



# Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship Policy

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2024-2025

*Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love  
and respect one another to be the best we can be.*

## **Mission Statement**

*Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be.*

## **Aim of the Policy**

We aim to show and proclaim God's way to our families, so that we can all have the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and the love of God and His entire creation: from the plants below our feet to our brothers and sisters across the entire world. At our school, we seek to promote the Catholic faith and keep her traditions alive as MISSIONARY DISCIPLES of Jesus Christ; faith-filled, joyful and outward-looking Christians who are growing in confidence to speak humbly of the difference that knowing Christ makes to our lives, and who bear witness to His love in our service of others.

Our Catholic school sets out to encourage the spiritual development of the individual, whilst appreciating that each and every person, has an individual relationship with God. We are privileged to be missionary disciples and we want everyone to have the opportunity to experience a close and loving relationship with God.

*As Pope Francis wrote in Evangelii Gaudium, "Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others."*

Prayer, liturgy and collective worship provides opportunity to:

- ♥ help live out our mission and grow closer to God as an individual person and together collectively
- ♥ nurture and deepen our sense of awe and wonder in our response to God, His world and all His people
- ♥ encourage children and adults of all faiths and no faith to express their feelings and emotions
- ♥ emphasis through prayer and worship the Catholic ethos of our school
- ♥ celebrate and respond to our achievements and life on earth

## **Definition of Terms**

According to The Prayer & Liturgy Directory, To Love You More Dearly 2023 Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, page 7 and 8:

Prayer, celebrations of the word, 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** has been traditionally described as 'lifting up of the hearts and minds to God', which means it involves our whole person – our head as well as our heart. This definition expresses a fundamental understanding that God is concerned and

interested about what goes on in our lives; is due our expression of thanksgiving and gratitude; and responds to us when we express our needs. This basic dynamic of recognition, thanksgiving, and intercession forms the core of all prayer and liturgy. It is wholly appropriate that communal prayer forms an essential dimension of life in a Catholic school. Staff and pupils are invited to recognise God's action in their lives and the life of the school, and in response to express together their needs and those of the whole human family, and to offer thanks for all that is good. Communal prayer takes place, for example, at the beginning or end of the school day, in the classroom, or at a staff meeting.

Such prayer times will have a clear, simple structure. Texts used may include familiar prayers as well as prayers written for the occasion, but there is also scope for spontaneous prayers, for example, intercessions. Long-standing Catholic devotions, such as the Angelus or the Stations of the Cross during Lent, can also be suitable. Giving space for appropriate silence forms part of the prayer. There is virtue in variety and also great scope for creativity: varying the focus and the format according to the liturgical year reinforces the essential Catholic focus of the school while providing opportunities for pupil engagement.

**Celebrations of the Word** As the time allotted to prayer lengthens and the number of people involved grows, there is a corresponding need for more formal structures. The term 'celebrations of the word' is used in this Directory for celebrations which are created for the school community and not directly taken from the liturgical books of the Church. These celebrations will take many forms, but the common element is the proclamation of scripture. These include assemblies, carol services, and other gatherings of all or part of the school community for special times and occasions. They may draw upon elements of the liturgy, such as its texts, symbols, and gestures, which help to reinforce their Catholic nature, but the various elements may be used with greater creative freedom than in the liturgy itself.

**Liturgy** The most familiar forms of the liturgy celebrated in school are the Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The liturgical books, such as the Roman Missal and the Lectionary, set out the structure to be followed, the words to be spoken, the gestures to be performed, and the symbols to be used when celebrating a liturgy. The possibility for some creativity and adaptation remains but they have to be exercised within the parameters authorised by the liturgical books.



**Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship**

At St Michael & St John's we believe that prayer, liturgy and collective worship in our school truly acknowledges and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is integrated throughout the life of the school; though our relationship with our brothers and sisters here in the community and around the world. It is our loving response to God's invitation to enter into relationship with Him, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Through prayer, liturgy and collective worship, we can form a deep bond and connection with God, we can tell God anything. It is a fundamental part of Catholic school life; central to our Catholic tradition and school ethos and values.

