St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Primary School

St Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Forming Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice

Prayer & Liturgy Policy



"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us" Romans 12:6

"Pray always. He knows our needs better than we do." Pope Francis.

At St Joseph and St Theresa's, prayer and liturgy are fundamental to all areas of school life. They help us to develop our relationship with God and are rooted in our mission statement, the Catholic Pupil Profile Virtues and Catholic Social Teaching.

Legal Requirement

All schools in England, including academies and free schools, are required by law to carry out a daily act of Collective Worship. For Catholic schools, this requirement is made explicit within the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and Articles of Association. This legal document, under both statutory and canonical law states that "religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church; and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ."

Prayer

Prayer and liturgy are at the heart of the Catholic life and mission of St Joseph and St Theresa Catholic Primary School. They are Christ-centred and Trinitarian: through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn into the prayer of Christ and offer our worship to the Father. Through a rich variety of experiences, appropriate to their age and development, pupils are supported to encounter Christ, deepen their relationship with God and grow in faith.

Pupils experience a variety of forms of prayer, including listening and responding to Scripture, traditional Catholic prayers, spontaneous prayer, silence, meditation, music and devotional prayer. Prayer and liturgy provide opportunities for the full, conscious and active participation of all members of our school community.

Prayer, Celebrations of the Word and Liturgy

The prayer life of our school includes a rich variety of prayer, Celebrations of the Word and liturgical celebrations. These are distinct but complementary expressions of the prayer life of the Church.

Prayer may take many forms and includes familiar and traditional prayers, spontaneous prayer, meditation, silence, music and devotional prayer.

Celebrations of the Word are structured celebrations created for the school community in which the proclamation of Scripture is central. They provide opportunities for pupils and adults to listen and respond to the Word of God through prayer, reflection, silence, music, symbol and action.

Liturgy includes celebrations of the Church's official liturgy, particularly the celebration of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. These follow the structures, texts and norms established by the Church.

Prayer, Celebrations of the Word and liturgy reflect the liturgical year and the life and mission of the Church and may also make appropriate connections with Catholic Social Teaching, the Catholic virtues and the life of the school.

Celebrations of the Word will ordinarily follow the school's four-part framework of Gather, Listen, Respond and Mission (Go Forth). This provides pupils with a familiar structure while allowing appropriate creativity and variety. Other forms of prayer will use a structure appropriate to the form of prayer or celebration. Celebrations of the Church's liturgy will always follow the relevant approved liturgical books and norms.

Mass

For Catholics, the Mass is central to the practice of their faith. At St Joseph and St Theresa's, pupils are taught that in the celebration of Mass we remember the Last Supper and that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Mass is celebrated weekly, either at St Joseph's Catholic Church or in our school chapel, and may involve a class, key stage or the whole school. Teachers and pupils prepare for and participate in Mass, undertaking appropriate ministries such as reading, serving, singing and preparing the Universal Prayer, while following the structure and norms of the Church's liturgy and taking account of feast days, the liturgical year and sacramental preparation.

A parish Family Mass also takes place once each half term on a Saturday evening at 5.00pm at St Joseph's Catholic Church. Three classes support the preparation and celebration of the Mass through appropriate ministries, including readings and artwork linked to the Scripture of the day.

Expectations

Prayer and liturgy at our school are authentically Catholic and form part of daily school life. We ensure that all pupils come to know, experience and participate in a rich variety of forms of prayer and worship appropriate to their age and development.

Prayer and liturgy will promote the full, conscious and active participation of pupils and adults. Participation is not understood simply as having a role or task within a celebration. Pupils will be supported to participate both outwardly and inwardly through listening, responding, singing, silence, reflection, prayer and action. Prayer and liturgy should engage the heart and mind and lead pupils to consider how their encounter with Christ might influence the way they live.

Age-appropriate opportunities for prayer are built into the school timetable. Leaders ensure that high-quality prayer and Celebrations of the Word are modelled and that pupils are given increasing opportunities to prepare, lead and evaluate them as they progress through the school.

The school provides opportunities for parents and families, members of the parish and the wider Catholic community to participate in the prayer life of the school. For example, parents are invited to class Masses and Celebrations of the Word.

Prayer and liturgy will be regularly monitored and evaluated, and leaders will ensure that appropriate resources are available.

