



***Jesus is the centre of our lives,  
our learning and friendships,  
in a safe, happy, caring community  
where all are welcome.***

## **PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY**

Person Responsible:	RE Co-ordinator/H/T/DHT
Date policy reviewed:	September 2025
Reviewed by:	Teaching staff, Head Teacher, Governors
Date of next Review:	September 2027



## **The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy at Holy Cross**

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. We are following the guidance of the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory, 'To love You more dearly' prior to it becoming statutory in September 2025.

'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**

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.) We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that 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 act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Liturgy. However, given the importance of 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. Liturgy at Holy Cross is an important part of its Catholic distinctive ethos.

## **The Place of Liturgy in the Life of Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy**

Worship in **Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy** is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition, our school Mission Statement and Gospel Values.

Liturgy considers 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 Liturgy**

Liturgy in Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy 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 worship in Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy 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 worship;
- 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. Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

## **Full participation in our faith will allow us:**

- To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;
- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of prayer.

## **Implementation**

All acts of worship should:

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants;

- Be kept to the point (and brief wherever possible);
- Be clear in their liturgical focus and varied in their delivery;

### **Planning, content and celebration**

Liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, British Values and Protected Characteristics.

The parish and parents are invited to participate in celebrations such as an end of school year mass, the Rosary in October and May, Class Mass, Family Mass and school assemblies.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

We have formal prayers taught to all the children including the Our Father and Hail Mary. ***We are following the guidance in the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory, 'To love You more dearly' section 9.5-Common Prayers.*** The children are encouraged to participate in prayer at specific times of the day and spontaneous prayer within their own class on a daily basis as well as in Liturgy.

As part of Liturgy, children are taught the prayers and responses for mass eg: 'clapping' Gloria, all of which children choose which they would like to sing.

### **Liturgical Assemblies – Liturgy**

Assemblies are important regular occasions when we reinforce the sense of being a community centred on Christ.

Structure of our Liturgy:

1. Gathering - welcome
2. The Word - readings from Scripture
3. Reflection - responding to the Word of God, intercessions
4. Moving on - sending forth

#### **1. Gathering – welcome**

When we gather during Liturgy, at Holy Cross, we believe the atmosphere is important so staff and children arrive silently and listen to music. The music is a mixture of hymns from around the world to prepare pupils to listen to the Word of God. Teachers should see themselves as responsible for the behaviour of their class as they enter a Liturgy. Pupils should enter in an orderly and appropriate way.

## 2. The Word - readings from Scripture

### Liturgy Theme

The starting point for a whole school Liturgy (Monday) should be the Scripture readings from the previous Sunday. This will enable all the children at Holy Cross, to experience the Christian feast of Sunday. The Headteacher writes a Monday Briefing Note which includes the readings from that Sunday and reflections. This enables staff to plan the liturgy for their class and deepen their own understanding of the scripture readings and this is especially important for non-Catholic, members of staff. The Monday Briefing Note is sent to all staff on Sunday afternoon ready for the week ahead.

The other Liturgies in the week will follow themes, for example: British values, our school Gospel Values, Catholic Social Teaching, PSHE and protected characteristics, all linking to our beliefs and scripture readings.

## 3. Reflection - responding to the Word of God

At this point, the response to Scripture can be original and stimulating, for example drama, art (visual focus), mime, songs, quiet reflection, prayer and music. Liturgy offers regular opportunities for community song and gathering together.

Liturgy is the key time when the community prays together. The whole Liturgy should be seen as prayer.

## 4. Moving on - sending forth

Whatever Liturgy theme is developed, there should be some aspect that enables students and staff to link it to their lives and invite them to respond. This can be quite simple such as asking a question or more elaborate in terms of giving detailed examples. For instances, an assembly based from Mark 4:30-32 (The parable of the mustard seed) might elaborate on how pupils could act on something/start something small which could make a huge difference.

### **The timetable of Liturgy is as below:**

<b>WHEN?</b>		<b>Who by?</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday Briefing note is sent to all staff.</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Monday</b>	Assembly for EYFS/KS1 and then KS2	Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher or RE Lead
<b>Tuesday</b>	All Classes Classroom Worship	Class teachers
<b>Wednesday</b>	Hymn Practice and whole school Worship	Music Teacher/ Class teachers
<b>Thursday</b>	In class (KS2 pupils lead)	Teachers or KS2 pupils
<b>Friday</b>	EYFS, KS1 and KS2 celebration Assembly	Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/ Priest

## **Definitions**

### **Liturgy**

Liturgy literally means 'work of the people' and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action. Liturgy is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with Godself, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and witness of the Holy Spirit.

### **Prayer**

One of the early fathers of the Church described prayer as "the raising of one's mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God." These words of St. John Damascene, now found in the catechism, illustrate why in this Catholic school we begin and end each session with a prayer.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Liturgy is monitored using Liturgy monitoring form, (Appendix 1a) and prayer areas monitored (Appendix 1b).

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

## **Resources**

The new Prayer and Liturgy Directory, 'To love You more dearly'. 2023

Each teacher takes part in a retreat in September and then there is training throughout the year for liturgy and Liturgy.

Resources are kept in classes and in the Headteacher's office

All KS2 classes have new Good News Bibles.

Music resources kept on shared area for staff to use in Liturgy

Each class has a 'Liturgy' template and Bibles to use when planning Liturgy (Appendix 2)

## **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. 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.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

At Holy Cross, it is the overall responsibility of governors, in consultation with the Headteacher, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and opportunities for quality Liturgy are being delivered. Those responsible will ensure that acts of worship are in accordance with the school's trust deed and consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church.

This policy is monitored by the R.E. co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff every two years. Governors should review reports on the prayer life of the school on a termly basis. This will form part of the headteacher's report to governors.