The Religious Education Directory 2023 Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, page 8, reaffirms the importance of worship in Catholic schools:

*In Gravissimum Educationis, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council teach that the purpose of an education that is distinctively Christian is threefold.<sup>31</sup> Its first purpose is to ensure that the baptised increase in their understanding of the faith which they have received. **Second, that they learn how to worship God in spirit and truth through prayer and liturgy.** Third, that they are formed to live in conformity with the pattern of human goodness and truth that we find in Jesus Christ.*

Planned opportunities for individual and collective worship are at the heart of our school life, and we encourage a culture of spontaneous prayer and reflection. All of these opportunities enrich the spiritual development of both children and adults within our community. We believe that prayer, liturgy and collective worship should take into consideration the different religious and educational needs of all who share it.

*'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus'. Galatians 3:28*

### **Organisation of Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship**

At St Michael and St John's, we offer:

- ♥ Daily prayers at least three times a day
- ♥ Twice a week collective class worship (celebrations of the word) in the morning
- ♥ Weekly whole school singing assembly
- ♥ Weekly whole school worship (celebration of the word)
- ♥ Weekly whole school celebration with parents and guardians
- ♥ *Rejoice* class worship with parents and guardians (celebration of the word)
- ♥ Whole school masses at key points in the liturgical year
- ♥ Class masses on a regular basis and on Holy Days of Obligation
- ♥ Additional prayer, liturgy and collective worship linked to the liturgical calendar e.g. October and the Holy Rosary, Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter and to special Saint's days like St Michael and St John
- ♥ Regular reflection time and opportunities for spontaneous prayer
- ♥ Mindfulness sessions

We intend to provide many opportunities for both children and staff to come together to worship God and specifically to:

- experience quietness

- be mindful
- use all our senses
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- build foundations of liturgical awareness
- develop deeper understanding of scripture
- develop understanding of our roles as missionary disciples
- experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- respond to and celebrate life

### **Daily Prayers**

Prayers are said a minimum of three times during the day: before lunch, after lunch and at the end of the school day.

1. Lunchtime prayer (whole school prayer)
2. After lunch prayer daily (daily Ten:Ten class prayers)
3. End of School Day is either the Afternoon whole school prayer, a prayer of class choice or a traditional Catholic prayer

See **Appendix 1** for a list of school prayers.

### **Traditional Catholic Prayers**

As a Catholic school we have the responsibility to teach prayers and responses of parts of worship at Mass, which are part of the Catholic traditions. It is agreed that children should become familiar with and know the following prayers:

EYFS	Key Stage One	Key Stage Two
Sign of the Cross Hail Mary Our Father Simple responses at Mass including Greeting the Gospel (Acclamation)	Sign of the Cross Hail Mary Our Father Glory be to the Father Act of Contrition More responses at Mass including Greeting the Gospel (Acclamation)	Sign of the Cross Hail Mary Our Father Glory be to the Father Act of Contrition Eternal Rest The Angelus All Responses at Mass

See **Appendix 2** for a list of Catholic traditional prayers.

### **Class Worship**

Our class worship, within which we celebrate the word, follows the pattern of:

- Gather (Welcome)
- Listen (Word of God)
- Respond (Prayer/Symbolic Action)
- Going Forth (Missionary Disciples)

On Tuesday mornings, our collective worship is teacher-prepared where pupils lead different parts of the worship. On Thursday mornings, our collective worship is pupil-

led. Pupils are supported with the preparation of class worship from members of staff, our G.I.F.T. Team or their peers.

### **Spontaneous Worship**

Our school encourages spontaneous worship at any point in the day. Spontaneous individual and collective prayer may occur across the curriculum for example during a PSHE with RSE session on friendship, or in a geography lesson when learning about contrasting locations or natural disasters. Spontaneous prayer may also be in response to a current situation, whether that be within the school community, nationally or globally. Children are encouraged to stop and reflect, and to pray to God either individually or as a whole class.