Outlined below are the prayer and liturgy expectations of our school:

Daily:

Prayer takes place in class every day:

- Prayer at the start and end of every day
- Grace before and **after** meals are said every day
- The Ten Ten daily prayers may also be used to supplement prayer in the classroom
- Any other prayers appropriate to the liturgical season – See Liturgical season prayer sheet and Teach Us To Pray document

Weekly:

- **Monday – Whole-school Celebration of the Word**
  The whole school gathers for a Celebration of the Word centred upon the Gospel for the forthcoming Sunday. Through the proclamation of Scripture, prayer, reflection, silence, music and an appropriate response, pupils are helped to encounter Christ in his Word and to connect the Gospel with their lives and the mission of the school.
- **Tuesday – Worship Through Song**

The school gathers to pray through sacred music and song. Music is chosen with reference to the liturgical year, Scripture and the prayer life of the Church. This gathering is prayerful rather than simply a rehearsal of hymns and provides opportunities for praise, thanksgiving, reflection and silence.

- **Wednesday – Celebration of the Word (Wednesday Word)**
  Pupils gather in key stages for a Celebration of the Word based upon the Gospel for the forthcoming Sunday, using The Wednesday Word as a key resource. Celebrations take place in three groups: EYFS, Years 1/2/3 and Years 4/5/6, and are led by teaching staff. Pupils are given the opportunity to encounter the Gospel more deeply, reflect upon its meaning and consider how God's Word calls them to respond in their own lives.
- **Thursday and Friday – Class Prayer**
  Each class has dedicated time for prayer appropriate to the age, experience and development of the pupils. Class prayer may be teacher-led or pupil-led and may take place in the classroom or the school chapel. It may include Scripture, traditional Catholic prayers, spontaneous prayer, meditation, silence, music, intercession and devotional prayer. Increasing opportunities are provided for pupils to prepare and lead prayer as they progress through the school.
- **Staff Prayer**
  Staff prayer is led by the Headteacher or another member of SLT during Monday morning briefing. Staff also take turns to prepare and lead prayer during staff meetings, enabling adults within the school community to share responsibility for and participate in the prayer life of the school.
- **Pupil Leadership of Prayer:** Pupils are provided with age-appropriate opportunities to prepare and lead prayer and Celebrations of the Word, with increasing independence as they progress through the school. Pupils are supported and formed for these roles so that leadership is understood as a ministry of service to the praying community rather than simply the allocation of tasks. Pupils are also encouraged to reflect upon and evaluate the prayer they have prepared and led, considering its impact and how future celebrations might be developed.

Over the course of the academic year:

- **Silence:** Appropriate periods of silence form an important part of the prayer life of the school. Pupils are progressively supported to become comfortable with prayerful silence, using it to listen, reflect, encounter God and make a personal response.
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: This takes place half termly in the school chapel and is a time of quiet prayer, praise, thanksgiving and intercession before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.
- **Carol Service:** A Celebration led by Key Stage 2, including Scripture readings, reflection and carols in preparation for Christmas. This takes place at St Joseph's Catholic Church and parents and the parish community are invited to attend.
- **Class-led Celebrations of the Word and devotions:** These are prepared and led by class teachers and pupils, with increasing pupil leadership as children progress through the school. Parents are invited to attend:

Year 1	May Procession
Year 2	Rosary Devotion
Year 3	Lent Celebration of the Word
Year 4	Stations of the Cross
Year 5	Advent Celebration of the Word
Year 6	Pentecost Celebration of the Word

- **School-led Masses:** These take place half termly. Classes and staff take turns to prepare for and participate in these Masses through appropriate ministries. They provide an opportunity for the school and parish to celebrate Mass together.
- **Retreats:** Classes in Key Stage 2 are all given the opportunity to take part in a retreat:

Year 5	Retreat with One Life Music and the Catholic Cannock Cluster at Our Lady of Lourdes

- **Dawn Devotions:** Pupils and parents are invited into the school chapel before the start of the school day for a time of prayer and devotion linked to the liturgical year, which may include the Rosary. This is led by the RE Leader and the Mini Vinnies.
- **Sacramental Preparation:** Pupils who will be receiving the sacraments are invited to attend a Mass of Commitment as part of their preparation. School-led pupil and parent workshops take place to mark the beginning and end of the preparation period. Parish-led parent workshops also take place during the preparation period to support families in their sacramental role.
- **Reconciliation:** Pupils in Key Stage 2 are given opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.
- **One Life Music:** Throughout the school year, the children will take part in the daily liturgy bursts with One Life Music, as well as the live streams
- **Governor Meetings:** These meetings always begin with a time of prayer

