

Our Lady's  
Catholic Primary School



# Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Date agreed: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2026



The  
Pope Francis Catholic  
Multi Academy Company

***‘Jesus said, “I am the Way, the Truth and the life.  
No one comes to the Father, except through me.”’  
(John 14: 6)***

### **Rationale**

Catholic schools are established *‘to be part of the Church’s mission in education, to place Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people’s lives.’* (Christ at the Centre, 2012) As a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, the foundation of all that we do is based upon Christ and His Gospel values and we are faithful to the mission of the Archdiocese of *‘Making Christ known today.’* Through daily prayer and liturgy, we offer the opportunities for children to develop and grow in their faith and work in partnership with parents to bring children to the pathway of holiness with the aim of becoming the future saints:

*‘A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints.’*

*(Pope Benedict, 2010)*

Our Lady’s is fully committed to its distinctive Salesian charism and we follow the wisdom and words of St John Bosco.

*“Trust all things to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary, Help of Christians and you will see what miracles are.”*

*St John Bosco*

### **Legal Requirement**

In accordance with the law for all maintained schools, at Our Lady’s:

- We provide daily Collective Worship for all.
- Acts of Collective Worship are not part of the allocation of curriculum time for religious education.
- Foundation governors have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of the school.

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from acts of Collective Worship. However, there are no set times for when worship takes place and in accordance with Christ at the Centre, this is at the heart of the school day and regular in occurrence:

*‘Regular liturgical celebrations and daily prayers “... in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church” should be at the heart of school life.’*

*(Christ at the Centre, 2012)*

Any requests for the withdrawal from Collective Worship must be discussed with the headteacher.

The term ‘Collective Worship’ is a legal term. To be in full communion with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we refer to Collective Worship as **‘Prayer and Liturgy’** throughout this policy and as spoken language within the school day.

At Our Lady’s, the ultimate aim of prayer and liturgy is to provide the space and tools for our young people and staff within the context of the Catholic faith and traditions:

- to give praise and honour to God
- to contemplate the mystery of God
- to reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- to foster and nurture relationships
- to respond to and celebrate life

- to experience a sense of belonging and community
- to nurture a common ethos and shared set of Salesian values
- to enrich religious experience
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development
- to reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- to seek appropriate responses to the love of God
- to take the time 'to wonder at' and develop spiritually

### **Responsibility and Oversight of Prayer and Liturgy**

The governors and headteacher are responsible for ensuring that there are daily opportunities for whole school and class prayer and liturgy.

The governors ensure that:

- there is a named person who is responsible for organising the routine of prayer and liturgy across the school
- prayer and liturgy happens for all pupils daily
- all pupils are able to access the prayer and liturgy offered within the school day
- prayer and liturgy is well resourced, both in regard to content and the continued professional development of those planning and leading. This includes enabling pupils to plan and lead.
- there is regular and comprehensive monitoring of prayer and liturgy which clearly demonstrates the impact on the school's Catholic mission.

### **Prayer and Liturgy at Our Lady's: Forms of Liturgy**

At Our Lady's, prayer and liturgy takes the following forms:

#### **Mass**

At Our Lady's, sacramental aspects of the Church's liturgical life, especially the Eucharist and the sacrament of reconciliation are intrinsically woven into the fabric of our Salesian identity. The academic year starts with Mass in our school so that the Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle in our chapel. Each school term begins and ends with Mass and it is our aim to have at least one class involved in Mass in our parish church once a week. In addition, we work to be of service to our parish and enhance prayers at Mass by providing music and singing both when attending week-day Mass in our Church or on special Sunday occasions, for example, the feast of Christ the King (national youth Sunday).

#### **School Assemblies**

We hold twice-weekly assemblies as a whole school. The week starts with Gospel assembly every Monday morning which is led by each class on a rota basis. Children, in collaboration with their class teacher, plan, organise, deliver and evaluate their delivery of the Gospel message using the required school format (see appendix 1 and 2). Following this, the headteacher awards the Salesian of the Week certificates. The message of RUAH is consistently mentioned.

Every Friday morning, our school gathers together to award the Learner of the Week certificates and reinforce messages, including the mission from the Gospel given during the assembly on the Monday.

Every assembly starts with the sign of the cross and ends with prayers; hymns are included.