### **Class and Whole School Masses**

Class masses are held in the church. An infant class partners with a junior class to attend mass. Whole school masses are held at different times of the year and on Holy days of Obligation. Classes participate in these masses by undertaking readings and preparing and reading bidding prayers.

### **Areas of Worship**

Prayer and collective worship is encouraged anywhere and everywhere at St Michael and St John's. However, the notable areas of worship are in the school hall, in each classroom, the Prayer Room and Prayer Garden.

Each classroom has a focal point for prayer and collective worship in the form of a prayer table which shows the liturgical colours (see Appendix 3) and is designed and changed throughout the year according to pupil-voice. It is very important to our school that children have ownership of their area of worship, allowing them as individuals to develop their relationship with God. All areas of worship are welcoming to both those of faith and non-faith backgrounds.

Each class has a regular allocated time to visit the Prayer Room and Prayer Garden for class worship, however all classes are invited to visit these areas whenever they wish to. Parents are invited to have a quiet reflection time in the Prayer Garden, Prayer Room or in Church next door to the school once they have dropped children off in the morning.

### **Leaders of Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship**

Each and every one of us at school and within our community, play a role in worship.

#### **1. G.I.F.T. Team (Growing in Faith Together)**

The G.I.F.T. team have led liturgies and perform choreographed prayers at certain times of the year. They in turn train and support younger pupils to take on the role as members of the G.I.F.T. Team as they move onto high school. They lead worship on a regular basis both independently and alongside teachers. They also take an active part in masses throughout the year.

#### **2. Governors**

Responsibility lies with the Governing Body, to approve a Policy for Prayer, Liturgy and Collective Worship in the school, after consultation with the Headteacher. The Subject Link Governor works closely with the school, to monitor the delivery and opportunities for prayer, liturgy and collective worship and to evaluate whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in their own personal faith journey. This evaluation will help the Religious Education subject leader to focus staff in their means of evaluating and reflecting upon the delivery of prayer and liturgy and how to move forward in order to enhance and facilitate children in their spiritual growth and development.

### 3. Headteacher

The Headteacher's role, supported by the Religious Education subject leader, is to ensure that worship is provided for each child and like the governors, that they monitor and evaluate prayer, liturgy and collective worship.

### 4. Children

All children have an entitlement to take part in different acts of worship. All children are also entitled to lead worship and contribute in spontaneous prayer.

### 5. School Staff

Teaching staff assist in the planning and delivery of meaningful acts of worship, with the entire school staff supporting and being role models of the Catholic faith and worship.

### 6. Parents

Parents have a focal supportive role to play and example to set. They are encouraged to participate in school collective worship and are encouraged to attend various school masses during the school year and rejoice liturgies at the end of a unit.

### 7. Parish Priest and wider Faith Community

The active participation of the Parish Priest and the Parish community in supporting aspects of collective worship is acknowledged by all.

*'The family that prays together stays together.'*  
R.C. Family Rosary Crusade 1947

## **Inclusion**

St Michael and St John's is committed to supporting and allowing all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and English as an Additional Language, to participate in prayer, liturgy and collective worship.

## **Sacramental Programme**

School supports the parish in preparation for the Year Three children on their Sacramental Programme Journey. An initial meeting takes place after Mass on a Sunday followed by weekly sessions arranged to take place after school, led by the year 3 teacher and supported by Catechists to ensure the children have the knowledge, understanding and spiritual support to enable them to be fully received as Catholics into the Parish of St. Michael and St John's.

