to scripture.
- Explain how scripture challenges Christians to live.
- Make links between:
 - Gospel values
 - Catholic Social Teaching
 - everyday life.
- Encourage others to act upon the mission.
- Reflect on how prayer and liturgy inspire action and service.

Children understand:

- Prayer and liturgy should transform how we live.
- Christians are called to serve others.
- Faith is lived through actions as well as words.

Evaluation

Children can:

- Evaluate prayer and liturgy independently and respectfully.
- Reflect on:
 - participation
 - scripture choice
 - atmosphere
 - response activities
 - mission impact.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Suggest improvements for future celebrations.
- Support younger pupils in evaluating prayer and liturgy.

Children understand:

- Reflection deepens our faith.

- Evaluation helps prayer and liturgy grow and improve.
- Prayer and liturgy should have an impact on our daily lives.

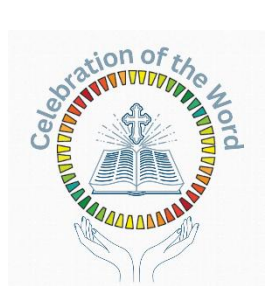
Liturgical Formation

Children can:

- Explain the four-part structure:
 - Gather
 - Listen
 - Respond
 - Mission.
- Understand the importance of:
 - scripture
 - silence
 - symbols
 - music
 - prayerful participation.
- Explain the purpose of key liturgical seasons:
 - Advent
 - Christmas
 - Lent
 - Holy Week
 - Easter
 - Pentecost
 - Ordinary Time.
- Make links between the liturgical year and school prayer life.
- Understand the significance of the Eucharist as the source and summit of Catholic life.

Children understand:

- Prayer and liturgy are central to Catholic life.
- The liturgical year tells the story of salvation.
- Prayer and liturgy help Christians grow closer to God.

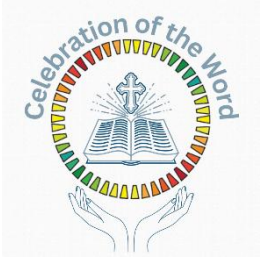


Let Us Pray – Children Planning Prayer and Liturgy (KS2)



Prayer Leads:		Week Commencing:	
Theme: ☐ Liturgical Season ☐ RED Branch ☐ Catholic Social Teaching ☐ Saint's Day ☐ School Virtue ☐ Current Event			
Why have we chosen this theme:			
Prayer Focus: ☐ Bible ☐ Crucifix ☐ Candle ☐ Cloth Colour ☐ Image ☐ Symbol			
What do our symbols mean?			
Gather How will we help our peers prepare to meet with God?		Listen	
Hymn chosen:		Reference:	
How does it fit with our theme?		Read by:	
Who will:		Why did we choose this scripture?	
Welcome everyone?		What message is God giving us?	
Set up prayer focus?			

Response How will we help people think about God's message? ☐ Silent reflection ☐ Traditional prayer ☐ Spontaneous prayer ☐ Music ☐ Artwork ☐ Symbolic action ☐ Meditation ☐ Prayer writing	Intercession (bidding prayers) Who or what shall we pray for today? ☐ Church ☐ World ☐ School ☐ Local Community ☐ People in Need ☐ Personal Intentions
Mission How will we live out God's message? How does this link back to the Scripture?	Evaluation What went well? What helped people pray? Come back to this one next week: Did our mission make a difference? How?



Let Us Pray – Children Planning Prayer and Liturgy (EYFS and KS1)

Prayer Leads:

Week Commencing:

Theme: ☐ Liturgical Season ☐ RED Branch ☐ Catholic Social Teaching ☐ Saint's Day ☐ School Virtue ☐ Current Event

Why have we chosen this theme:

Prayer Focus: ☐ Bible ☐ Crucifix ☐ Candle ☐ Cloth Colour ☐ Image ☐ Symbol

What do our symbols mean?

Gather How will we help our peers prepare to meet with God?

Hymn chosen:

Who will welcome everyone?

Who will do the sign of the cross?

Listen

Reference:

What message is God giving us?

Response How will we help people think about God's message? ☐ Silent reflection ☐ Traditional prayer ☐ Spontaneous prayer ☐ Music/singing ☐ Artwork	Intercession (bidding prayers) Who or what shall we pray for today? ☐ Church ☐ World ☐ School ☐ Local Community ☐ People in Need ☐ Personal Intentions
Mission How will we live out God's message?	Evaluation What went well? What helped the children in the class pray? How did we feel when we were talking to God?