#### **Class-Led Assemblies**

To continue to empower children's personal development, class-led assemblies are delivered termly to showcase children's learning. This gives them, and the whole school, the opportunity to celebrate the children's achievements and God-given gifts and talents.

#### **Classroom Prayer and Liturgy**

Classroom prayers are said:

- at the beginning of the school day
- at the end of the school day
- Lunchtime prayers as a Salesian community

During other times of the liturgical year, other prayers might be said in accordance with our progression of prayer (see appendix 3).

At least once a week, all children participate in prayer and liturgy as a class. Children are organised into POP Groups (**P**ower **O**f **P**rayer) and are expected to plan, organise, deliver and evaluate prayer and liturgy sessions. Children use the school-specific planning template (appendix 1) to aid the delivery of their sessions and evaluate (appendix 2) to make improvements. Classroom prayer and liturgy sessions are planned for in accordance with the Liturgical year or topical themes like school-specific celebrations (for example, our Salesian Patron Saints) or a local, national or international event that is publicised.

### Other

Children have the opportunity to lead our school community or prayer and times of reflection during Advent in the form of nativity plays (Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1) and Carol Services (Key Stage 2) and during Lent in the form of the Way of the Cross (Years 3 and 4).

### Planning Liturgy

When planning any services, we use the gather, Word respond and mission model. When planning prayer and liturgy, special attention must be made to the liturgical season of the church.

As children grow in age and confidence, they can take a more active role in the planning and delivery of the liturgy.

### Progression of Participation

<b>Early Years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggest the focus</li> <li>• Select an appropriate colour cloth linked to the theme or appropriate for the liturgical year.</li> <li>• Place candles and artefacts in the centre.</li> <li>• Respond with personal ideas and/or prayers.</li> </ul>
<b>Years 1&amp;2</b>	<p><i>As above but with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write or say simple prayers.</li> <li>• Choose songs that fit the theme of worship (with guidance).</li> <li>• Choose artefacts.</li> <li>• Lead the start (Sign of the Cross) and reinforce the mission.</li> </ul>
<b>Years 3&amp;4</b>	<p><i>As above but with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning the four components that flow within the same theme.</li> <li>• Choose songs</li> <li>• Choose Scripture (with guidance)</li> <li>• Link the theme and mission to RUAH both around our school and in the community</li> </ul>
<b>Years 5&amp;6</b>	<p><i>As above but with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose Scripture independently</li> <li>• Link the theme and mission to Catholic Social Teaching</li> </ul>

### **Prayer and Liturgy at Our Lady's: Prayers**

At Our Lady's, we aim to help children respect and value the power of prayer. We encourage the children to pray by providing prayer tables and prayer areas in classrooms, within the school building and outside on the school grounds. In addition, we use the chapel and the Mornese Garden in the grounds of the Salesian Convent.

At Our Lady's we believe that to help children prepare for prayer and experience peace and tranquillity, the atmosphere must be created. This includes:

- the use of candles
- appropriate lighting
- appropriate music
- prompts or artefacts

Each class has their own prayer and liturgy box which contains: scripture, coloured cloths, candles, artefacts, candles and other prompts that children can use to deliver prayer and liturgy sessions in their POP Groups.

We expect the children to have an understanding of formal prayers by the time they reach the end of each phase. This includes the majority of diocesan-expected prayers, prayers loyal to our Salesian identity and prayers/responses for Mass (see appendix 3).

In addition, we encourage children and staff to be spontaneous with prayers to develop their personal spiritual encounter with God.

### **Music**

We believe that singing is a powerful tool to enhance prayer and liturgy and brings both meaning and passion to praying:

*'Life without music is like a body without a soul.'*

*St John Bosco*

It is our aim that within the seven years of education at our school, the children will learn a wide repertoire of hymns to use at appropriate times within the liturgical year. It is our aim that the children will be able to select appropriate hymns in accordance with the theme of their prayer and liturgy both within the class, for the school and for Mass with our parish.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The provision of prayer and liturgy is evaluated every term. The Liturgy Team play an important role in the evaluation process and work closely with senior leaders. Forms of monitoring include:

- viewing of prayer and liturgy classroom folders to ensure that all POP Groups are using the school-specific template
- observing classroom sessions of prayer and liturgy
- Viewing evidence of prayer and liturgy sessions to ensure that there are links to the liturgical year
- viewing classroom and communal prayer tables/areas so that they accurately reflect the liturgical year
- observing Gospel assemblies and checking the key message has been understood throughout the school week
- identifying that children are in line with prayer expectations for their phase.

