



Collective Worship at St Philomena's Catholic Primary School

Our Mission

Our mission is with Christ at the centre, we strive for excellence, act with respect and serve our community.

This mission underpins our approach to Collective Worship and our whole prayer and liturgical life. It reminds us that Christ is at the centre of all that we do and encourages us to share our love of God every day in all that we learn, do and say.

Our Understanding of Collective Worship

At St Philomena's Catholic Primary School, Collective Worship is central to our Catholic identity and forms an important part of the spiritual life of our school community.

As a Catholic school, Collective Worship encompasses the rich variety of prayer and liturgy that takes place throughout the life of our school. It provides opportunities for children, staff and the wider school community to come together to encounter Christ, listen to the Word of God, celebrate our faith, give thanks and reflect on how we are called to live as disciples.

Our prayer and liturgical life is rooted in the teachings, traditions and practices of the Catholic Church and reflects the Church's liturgical year.

Through Collective Worship, we seek to strengthen our relationship with God and with one another, while developing a deeper understanding of what it means to belong to the Catholic Church.

Collective Worship is not simply something that happens at particular times of the day. It is part of our Catholic identity and helps us to live our faith through prayer, reflection, celebration and action.

The Purpose of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St Philomena's aims to:

- provide opportunities for our school community to encounter Christ;
 - celebrate our Catholic faith and identity;
 - develop a sense of belonging within our school, parish and the wider Church;
 - encourage pupils to listen to Scripture and reflect on the Gospel message;
 - deepen pupils' understanding of the Church's traditions, celebrations and liturgical year;
 - provide opportunities for prayer, reflection, celebration and thanksgiving;
 - support pupils in developing reverence, reflection and respect;
 - encourage pupils to participate actively in prayer and liturgy;
 - provide opportunities for pupils to prepare and lead appropriate elements of prayer and liturgy;
- and
- encourage a response to God's love through acts of kindness, justice, compassion and service.

Through Collective Worship, children are invited to celebrate, reflect, pray and grow as members of God's family.

Forms of Prayer and Liturgy at St Philomena's

Collective Worship at St Philomena's takes a variety of forms. These provide opportunities for pupils to experience prayer and liturgy in different settings and according to their age, stage of development and the occasion being celebrated.

These include:

- daily classroom prayer;
- class liturgies;
- Celebrations of the Word;
- whole-school prayer and liturgy;
- year-group and key-stage liturgies;
- Mass and Eucharistic celebrations;
- prayer and liturgy connected with the seasons of the Church's year;
- celebrations of saints and significant feast days;
- Catholic devotional prayer;
- opportunities for personal prayer, silence and reflection; and
- prayer connected with significant events, celebrations, thanksgiving and particular intentions.

Each form has its own purpose, but together they contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of our Catholic school community.

Our Journey Through Liturgy

Where appropriate, our liturgies follow a simple pattern:

Gather

We come together as a faith community and prepare our hearts and minds for prayer.

This may include reflective music, hymns, silence, a candle being lit, the Sign of the Cross, a welcome, religious symbols or a moment of stillness.

Our prayer spaces and liturgical environments help us recognise that we are entering a special time of prayer and encounter with God.

Word

The Word of God has a central place in our prayer and liturgical life.

We listen to Scripture from the Old or New Testament and reflect on what God is saying to us.

Children are encouraged to explore the meaning of Scripture and consider how the teachings of Jesus can guide their choices, relationships and actions.

Response

We respond to God's Word through prayer, reflection, music, silence, discussion, symbolic actions and participation.

Depending on the celebration, children may share prayers and intentions, respond to Scripture, sing, reflect quietly or take part in an appropriate symbolic action.

We encourage children to make connections between Scripture, their own lives and the lives of others.

Send – Our Mission

Our liturgy does not simply end when the celebration finishes.

We are sent out to live our faith through our words, choices and actions.

Children are encouraged to consider how they can put their faith into action through kindness, forgiveness, compassion, service and love within school, at home, in the parish and in the wider community.

Class Liturgy

Class liturgy provides regular opportunities for children to gather together as a smaller faith community.

Children have opportunities to listen to Scripture, pray, reflect and respond to God's Word.

Each class has a prayer focus area which supports prayer and reflection. These prayer areas reflect the themes being explored, the Church's liturgical seasons and important celebrations throughout the year.

Children are encouraged to participate actively and, as they grow in confidence, to prepare and lead appropriate elements of class liturgy.

Celebrations of the Word

Celebrations of the Word provide opportunities for pupils and staff to gather around Scripture, listen to the Word of God, reflect and respond. These celebrations are planned according to the age and needs of the children and the particular occasion or liturgical season. They may take place within a class, key stage or whole-school setting.

Whole-School Liturgy

Whole-school liturgies bring our school community together to celebrate and reflect on important moments in the life of the Church and our school.

