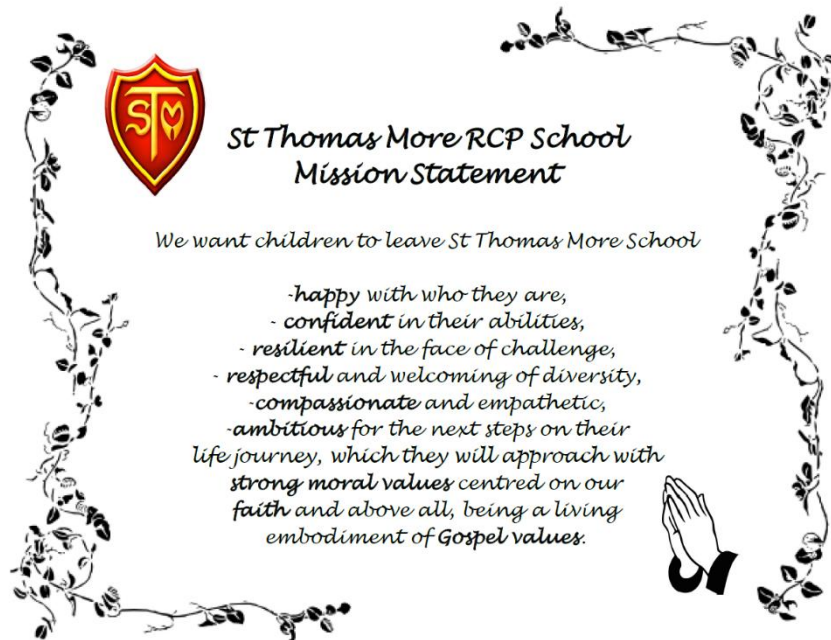


St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Prayer & Liturgy Policy

'Love one another as I have loved you.'



The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy, in a Catholic school, names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching will enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and develop a spiritual life. The Prayer and Liturgy Policy is written in line with 'To know you more clearly

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single 'act of worship' for all pupils, or separate 'acts of worship' in school groups. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

The 'act of worship' is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured, within the RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Prayer and liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church;
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St Thomas More Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All acts of prayer in St Thomas More Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church. Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, The Way the Truth the Life, Life to the Full, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day. Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations. A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy

- Daily prayers in class; morning, before and after lunch, end of day
- Monday whole school Collective Worship and Prayer
- Wednesday KS1 Assembly and Prayer
- Thursday KS2 Assembly and Prayer
- Friday Whole School Celebration Assembly including shared prayer
- Mass & Year Group Liturgy events
- Important events in the liturgical calendar e.g. Month of Mary

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is monitored by the Headteacher and RE Leads. Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's development plan.

The learning environment

Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment.

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference current topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos. The main hall boards will also reflect the children's work around Catholic Social Teaching.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher, Governors and the RE Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Reviewed Date: September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2027