Prayers that should be known:

EYFS	**KS1**
Our Father Hail Mary Sign of the Cross School Mission Prayer	Morning Offering - KS1 Grace before meals – KS1 Grace after meals – KS1 Prayer at the end of the day – KS1 Glory Be

LKS2	**UKS2**
Morning Offering – KS2 Grace before meals - KS2 Grace after meals – KS2 Prayer at the end of the day – KS2 The Apostles' Creed An Act of Contrition Angel of God The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love	The Rosary The Magnificat Come, Holy Spirit

Formation

Staff and pupils will receive appropriate formation to enable them to participate fully in prayer and liturgy and, where appropriate, to prepare and lead prayer and Celebrations of the Word. Leaders will model good practice and provide staff with opportunities to develop their understanding of Catholic prayer, Celebrations of the Word and liturgy. Pupils will receive age-appropriate formation for the ministries they undertake, including proclaiming Scripture, leading prayer, singing and serving.

Leadership and Monitoring

Leaders and governors will promote, monitor and evaluate prayer and liturgy in the school throughout the year, according to the monitoring cycle:

- We will ensure that the Foundation of the school is honoured and that the worship policy is firmly based upon the intentions set down in the Trust Deed.
- We will ensure that the Prayer & Liturgy Policy is put into practice and monitored by the appropriate Governor.
- The link Governor is involved in monitoring prayer and liturgy. Our link Governor is Steph Hewitt
- The RE Leader and Headteacher have responsibility for managing prayer and liturgy on a day-to-day basis and for ensuring that relevant requirements are met. The RE Leader also keeps abreast of developments in prayer and liturgy in Catholic education and supports colleagues in developing practice.
- Leaders in school will monitor and evaluate prayer and liturgy.
- Monitoring is an ongoing process involving pupils, class teachers, the RE Leader and senior leaders.

Monitoring and evaluation will consider the quality, variety and appropriateness of prayer and liturgy; the centrality and appropriate proclamation of Scripture; opportunities for silence and reflection; the full, conscious and active participation of pupils and adults; pupil leadership and progression; links with the liturgical year; and the impact of prayer and liturgy upon the Catholic life and mission of the school.

Pupil voice will form an important part of this process, enabling leaders to understand pupils' experiences of prayer and how these experiences support their relationship with God and influence their lives.

Inclusion

All pupils and adults are welcomed into the prayer life of the school. Prayer and liturgy are authentically Catholic while recognising that members of our school community may come from different Christian traditions, other faiths or have no religious affiliation. All are treated with dignity and respect and are invited to participate in a manner appropriate to their own circumstances. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are supported to participate fully in ways appropriate to their individual needs.

Withdrawal from Collective Worship

If parents or guardians wish to withdraw their child from prayer and liturgy in our school, they must request this in writing. Children cannot choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy until they are over the age of 16. The school will supervise any child who has been withdrawn from prayer and liturgy.

If such situations arise, the school will enter into dialogue with the parents to ascertain what their specific reasons and concerns are, and if there is anything the school can do to help support the family. This may allay any misunderstandings and concerns about the nature and purpose of prayer in a Catholic school.

Health and Safety

Adults light and extinguish candles; battery-operated candles are used where appropriate. Matches and lighters are stored safely. Risk assessments are in place for the use of candles and for walking to and from church.