The following will be monitored:

- Time set aside for Liturgy;
- Whether the observed practice is consistent with agreed policy;
- Whether Liturgy is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc;
- Staff development on Liturgy and its impact;
- Prayer focus and its effectiveness in drawing pupils into prayer;
- Impact on pupils and members of the school community;
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills to access worship and prayer;
  - Records of themes and teachings of the Catholic Church covered in Liturgy.
- Observation and monitoring records should be kept and should form part of the self-review process.

Outcomes of monitoring will be communicated to staff and governors with recommendations for future action.

### **The Role of the RE Lead:**

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:

- Formulating a written policy;
- Ensuring there is a development plan for Liturgy;
- Ensuring that Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils;
- Ensuring that Liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the Catholic teachings;
- Organising themes for worship in consultation with staff
- Assisting the governors in carrying out their legal responsibilities with regard to Liturgy.

## Communication

This policy will be communicated to:

- All members of the school community;
- Parish priests or members of pastoral areas as appropriate;
- New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
- New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards Liturgy

Policy review date September 2025



## Appendix 1 CAOW Observation Sheet



### Collective Worship Observation Record

**Date and Time:**

**Present:** Whole school / Key Stage / Class

**Leader:**

**Theme of Act of Worship:**

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
<p><b>Setting the Atmosphere and Preparing for Worship:</b>                      Is there a plan available with content to meet the needs of all present?                      Is there an appropriate focus?                      Are the resources used suitable?                      Are ICT / Music etc. prepared and ready?                      Do all the readers / leaders have all they need?                      Have all support staff been briefed?                      Have invitations been sent to members of the community (if appropriate)?                      Is the environment suitable and ready?</p>		
<p><b>Gathering:</b>                      How do participants gather – is there a sense of order and respect?                      Is there a procession / movement to another area?                      How is a prayerful atmosphere created?                      Is there an invitation to participate?                      Does everyone feel welcome?                      Is the purpose of the act of worship clear and the focus explained?</p>		

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
<b>Listening to the Word:</b> Is the Scripture they are listening to suitable? Is the Word treated with reverence? Has / have the reader(s) been well-prepared so as to engage the listener? How is the 'reading' shared – role play, music, power-point etc.? Is it suitable for the participants? Do participants listen attentively? Do they show good listening skills?		
<b>Responding:</b> Is there maximum participation? Is time given for individual silent reflection? Do children pray / respond wholeheartedly? Are adults good role models? Do all adults participate? Are participants invited to respond in an appropriate manner? (in a variety of ways?)		
<b>Going Forth:</b> Does Worship conclude appropriately? Do participants leave Collective Worship in a suitable, orderly manner? How are they enabled to take the message away with them?		

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
<b>Overall:</b> Was it a positive, enriching religious experience for all present? Has this worship enhanced the spiritual and / or moral development of those present? Was the time and content appropriate for the age, ability and background of the children? Did all parts of worship help to develop the Liturgical formation of participants? Was it well-organised, led and presented? Was there a sense of community, common ethos and shared values?		

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to Class Teacher:

Date:

Appendix 2 - Monitoring of Prayer Areas

**Monitoring of prayer areas**

Teacher – \_\_\_\_\_

Class name – \_\_\_\_\_

Date – \_\_\_\_\_

The prayer area is prominent in the classroom	Yes/No
The prayer area looks clean, fresh and well-presented	Yes/No
The prayer area reflects the current topic/liturgical year e.g. rosary in October	Yes/No
The prayer area has the correct colour cloth	Yes/No
Do pupils help look after the prayer area?	Yes/No
The Bible is prominently displayed The Bible is open to scripture reading of day/theme	Yes/No Yes/No
The prayer area is used interactively e.g. has prayer intention cards, prayer pebbles	Yes/No
Is there a candle on the prayer display?	Yes/No
The prayer area is used regularly by teachers and pupils	Yes/No
Areas for development: _____ _____ _____	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix 3 – HOLY CROSS Catholic Primary Academy Liturgical Year**

Continuous	Daily Liturgy either in class or in the hall. Assemblies- Celebration class assemblies throughout the year and a celebration assembly every Friday. Year 3-6 to attend weekday mass in the parish on a weekly rota		
<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Summer Term</b>	
Whole school mass- Beginning of the school year -September. (years 1-6)	Whole school mass- Epiphany January. (Years 1-6)	May procession for whole school	
Mass for staff to start year and Retreat		Rosary every morning during May.	
Year 3-6 Mass every Tuesday and Year 5/6 Class Mass	INSET Training - Liturgy for staff	INSET Training - Liturgy for staff	
CAFOD assemblies	Mother's day Mass at the Church: Year3	Holy Communion Year 3. Parents are invited in for a celebration assembly.	
EYFS 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday Assembly	Reconciliation services for Lent KS2	RSE Curriculum delivered to Years 3-6	
Rosary every lunchtime during October.) Chaplains to train pupils in lunchtimes and support the Rosary	Fundraising during Lent - this year focus is on local families supporting the 'Catholic Children's Society' Actions during Lent sponsored	Year 6 leavers school Mass	

Harvest Festival- KS1 and KS2 Food donation to Streets to Homes	Ash Wednesday whole school Mass	
All Souls day service, Memory Club November	Year 4 and 5 Easter Passion Play	

Remembrance Assembly and Year 6 to lay a wreath at the Memorial.	Seniors Lenten Lunch and Year 6 Stations of the Cross.	
Years EYFS, and Year 1 Christmas productions in the school hall Year 2 and Year 3 Carol Concert	Easter Service- KS1 And KS2	
Christmas Hampers for local community		
Years 2 and 3 Christmas production at Church.		
Advent reconciliation for yeas 4, 5 and 6		
Festival of Light service KS1 and KS2		