The headteacher checks that the required level of monitoring has taken place on a termly basis and reports to governors who view a sample of evidence.

### **Spiritual Formation of Staff**

To become a prayerful community, staff must be the first witnesses to prayer and liturgy. To empower staff to support the spiritual formation of our children, the headteacher delivers prayer and liturgy sessions for staff with the aim of:

- a.) developing their own spirituality through times of quiet prayer and reflection
- b.) sharing best practice to use within the classroom

## Prayer and Liturgy Format

There are four distinct parts to the Mass and this can form the basis for any act of worship or assembly.

<b>Gather</b>				<b>Word</b>			
Opening hymn/ song/ Taize chant (Song – Gather) Dimmed lighting Light on a cross or object Procession Greeting/ introduction Prayer An action – sign of peace/ lighting of candle/ confession of sin Slide/ visual aid Poem Short drama				Psalms (spoken/ sung/ using CD) New Testament reading Old Testament reading Gospel acclamation Gospel (processed in by a child) Drama of Gospel Secular writing e.g. poem, speech “I have a dream” Meditation Use of Taize or classical music in the background whilst listening			
<b>Respond</b>				<b>Mission</b>			
Symbol	Significance	Activity/Action	Theme	Renewal of baptismal promises Final prayer A “Mission” to take away Final hymn/ prayer/ poem to conclude What will you do today to spread the Good News? Links to RUAH and/or Catholic Social Teaching? How can you live out that message in your own life today?			
Water	Recalling Baptism cleansing	Signing or washing hands with holy water (anyone can bless holy water with a simple prayer) Blessing each other with holy water	Christian unity Reconciliation Church Family Life				
Ice	Coldness of heart sin	A block of ice used (melts with the sin) individuals go and touch the ice after reconciliation, individuals bring up an ice cube	Reconciliation				
Light (candles)	Christ the Light, light of faith, hope, stillness, peace	Individuals light candle, dimmed light and focus on candles around a cross, night lights	Church, Christian unity				
Oil	Dedication, vocation, healing	Anointing of hands with oil, using oil on forehead	Church, thanksgiving				
Hands	Peace	Making the sign of peace, laying of hands on one another, paper hands placed by individuals as an offering of their own hand	Healing				
Prayers		Asking, thanking, silent prayers, use of music (e.g. Litany to the Father/ Lord May Your Kingdom Come)	Prayer/ intercession				
Incense	Prayer	Incense sticks burned as a fragrant offering	Prayer/ intercession				
Stone	sorrow, burden	Each person lays a stone at the foot of a cross					

## Prayer and Liturgy: Planning Template

Theme:	
Colours:	
Candles:	
Dimmed lighting:	
Other resources:	

<b>1. Gather</b>	Opening Music:
	Sign of the cross:
	Opening prayer:
	Today our message is.....
	Other:
<b>2. Word</b>	Reading: <i>(Old/New Testament, poem, prayer etc)</i>
<b>3. Respond</b>	Lead person:
	Music:
	What do you want everyone to do? <i>(write a prayer or a petition, a moment of reflection, offering, spontaneous prayer?)</i>
<b>4. Mission</b>	Final prayer.....
	Today our message is.....
	Link to RUAH/Catholic Social Teaching:
	What action would you like everyone to do as a result of the POP session?

## Prayer and Liturgy: Evaluation

Please use this form to evaluate the prayer and liturgy session.

Date:	Start Time: Finish Time:	Observer:	Theme:
Location:	<b>Class</b> <b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Phase</b> <b>Whole School</b>	Prepared by:  Led by:

<b>Gather</b>		<b>Word</b>	
Has the liturgy planner been used?	Yes/No	Are gestures such as lighting a candle and the marking of a cross used?	Yes/No
Have the children been involved in selecting the story, scripture, hymns, visuals, etc?	Yes/No	Is scripture taken from the Bible or a Bible story used?	Yes/No
Is there a visual element around which everyone can gather?	Yes/No	Are there visual images? Are they appropriate?	Yes/No
Is the cloth the right colour? Does its tone reflect the season, e.g., Lent = no flowers?	Yes/No	Is there use of different ways of engaging the audience – music, drama, Q+A, storytelling?	Yes/No
Is it an appealing space? Does it inspire the children and adults to enter in prayer?	Yes/No	Is music, video, images, presentations, religious objects used to support?	Yes/No
Are people entering the space quietly, with hands together?	Yes/No		
Is everyone ready to start on time?	Yes/No		
Is the Sign of the Cross made?	Yes/No		
<b>Respond</b>		<b>Mission</b>	
Are there opportunities for silence, reflection, contemplation, etc?	Yes/No	Do the class know and understand the message of the service?	Yes/No
Were the children encouraged to make links to their own lives, now and in the future?	Yes/No	Does it link to Catholic Social Teaching in any way?	Yes/No
Is the main focus on praising and honouring God and not the entertainment?	Yes/No	Are the children confidently able to 'Go Forth' with the message from the service?	Yes/No
Was there use of traditional prayers, prayers from the Mass, guided meditation, psalms?	Yes/No	Do they leave the prayer and liturgy in an appropriate manner?	Yes/No
Do staff participate fully and encourage the children to do so?	Yes/No		
Were the children involved in responding to the prayer and liturgy service? E.g. Spontaneous prayer, post-its used, etc.	Yes/No		

<b>What Worked Well?</b>	<b>Even Better If...</b>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

### Appendix 3: Prayer Expectations at Our Lady's

It is our aim for the children to have a good understanding of the following prayers by the end of each year group:

	Prayers	Hymns
<b>Nursery &amp; Reception</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign of the Cross</li> <li>• Our Lady's school prayer</li> <li>• Start of the day</li> <li>• End of the day</li> <li>• Grace before meals</li> <li>• Grace after meals</li> <li>• Hail Mary</li> <li>• Our Father</li> <li>• Prayer to St Mary Mazzarello</li> </ul> <p><b>Mass Responses</b> <i>And with your Spirit</i></p>	<p>Our God is a great big God How great is our God This little light of mine</p>
<b>Years 1&amp;2</b> <i>as previous year but with:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glory be</li> <li>• Prayer to the Guardian Angel</li> <li>• Act of Faith, Hope and Love</li> <li>• Eternal Rest</li> <li>• Prayer to St. Francis of Assisi</li> <li>• The Rosary (Our Father, 3x Hail Mary's, Glory be)</li> <li>• Sacrament Most Holy</li> <li>• The Angelus (the first section)</li> <li>• The Benedictus (first 4 lines- link to Advent Unit 2C)</li> <li>• Prayer to Blessed Laura Vicuna</li> </ul> <p><b>Mass Responses</b> <i>Thanks be to God</i> <i>Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ</i> <i>(responses to the Liturgy of the Word)</i> <i>Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy</i> <i>Lamb of God</i></p>	<p><u>Mass Parts</u> Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia, Praise to the Lord) O Sacrament most holy <u>Advent and Christmas</u> Come to us o Emmanuel O come o come Emmanuel (chorus) Away in a Manger O come all ye faithful <u>Lent and Easter</u> O Lord hear my prayer Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord <u>Hymns to Our Lady</u> As I kneel before you Immaculate Mary <u>Salesian Hymns</u> John Bosco be our guide and father <u>General</u> Make me a channel of your peace</p>
<b>Years 3&amp;4</b> <i>as previous year but with:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hail Holy Queen</li> <li>• Act of Love</li> <li>• Act of Contrition</li> <li>• The Angelus</li> <li>• Mysteries of the Rosary</li> <li>• Our Parish Prayer</li> <li>• Magnificat</li> <li>• Prayer to St. Richard of Chichester</li> <li>• Prayer to St. Dominic Savio</li> <li>• Prayer to the Good Shepherd</li> <li>• The Benedictus (link to Advent Unit 4c)</li> <li>• Nunc Dimittis (link to units 4A and 4C: Old Testament knowledge)</li> </ul> <p><b>Mass Responses</b></p>	<p><u>Mass Parts</u> Lamb of God Holy holy, memorial acclamation and Amen (Dan Callow Children's Mass) <u>Advent and Christmas</u> O come o come Emmanuel There is a longing O little town of Bethlehem No Wind at the Window <u>Lent and Easter</u> Bless the Lord my soul Stay with me Servant King Christ be our light <u>Hymns to Our Lady</u> Magnificat</p>

