



ST BEDE'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

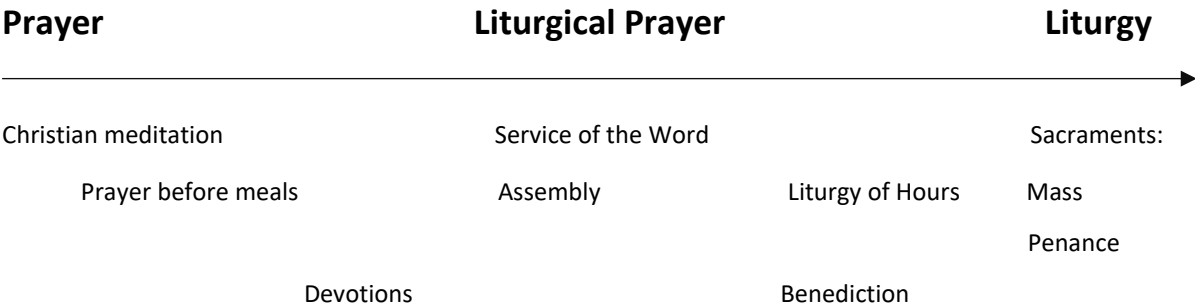
Introduction - Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

(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. Bede's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission Statement

St. Bede's is inspired by the teaching and life of Christ. We are a family community where every individual is valued and respected. Our school seeks excellence in teaching and learning, to be inspirational to others through our words and actions. We achieve our success through hard work and dedication, through tolerance, sharing and fairness. We are committed to our vision to build respect where each voice is heard and everyone matters. Let love surround us, love of learning, love of one another, love of all peoples, love of life itself and love of God.

St. Bede's is a community of faith, love and respect inspiring us to achieve.

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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St. Bede'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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St. Bede'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. Bede'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.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

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. 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 timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as follows:

Weekly staff meetings begin with staff prayer. Training days begin with staff liturgical prayer. Governors meetings begin with Trust Prayer and a moment of reflection.

Mass: Twice termly whole school Mass. Weekly year group Masses throughout the year with parish. Advent and Lent whole school Mass.

Monday: Whole school Celebration of the Word.

Tuesday: Class based Prayer and Liturgy

Wednesday: Class based / Key Stage based Creative Prayer. Hymn Practice

Thurs: Key Stage Prayer and Liturgy led by children in hall families invited

Friday: Class based Prayer and Liturgy. Celebration Assembly (inclusive of Celebration of Scripture)

Meditation: Class based daily meditation

End of each unit of Come and See curriculum RE – Liturgical prayer is planned with children and celebrated.

Lent: Easter Prayer Service in parish for school and parish community.

May and October: Friday whole school Rosary

May: Feast of St Bede Prayer Service

May: Crowning of Mary Prayer Service

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead collective worship. In this responsibility, she is supported by the Assistant Head. The class teacher will lead class collective worship. Children are taught to plan and lead worship according to their age.

Recording

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded and is centrally held by the RE lead and in RE books.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and Liturgy is regularly monitored, including at the preparatory stage, using the school's monitoring form. Feedback is given to individual staff members and phase leaders.

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

Resources

The RE lead is responsible for managing resources. They are centrally held with ease of access for staff and pupils. An annual audit takes place in the summer term. The RE lead is responsible for acting on the audit, ordering and sourcing resources where necessary.

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

A programme of retreat is offered to Senior Leadership Team on an annual cycle and a bi-annual cycle for staff.

Other opportunities

Ash Wednesday Service of Prayer: Headteacher and RE lead distribute ashes to children in school after attending service in church

Eucharist

Pupils are invited to receive the Eucharist at whole school Masses.

The coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Lisa Dempsey is the RE Co-ordinator charged with the responsibility for leading RE.

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.

Date: April 2024

Review date: April 2026

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

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