These may include celebrations connected with Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, feast days, saints, Catholic Social Teaching, significant events and times of thanksgiving or remembrance.

Children are encouraged to participate through Scripture, prayer, music, reflection and appropriate leadership.

Key Stage Liturgy

Year-group and key-stage liturgies provide opportunities for children to experience prayer and liturgy in ways that are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

These celebrations allow children to participate more deeply and, where appropriate, to take greater responsibility for preparing and leading elements of the liturgy.

Mass and the Eucharist

The Eucharist is central to the life of the Catholic Church and has a special place within the prayer and liturgical life of St Philomena's.

Throughout the year, pupils have opportunities to celebrate Mass and other appropriate Eucharistic celebrations with the support of our parish community.

Our parish priest, Father Subbo from Our Lady of the Cray Parish, works in partnership with the school to support the faith development of our pupils and strengthen the relationship between school and parish.

Through participation in Mass, children encounter the richness of the Church's Eucharistic celebration and develop an age-appropriate understanding of the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.

Children are supported in participating reverently and meaningfully according to their age and understanding.

The Liturgical Year

Our prayer and liturgical life follows the rhythm of the Church's year.

Throughout the year, pupils explore and celebrate:

- Advent and preparing for the coming of Christ;
- Christmas and the celebration of Jesus' birth;
- Lent as a time of prayer, reflection and preparation;
- Holy Week and the Passion of Christ;
- Easter and the joy of the Resurrection;
- Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit; and
- Ordinary Time and growing in our life as followers of Jesus.

The lives of saints and examples of faithful discipleship are also explored to inspire pupils in their own faith journeys.

Catholic Prayer and Devotion

Alongside liturgy, children are introduced to the richness of Catholic prayer and devotional life.

Depending on the season and occasion, this may include:

- the Rosary;
- Stations of the Cross;
- traditional Catholic prayers;
- prayer for particular intentions;
- opportunities for silence and reflection;
- prayers connected with saints and feast days; and
- personal prayer.

These opportunities help children to develop an appreciation of the richness and diversity of Catholic prayer.

Sacred Spaces

Our prayer and liturgical environments help create a sense of reverence and provide a focus for prayer.

Classrooms have prayer areas which may include:

- a Bible;
- a crucifix or religious image;
- a candle;
- seasonal symbols;
- flowers;
- prayer intentions;

- children's artwork; and
- other appropriate religious artefacts.

For larger celebrations, the prayer space or liturgical environment is prepared according to the season, celebration and nature of the liturgy.

Pupil Participation and Leadership

At St Philomena's, children are active participants in the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

Pupils are given opportunities to:

- read Scripture;
- prepare prayers and reflections;
- welcome others into prayer;
- lead responses;
- choose appropriate music and hymns;
- prepare prayer spaces;
- contribute to liturgical celebrations;
- lead moments of reflection; and
- take increasing responsibility for preparing and leading prayer and liturgy.

Opportunities for leadership develop progressively according to pupils' age, ability, confidence and spiritual development.

Through participation, children develop confidence, responsibility and a deeper understanding of their role within our Catholic community.

Collective Worship and Catholic Social Teaching

Our prayer and liturgical life encourages children to understand that faith is lived through action.

Through Scripture, prayer and reflection, children are encouraged to consider how they can respond to the needs of others and contribute to building a fairer, more compassionate and loving community.

Our Collective Worship therefore connects prayer with our mission to act with respect and serve our community.

Links with Parish and the Wider Church

Our relationship with our parish is an important part of our Catholic life.

Children have opportunities to experience the life of the wider Catholic Church through Mass, parish celebrations, sacramental preparation and shared prayer.

We value the contribution of our parish priest and other members of the parish community and seek to strengthen the relationship between school, parish and home.

Who Leads Collective Worship?

Collective Worship is led by members of the school and parish community, recognising that prayer and liturgy are an important part of the life of the whole Catholic community.

Those involved include:

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders

Who ensure that prayer and liturgy remain central to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school.

Teachers and Staff

Who provide and support opportunities for pupils to encounter Christ, pray, reflect and grow in faith.

Children

Who participate actively and develop their confidence as members of the worshipping community.

The Chaplaincy Team

Who support the spiritual life of the school and promote faith in action.

Parish Clergy and Visitors

Who strengthen links with the wider Church community and support appropriate celebrations throughout the year.

Growing in Faith Together

Collective Worship helps pupils to recognise that prayer and faith are not only something we experience at particular times but something that shapes our whole way of living.

Through prayer, Scripture, reflection and action, our children are encouraged to follow the example of Jesus by showing compassion, respect and service to others.

Inspired by our patron saint, St Philomena, we strive to be a community where faith is lived out each day and where everyone is encouraged to let the light of Christ shine through their words and actions.

Our Collective Worship helps us to live our school mission:

With Christ at the centre, we strive for excellence, act with respect and serve our community.

We seek to share our love of God every day in all that we learn, do and say.