

**St Joseph's College**  
**PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY**

This Policy Links with:

- RSE and PSHE Policy

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<b>Policy Available for Staff at:</b>	TEAMS
<b>Policy Available for Parents at:</b>	Website
<b>Person in Charge of Catholic Life (PICCL):</b>	Mrs C Cirino
<b>Priest Chaplain:</b>	
<b>Lay Chaplain:</b>	Miss C Hopkinson
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs C Slattery

## Prayer and Liturgy

### “Where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst”

Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school is more than just a legal requirement. It is central to Catholic education and is an essential part of the school's overall provision for prayer and worship. It is an essential part of every pupil's entitlement.

St Joseph's College seeks to affirm, nurture and develop the faith and spiritual growth of all its members; promote and develop moral values and encourage individuals' participation in the life of the church at a school level, as well as encouraging links with parish life and the Archdiocese.

As a school with a designated religious character, prayer and liturgy at the College is in accordance with the doctrines, rites, practices and observances of the Roman Catholic Church.

Through our collective acts of prayer and liturgy, we aim to create a community with an ethos which fosters a love of God and love for one another, so that all “may have life and have it to the full”.

### School Mission Statement

In 2024 St Joseph's College adopted an anchor for its core principles: **Head, Hand, Heart**. This philosophy permeates the school in all that we do, encompassing the vision of a holistic education, in which faith is central.

St Joseph's College seeks to develop the whole person. We are a Catholic School inspired in our mission by the vision of life that is found in the teaching of the Gospel, the Church and in Jesus, who came that we 'may have life and have it to the full.'

In striving to fulfil this mission we continue the work of the Christian Brothers and its founder Blessed Edmund Rice. In practice this means that we seek to:

1. Encourage, support and inspire young people and the wider school community in the journey of faith.
2. Create a well-ordered community where everyone is valued and respected.
3. Develop the intellectual, creative, physical, spiritual and religious potential of every pupil and encourage involvement in extra-curricular activities such as sport, music, drama and community service.
4. Work in partnership with parents, parishes, local industry and commerce, and the wider community in a spirit of mutual service for the benefit of all.
5. Prepare our young people for life beyond school and in particular develop personal integrity, moral values and a sense of justice so that they 'act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God'.  
(Micah 6:8)

### 1 Rationale

The aim of the prayer and liturgy policy is to outline the opportunities in our community to:

- worship God
- reflect on God and the teachings of Jesus.
- reflect on values that are based on Gospel Values
- develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- experience a sense of community and belonging
- dedicate part of a busy school day to quiet reflection
- pray for those around the world in need as the starting point for Catholic Social Teaching

- reinforce prayer and liturgy as part of the Catholic tradition
- experience a variety of prayer forms

### **Arrangements for prayer and liturgy**

Prayer and liturgy is carefully planned at St Joseph's College by our PICCL and lay chaplain. This Annual Plan of Provision (APOP) is routinely shared with SLT, governors and staff, and is central to the writing of the school calendar. This plan includes

- Daily prayer through assembly or form period
- Daily prayer at the end of the school day
- Weekly celebration of the Word through *Word Of The Week*
- Assemblies (whole school, KS3, KS4, KS5)
- Extended form time para-liturgies for significant days
- House assemblies
- Celebration of Holy Mass – Holy Days of Obligation
- Celebration of Holy Mass – Welcome Masses / Family Mass (year 7)
- Celebration of Holy Mass – St Joseph's Feast Day
- Celebration of Holy Mass – Leavers
- Ash Wednesday services (when it falls during term time)
- Sacrament of Reconciliation (Advent / Lent)
- Annual Carol Service
- Whole school retreat programme
- Staff – all briefings / meetings / INSET
- Staff Catholic life induction
- Staff and pupil Edmund Rice Induction

St Joseph's College has a strong tradition of liturgical celebration. We have strong links with our local parish and we are fortunate that our Parish Priest, comes to celebrate mass regularly with us.

The school has its own chapel which allows pupils and staff opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection. This is also an area for the chaplaincy groups to meet and others groups to come together to plan services, outreach work, campaigns or simply spend some individual quiet time, should students wish to use it. There is a thriving chaplaincy timetable which large numbers of students who attend at break and lunch times, ranging from Y7-Y13.

As St Joseph's College is a Catholic school, all those parents/carers seeking entry for their children are required to agree to them taking part in assemblies, which follows the usual Christian traditions. The Education Act requires all schools to hold an Act of Worship (of an essentially Christian nature) every day, but at St Joseph's we are more intentional and deliberate in our plans for assemblies. There is a comprehensive assembly guidance that the school has in place to support those who write and lead assemblies. There is also a rigorous quality assurance process in place across the whole school.

Students in KS3/4 attend two assemblies per week, one which will usually be prepared by individual forms. An assembly rota published in September and themes are agreed by the pastoral team and the school's PICCL. The themes take into account the liturgical calendar, Pope Leo's prayer intentions, important cultural/social events, current affairs issues, patron saints' days etc. The school's lay Chaplain supports assembly preparation.

On the other three days of the week, prayer will take place in form, either led by form teacher or students. Form teachers have resources supplied by our Lay Chaplain to support daily form prayer. Each form room has a prayer space (box) with votive candle, liturgical cloth, prayer jar and prayer resources, for which they take ownership.

All pupils will attend mass on Holy Days of Obligation and Ash Wednesday services when celebrated during term time. Pupils of different faiths or none also attend as a way of supporting the Catholic identity of the school and community of which they are a part. All staff of the College also attend. Those

members of the community who proclaim the Word in mass are practising Catholics and our Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion have been trained by clergy, including Bishop Timothy. Our liturgical musicians play an important part in Mass, and music is selected carefully to enhance the liturgy in an appropriate way, under the direction of Head of Music and the PICCL. The sacrament of Reconciliation is made available to students during Advent and Lent.

Trip leaders of educational visits or retreats that span a Sunday or Holy Days of Obligation will ensure that they plan to attend mass on location where feasible. They will also include prayer opportunities for their participants. All year groups have the opportunity for a residential retreat, carefully planned by the Chaplaincy team, providing students with the time and space to reflect on faith and their religious journey.

Common prayers are used across the school, and students have access to these prayers in their student planner and/or on their Year's Teams page. The School Prayer is also an important part of our school's prayer life, being displayed across the school.

Prayer and liturgy is more than just a matter of the heart and mind or something that is done through formal mass and worship, but also a call to action. It is impossible to separate prayer and liturgy from action. The command to *Love One's Neighbour* is reflected in our numerous charity and outreach commitments that we partake in, and is a further example of St Joseph's College commitment to put our faith into real action.

A budget is specifically dedicated to Catholic Life/chaplaincy work in order to facilitate all of the above.

St Joseph's College will ensure that all pupils are taught about other faiths and gain knowledge and understanding of world religions, to live out British Values of responsibility and sensitivity, as well as inclusivity. This will equip them to be global citizens with personal integrity, moral values and a sense of justice so that they 'act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God'.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The Catholic Leadership Committee (CLC) will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The committee will be representative of members of St Joseph's College Community – parish priest, governors, chaplaincy team and the leadership team. The Chair of the committee will report formally, on a termly basis, to the full Governing Board.

The PICCL in conjunction with the Head of Religious Education and other SLT members will undertake an annual review of its CSED which in turn contributes to the School Development Plan. Elements relating to collective worship will be included in this process.