



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Reviewed:	November 2025
Next Review:	November 2026
Reviewed by:	T Gauvin J Cook

‘For where two or three are gathered in My name, there I am with them.’ Mt 18:20

Aims of Collective Worship

- To facilitate the opportunity for all in our community to encounter God through prayer
- To enable all to know, understand and experience Catholic prayer and its significance in our lives
- To equip young people with the language to pray independently and the desire to seek God’s presence and peace as they grow to adulthood
- To develop skills that will deepen and enhance the experience of prayer and a relationship with God: reverence, listening, contemplation, awe and wonder
- To enable pupils to formulate their own prayers and, for some, to independently plan and lead an act of collective worship
- To foster a community of faith based on love of God and love of each other
- To be inclusive and enhance the spiritual development of all students and staff, wherever they may be on their faith journey

Legal requirements

Collective worship is a legal daily requirement, distinct from curriculum time. For Catholic schools this requirement is made explicit within the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, which states: *“Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church. At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from all or any part of Collective Worship. The CES has provided guidance about this.

How we meet our stated aims through the different forms of Prayer and Liturgy

We meet our stated aims through:

- Having regular whole-school Masses in church, in addition to attendance every fortnight at the Tuesday morning Parish Mass, according to a rota
- Following the liturgical seasons faithfully
- Offering and enabling a variety of prayer experiences
- Prayer being in accordance with the teaching of the Gospel and/or the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, reflecting our recognition of human dignity, our concern for the needs of others (locally, nationally and globally), and care for the environment
- In the Prep School: weekly Liturgy Assembly, focusing on the Sunday Gospel, led and prepared by Mrs Gauvin and a class (usually P6); weekly class prayers written by children and offered up at this assembly; daily form prayers several times a day; weekly Celebration Assembly recognising Catholic virtues demonstrated by pupils; KS1 Bible story and prayer each week
- In the Senior School: weekly reflection on the Sunday Gospel shared via Teams during form time; weekly Catholic Life/Prayer Assembly led by either the Head, Deputy Head or Mrs Cook; student-prepared assemblies incorporating aspects of CST; prayer in form groups outside these times

- Regular House Assemblies in both Senior and Prep departments, reminding students of the inspiration of their House Patron
- Form Tutors supported with resources for guiding students in Form Prayers, including prayers for the liturgical season or Feast Days
- Provision for prayer and liturgy set down at the start of each term on the school APOP
- Each classroom has a prayer area/focus, updated in line with the liturgical calendar to inspire prayer
- Our Prayer Garden, created by staff and pupils as part of the Live Simply Award, provides a space for prayer, reflection and contemplation.
- Collective worship aims to be structured as: Gather/Word/Respond? Mission (following diocesan training)
- Opportunities for youth-centred collective worship at Catholic retreat centres (Alton Castle/ Soli House)
- Singing the school song, sung by generations of Dominicans, reminding us of our ethos and shared values
- Support from school choir and soloists to enhance a prayerful setting
“He who sings, prays twice” St. Augustine
- Annual Festival of Carols and Readings to celebrate the Incarnation, and Stations of the Cross Service to contemplate the Passion.

Expectations of Prayer Assemblies in Priory Hall

- Prayer Assemblies to be well-planned and recorded as evidence of provision
- Delivered in accordance with the APOP
- Students and staff should arrive on time, and enter in silence (all bags and coats to be left in classrooms)
- Once the candle is lit, the assembly - and time for community prayer - has begun and should be respected
- Prayer Assemblies should include Scripture, time to reflect, prayer and a thought/action to take away

Expectations of Form Prayer

- Students should be in Form rooms at the end of the day/for morning registration, ready for Form Prayer
- The start of the Form Prayer indicated by lighting a candle or showing a candle on the screen
- Prayer should begin and end with the Sign of the Cross
- Led by the Form Teacher to model prayer to begin and then by pupils to develop skills of leadership
- Include variety – e.g., using supplied resources, activities or prayers of the Church

Mass

At the heart of our school is the Mass, the highest form of prayer. We are privileged to have direct access to The Church of the Immaculate Conception and St Dominic, as well as the services of our parish priest, Fr Gerald Doyle. Father Doyle says Mass for us at the beginning and end of the academic year, and at important liturgical feasts and Holy Days of Obligation.

Mrs Cook oversees Mass planning, supported of Mrs Celia Gilbert (Catholic Life Governor). This involves liaising with Fr Doyle, producing mass booklets, preparing readers, selecting appropriate hymns, working with the music department, writing/supporting students in writing bidding prayers, and setting up the mass rota.

Mrs Gauvin prepares candidates and booklets for the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Reconciliation, liaising with Fr Doyle. She also prepares candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation and liaises with Fr Doyle and St Dominic’s Primary school for this.

Links with the Parish Community and Parents

- Whole-school Masses are indicated on the school calendar (on the website) and are open to parents, families, and parishioners
- School Masses are indicated on the parish weekly bulletin
- Students attend a fortnightly parish Mass alongside St Dominic's Primary School
- Collaboration with the parish for occasional Masses (e.g., Mission Sunday).
- Links with the parish SVP group for mini projects at Christmas and Easter
- Strong support from Catholic Life Governor, Mrs Celia Gilbert, who facilitates access to the church and parish involvement

Prayer Areas/Sacred Spaces

- Each classroom has a designated prayer area, including at least a crucifix and something indicating the liturgical season. In the Senior Dept, students refresh and update the prayer focus, guided by the Catholic Life Prefect.
- Members of the Live Simply team support grounds staff in maintaining the Prayer Garden
- Religious art, created by students enhances the Priory Hall and helps create an appropriate venue for prayer
- The library with religious statues and images provides a space for the Tuesday Rosary Club

Resources

- Mid-week Gospel reflection- in Staff Resources (Prayer and Liturgy Folder)
- Weekly prayer resources for Autumn/Spring/Summer Term Staff Resources (Prayer and Liturgy Folder)
- Weekly Prayer/Prayer idea posted on Teams
- Hymn books - music room
- Bibles in P6 classroom and Senior RE Room
- Candles found in Priory Hall/ RE Room
- Use of large screen in Priory Hall for assemblies
- Prayer Folders in every Senior Form room, updated regularly by Mrs Cook and Catholic Life Prefect
- Choir

Monitoring

- Prep: monitored by Mrs Gauvin. Senior: Senior monitored by Mrs Cook and Mrs Harrison.
- Both Mrs Cook and Mrs Gauvin liaise with each other to prepare and monitor liturgy across the school.
- In all areas of the school, Mrs Celia Gilbert, Catholic Life Governor, supports in evaluation and monitoring.
- Students are involved in monitoring of Prayer Areas.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

- SEND pupils are supported in writing class prayers and can participate in liturgy assemblies by giving out hymn books or holding up signs if unable to read aloud. They can also assist with IT take part in the reading. Pupils can also be involved in the IT.
- All Year 9 and Year 6, regardless of SEND, participate in annual Stations of the Cross services; they may be supported by a more confident reader or giving a microphone

Health and Safety

- Matches kept out of children's reach in the school office and staffroom
- Pupils always accompanied by staff to and from church and liturgy assemblies.