Progression in Prayer and Liturgy

Prayers that children should participate in & have knowledge of:	Class-led Celebrations of the Word (whole school)	Mass planning and participation	Planning pupil-led prayer and Celebrations of the Word	Taking part in class and pupil-led prayer and Celebrations of the Word	Responding to class and pupil-led prayer and Celebrations of the Word	Ownership of class prayer and Celebration of the Word books
EYFS: Nursery/Reception						
The Sign of the Cross The Lord's Prayer Hail Mary	N/A	Opportunities throughout the year for children to meet Father Linh. Children are taught a range of songs linked to prayer, Celebrations of the Word and RE.	Special helper of the day (linked to the class saint) leads daily prayer time. As the year progresses, children become more confident in reciting class prayers. Children may choose a familiar hymn to sing during prayer.	Begin to make the Sign of the Cross correctly. Begin to recognise the simple structure and elements of shared prayer and Celebrations of the Word. Join in with known prayers and listen prayerfully to prayers they do not yet know. A child may lead a familiar prayer with adult support.	Re-enact events and experiences within role & imaginative play. Bible stories shared regularly. Wild worship book used to plan prayer during forest school sessions.	Complete class prayer and Celebration of the Word books together. Reflections and thoughts are captured and scribed during the session. Photographs are added where appropriate. The Early Years floor book captures relevant RE curriculum experiences.
KS1: Year 1/Year 2						
Morning Offering - KS1 Grace before meals – KS1 Grace after meals – KS1 Prayer at the end of the day – KS1 Glory Be	May Procession Rosary Celebration / Devotion Christmas Nativity	Join in with most songs confidently. Begin to join in with Mass responses independently. To listen to simple readings attentively and be able to ask and answer questions. To look prayerful and reverent at times of prayer. To know when to make the sign of peace in Mass. Complete KS1 mass reflection sheet	Recognise and use appropriate signs and symbols to begin a time of prayer. Lead known prayers independently. Choose an appropriate prayer for class prayer or a Celebration of the Word.	Make the Sign of the Cross accurately. Become familiar with the structure of a Celebration of the Word as modelled by the teacher. Join in confidently with known prayers. Think of and share their own prayers.	Ask and answer questions about the Scripture and prayers they hear. Begin to discuss, with adult support, how prayer and Scripture might influence their lives.	Children's ideas and reflections are captured in the class prayer and Celebration of the Word book. Photographs are added where appropriate.
Prayers that children should participate in & have knowledge of:	**Class-led Celebrations of the Word (whole school)**	**Mass planning and participation**	**Planning pupil-led prayer and Celebrations of the Word**	**Taking part in class and pupil-led prayer and Celebrations of the Word**	**Responding to class and pupil-led prayer and Celebrations of the Word**	**Ownership of class prayer and Celebration of the Word books**
LKS2: Year 3/Year 4						

Morning Offering – KS2 Grace before meals - KS2 Grace after meals – KS2 Prayer at the end of the day – KS2 The Apostles' Creed An Act of Contrition Angel of God The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love	Lent Celebration of the Word (link to Reconciliation) Stations of the Cross	Join in confidently with the songs and all mass responses, with the support of the mass card or PPT presentation. Children listen to the readings and the Gospel and can answer questions about what we can learn from them and how it can affect their own actions. Complete Year 3/4 mass reflection sheet	Plan prayer and Celebrations of the Word in a small group with support from the teacher. Use the school Celebration of the Word planner, ordinarily following Gather, Listen, Respond and Mission. Choose appropriate prayers, Scripture, symbols and music for the theme. Use an appropriate Bible and prayer resources when preparing prayer.	Participate fully and prayerfully and understand that prayer can take a variety of forms, including silence, meditation, listening to Scripture, music, traditional prayer and spontaneous prayer.	Begin to make independent connections between prayer and their school/home life. Consider what Scripture may lead them to do. Make links to Catholic Social Teaching and the Pupil Profile virtues.	With teacher/TA support, children record thoughts and responses following prayer and Celebrations of the Word.
UKS2: Year 5/Year 6						
The Rosary **The Magnificat** **Come, Holy Spirit**	Advent Celebration of the Word Pentecost Celebration of the Word	With teacher/TA support, children to write their own bidding prayers, linked to the theme of the mass. Children confidently read out of the Missal during mass and are able to choose their own songs that they wish to sing and reflect upon during mass. Complete mass reflection sheet	Use appropriate school resources to prepare prayer and Celebrations of the Word in class. When preparing Celebrations of the Word, pupils ordinarily use the four-part structure of Gather, Listen, Respond and Mission. They make increasingly independent and appropriate choices about Scripture, prayer, music, silence, symbol and response. Reflect upon and evaluate the prayer and Celebrations of the Word they have prepared and led, considering their impact and identifying how future celebrations could be developed.	Participate fully, consciously and actively in prayer and Celebrations of the Word. Independently prepare and lead prayer and Celebrations of the Word, understanding that leadership is a service to the praying community. Choose appropriate prayers and Scripture with reference to the liturgical year, Catholic virtues and the life of the school. Recognise that prayer should lead to action in their own lives and the lives of others.	Reflect on and evaluate prayer and Celebrations of the Word, considering their impact and how future celebrations could be developed. Complete pupil voice about their experiences of prayer, including how what they have heard and responded to may affect their lives.	Record personal reflections on their thoughts and responses when taking part in prayer and Celebrations of the Word. Identify examples of how prayer, Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching and the Pupil Profile virtues have influenced their actions.

Reviewed: September 2026