<https://www.ssmj.lancs.sch.uk/our-sacramental-children/>

## **Resources**

Many different resources are available to support prayer, liturgy and collective worship including:

- ♥ Bibles and Bible stories
- ♥ Come and See Scheme
- ♥ Prayer and Liturgy Directory, To Love You More Dearly, 2023
- ♥ Ten:Ten Resources
- ♥ CAFOD Website
- ♥ Caritas Resources
- ♥ Pray Together Resource
- ♥ God Who Speaks Website
- ♥ Hymn resources including Teach us to Pray CJM music
- ♥ Mission Together
- ♥ Mark 10 Mission
- ♥ Missio Website
- ♥ Salford Diocese Website <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/resource-centre/education/collective-worship/>

We also have a wide range of books, symbols, candles, coloured cloths, visual imagery and musical resources that are available within classrooms and in our Prayer Room.

*'I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'* (John. 8:12)

## **Appendix 1**

### **School Prayers**

Prayers begin and end with a sign of the cross:

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**School Prayer**

This our school,  
Let peace dwell here,  
Let peace begin with me,  
Let the room be full of contentment,  
Let love abide here.  
Love one another.  
Love of humankind.  
Love of life itself  
And love of God.  
Let us remember  
That as many hands build a house.  
So many hearts make a school.  
Amen

**Morning Offering prayer**

Father in heaven, you are so good;  
I will try to love you as I should.

Father in heaven, I give you today;  
All that I think and do and say

.

**Lunchtime Prayer (Infant & Lower Juniors)**

Bless us o God, as we sit together.  
Bless the food we eat today.  
Bless the hands that make the food.

Bless us o God. Amen

**Lunchtime Prayer (Upper Juniors)**

Bless us o Lord and these thy gifts.  
For which we are about to receive,  
from thy bounty.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Afternoon Prayer**

God our Father, I've come to say;  
Thank you for your love today;

Thank you for my family and all  
The friends you give to me.

Guard me in the dark of night;  
And in the morning, send your light.  
Amen

## **Appendix 2**

### **Traditional Catholic Prayers**

#### **Hail Mary**

Hail Mary, full of grace.

The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou amongst women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death,  
Amen

### **Our Father**

*Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done  
on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
Amen*

### **Act of Contrition**

O my God, because you are so good.  
I am very **sorry** that I have sinned against you  
and by the help of your grace.  
I will not sin again.

### **Glory Be to the Father**

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen

### **The Angelus**

The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary: and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.  
Hail Mary... Holy Mary...

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to your word.  
Hail Mary... Holy Mary...

And the Word was made flesh: and dwelt among us  
Hail Mary... Holy Mary...

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God that we may be made worthy of the promises of  
Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts,  
that we to whom the incarnation of Christ, your Son,  
was made known by the message of an angel,  
may be brought by his passion and cross  
to the glory of his resurrection,  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen

**Eternal Rest**

Eternal rest grant unto him/her/them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon him/her/them.  
May he/she/they rest in peace.  
Amen

**Appendix 3**

**Liturgical Colours**

## LITURGICAL COLOURS (ALTAR CLOTHS) 2024 - 2025

September 2024								October 2024								November 2024								December 2024							
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su				
35						1	39						44				1	2	3	48						1					
36	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	40		1	2	3	4	5	6	45	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	49	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
37	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	41	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	46	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	50	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
38	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	42	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	47	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	51	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
39	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	43	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	48	25	26	27	28	29	30	52	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
	30						44	28	29	30	31											30	31								

  

January 2025								February 2025								March 2025								April 2025							
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su				
1			1	2	3	4	5	5					1	2	9					1	2	14		1	2	3	4	5	6		
2	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	6	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	15	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
3	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	7	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	11	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
4	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	8	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	12	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
5	27	28	29	30	31			9	24	25	26	27	28			13	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	18	28	29	30				
																	31														

  

May 2025								June 2025								July 2025								August 2025							
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su				
18				1	2	3	4	22						1	27		1	2	3	4	5	6	31					1	2	3	
19	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	23	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	28	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	32	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	24	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	29	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	33	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	30	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	34	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
22	26	27	28	29	30	31		26	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	28	29	30	31				35	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
									30																						