	<p><i>Eucharistic Prayer</i>  <i>Holy Holy</i>  <i>Memorial Acclamation</i>  <i>I confess (the confiteur)</i>  <i>Gloria</i></p>	<p>Hail Mary  <a href="#">Salesian Hymns</a>  John Bosco hymn: (very many people...)  <u>General</u>  Bread of life  Eat this bread, drink this cup</p>
<p><b>Years 5&amp;6:</b>  <i>as previous year with:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regina Ceili</li> <li>• Memorare</li> <li>• Prayer to the Holy Spirit</li> <li>• Diocesan prayer for vocations</li> <li>• Prayer to St. Francis de Sales</li> <li>• Novena to St. John Bosco</li> <li>• Novena to Mary Help of Christians</li> </ul> <p><b>Mass Responses</b>  The Creed  The Apostles Creed</p>	<p><u>Mass Parts</u>  Gloria  <a href="#">Advent and Christmas</a>  O come o come Emmanuel  There is a longing  O little town of Bethlehem  No Wind at the Window  <a href="#">Lent and Easter</a>  When I survey the wondrous cross  Bless the Lord my soul  All Heaven declares  <a href="#">Hymns to Our Lady</a>  Magnificat  Hail Mary  <a href="#">Salesian Hymns</a>  John Bosco hymn: (very many people...)  <u>General</u>  Bread of life  Eat this bread, drink this cup</p>

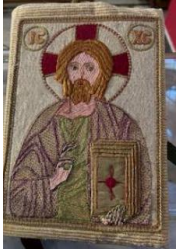
## Items used at Mass and liturgies

### Books



#### **Sacramentary**

Contains the opening prayer, prayer over the gifts, prayer after communion, and solemn blessings. Eucharistic prayers and prefaces for all of the masses including most special occasions.



#### **Book of the Gospels**

Contains only the Gospel readings.



#### **Lectionary**

Contains the scripture readings for Mass.

### Objects



#### **Chalice**

The large cup used at Mass used to hold the wine which becomes the Blood of Christ.



#### **Paten**

A saucer-like disk which holds the bread which becomes the Body of Christ.



#### **Ciborium**

A vessel used to hold the Hosts which will be used for communion. They are also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.



**Corporal** A white linen cloth on which are placed the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass which will become the Body and Blood of Christ



### **Purificator**

A white cloth used to cleanse the chalice. It resembles a napkin.



### **Pall**

The stiff, square, white cover that is placed over the paten when it is on the chalice.



### **Tabernacle**

The place for the exclusive reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. It should be in a prominent place in the church and locked when the Blessed Sacrament is present.



### **Sanctuary Lamp**

An oil lamp or wax candle that burns near the tabernacle. It is always lit whenever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in churches or chapels to show that Jesus is present.

## **Vestments**



### **Alb**

A long white garment which can be used by all liturgical ministers. It is a reminder of the baptismal garment worn when the new Christian "Put on Christ."



### **Cincture**

A long cord used for fastening albs at the waist. It holds the loose-fitting type of alb in place and is used to adjust it to proper length. It is usually white, although the liturgical colour of the day may be used.



**Chasuble**

The sleeveless outer garment, slipped over the head, hanging down from the shoulders covering the alb and stole of the priest. It is the proper Mass vestment for the main celebrant and its colour varies according to the feast.



**Cassock**

A long black garment worn by Altar Servers under the Surplice. Also worn by Diocesan Priests (Black), Monsignors (Rose), Bishops (Violet), Cardinals (Red), and the Pope (White).



**Priest Stole**

A long cloth "scarf." According to the manner in which it worn it is the mark of the Office of the priest or deacon. A priest wears it around the neck, letting it hang down in front.

**Liturgical Colours**

White

Worn during the Christmas, Easter seasons and celebrations of Mary, the Angels, Saints who were not martyrs, All Saints, Birth of John the Baptist, Chair of Peter, Conversion of Paul, St. John the Evangelist and is the preferred colour for Masses for the dead...

Green

Worn during "Ordinary Time."

Red

Worn on Passion (Palm) Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost Sunday, and on the Feast Days of Martyrs including the Apostles and Evangelists.

Purple

Worn during Advent and Lent or at Masses for the dead.

Rose

Worn on the 3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)