

SAINT BEDE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
LYTHAM



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

PRAYER & LITURGY POLICY

at the heart of the school community

Introduction

The liturgy of the Church is *“an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy, by the use of signs perceptible to the senses, our sanctification is symbolised and, in a manner appropriate to each sign, is brought about. Through the liturgy a complete public worship is offered to God by the head and members of the mystical body of Christ”*

This summary of Pope Pius XII’s *Mediator Dei* and *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of Vatican II establishes the aims and purposes of the liturgy of the Church and its place in the life of Saint Bede’s. While liturgy is not the sole means of sanctification it is the pre-eminent one: ‘the liturgy by its very nature is far superior to any of (the other forms of devotion)’ and is ‘the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows’. In the liturgy all Christ’s faithful participate in the priesthood of Christ, and so are made holy and offer public worship to God.

The aims of liturgy and corporate acts of worship (para-liturgies) are therefore two-fold:

- to allow for growth in personal holiness of members of the school community
- to allow members of the school community to participate in the priesthood of Jesus Christ and offer worship to God.

From these over-riding principles flow all other liturgical aims and objectives in the life of the school. We are aware that ‘liturgical services touch individual members of the Church in different ways, depending on their orders, their role in the liturgical services, and their actual participation in them’. By Baptism each member of the faithful is given a fundamental share in the priesthood of Christ and therefore a role in the liturgy. We also recognise that liturgy must proceed from and rest upon faith, therefore liturgical expression within the school community has another role – that of evangelisation and the stirring up of faith.

We also remember that liturgy is not just a private action of the school or the individual members. Therefore, liturgical celebrations should echo the ecclesial reality of the school community. Liturgy within the school should always be faithful to the life, teaching and mission of the Catholic community we serve.

Worship, prayer and liturgy are integral parts of the Catholic tradition and therefore central to all Catholic Schools and their character. At Saint Bede’s, this currently takes place through regular community prayers, such as assemblies, Masses and para-liturgies and through the occasion of voluntary private prayer. Year 10 students are also given the opportunity to spend some time away from school on retreat.

To further the school mission statement, all students will experience prayer in a variety of forms throughout the year. On many occasions this experience will be voluntary. The whole school is invited to reflect on personal, social and global issues and to consider their responses to them.

The Lay Chaplain gives direction to the Prayer & Liturgy in the school, on a full-time basis, along with the Head of RE and in collaboration with the Priest Chaplain.

Aims of Prayer & Liturgy at Saint Bede’s

- To encourage a common ethos and shared gospel values, giving worth to God and marking Him as special.
- To strengthen and celebrate the school community.
- To provide opportunities for pupils, staff and parents to come together to worship God.
- To integrate the school into the liturgical cycle and to mark this appropriately.
- To celebrate the richness of the Catholic tradition.

- To involve pupils in the preparation and delivery of prayer, worship and liturgy.
- To support students and staff in pursuing and developing their relationship with God.
- To provide opportunities to reflect on spiritual and personal beliefs.
- To provide opportunities for faith sharing, reflection and wonder.
- To enrich the religious experience of students and staff.
- To contemplate something of the mystery of God.
- To enable and encourage a sense of community within the school, local parishes and in the wider community.
- To strengthen the links with student and staff and the parishes to which they belong.

Statement of Intent

What forms will Prayer & Liturgy take?

Our intention is to add new dimension to the traditional forms of prayer and liturgy within the school. Primarily through:

- Daily Collective Worship in form rooms
- Weekly assembly with the Gospel message at its heart and supported by music and singing, in all year groups.
- Provision of daily form prayer services from the chapel to all students, at least once per half-term.
- Provision of a warm and welcoming prayer environment in the Chapel and privacy for personal or group discussion or study.
- Provision of good quality prayer resources (adapted for KS3 and KS4) provided with sufficient notice to enable Form Tutors to prepare for this aspect of daily form time
- Increasing the frequency of Mass services for the whole school; to supplement the voluntary Masses available in Chapel at key times in the Church year:
 - Each House to celebrate a themed Mass
 - Each Year Group to have a drop-down day retreat culminating in a Mass in which they will have contributed to by writing prayers and choosing scripture
 - Moving the Mass of Welcome for Year 7 to an afternoon slot so that all Year 7 pupils can participate (previously held in the evening)
- Introduction of faith sharing groups, reflection and meditation groups. A weekly Prayer Group has been introduced from Autumn 2022 to explore different forms of prayer with pupils.
- Provision of relevant information via posters and notices in school and through the use of social media.
- To make good use of social media as a route of evangelising our wider community.
- Encouraging students to make use of “Paula’s Drop-In” at break and lunchtime whereby they can discuss personal issues or questions of faith at their leisure.
- Strengthening Transition work with our Catholic feeder Primaries through the Year 4 retreat Day (first held Summer 2022), always placing Mass at the heart of the Year 6 Induction Day, exploring Prayer and Liturgy with Year 6 on the visits to Primary Schools in the Summer term.
- Continue to ensure access to the Sacrament of Reconciliation for all Catholic pupils during Advent and Lent.
- Continue to ensure that ALL pupils access a Service of Reconciliation, in the Chapel, during these times.
- Strengthen the recognition that we are guided by Jesus Christ as our role-model in all aspects of work for charity and stewardship.
- Support the extra-curricular groups in their work to involve increased numbers of pupils across all year groups
- Maintain strong links with Youth Worker and through him to national and international communities to work within Catholic Social Teaching parameters.

Who is involved?

- Prayer and liturgy takes place under the direction of the Headteacher and the supervision of the Senior Leader of RE and/or School Chaplain.
- Priest Chaplain conducts Masses in school and occasionally celebrates Mass for pupils in the local parish church.
- Parish clergy are invited to celebrate sacraments in school.
- Weekly themes for prayer services are considered in line with the Liturgical Cycle.
- Lay Chaplain organises and delivers prayer services in the Chapel, and is also responsible for setting up and running faith interest groups and other interest groups in school through the Chaplaincy.
- Form tutors and students attend the daily prayer services, which are currently run on a rota. They are currently attended by one form class each day on a random cycle. Each form will attend two services per term.
- We hope to increase opportunities for Governors, parents and members of the local community to join us for celebration of the sacraments.

Where does Prayer & Liturgy take place?

- Masses are held in the school Chapel or the school hall.
- Advent Service and Mass of Welcome are held in St Peter's, Lytham.
- One-to-one and small group work takes place in the chaplaincy office.
- Large group work takes place in the Chapel.
- Class discussion work takes place in the classrooms.
- Informal one-to-one and group contact can take place anywhere in the school; classrooms, library, dining hall, corridors etc.
- Prayer services take place in the Chapel and morning prayers are made available in the staff/shared area on the network.
- Saint Peter's school hold services of reconciliation in the Chapel during Advent and Lent.

Planning, Recording & Evaluation**Planning**

- Weekly Mass, daily prayer services and para-liturgy themes are based around the liturgical cycle.
- Format for prayer services and Masses agreed in consultation with Headteacher/Head of RE/Priest Chaplain.
- Prayer services delivered on a rota, decided by School Chaplain.
- Delivery of prayer services will be organised and supervised by School Chaplain.
- Chaplain to encourage greater participation from students (AV and sound technicians, artists, altar servers, readers, actors, dancers, musicians, singers, etc) and to supervise their contributions.
- Chaplain to produce a development plan for each academic year.

Recording

- Chaplain to record all plans and evaluation of activities in teacher's planner to be discussed at weekly intervals with the Head of RE.
- Chaplain to have weekly progress meetings with the Head of RE and review and monitor actions and progress.

Evaluating

- Weekly meetings with Head of RE
- Regular Meetings of the Chaplaincy Team (to include the Priest Chaplain, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Governor, Head of RE and Lay Chaplain
- Personal review and monitoring.
- Level of student participation and involvement.
- Student feedback, verbal and written.