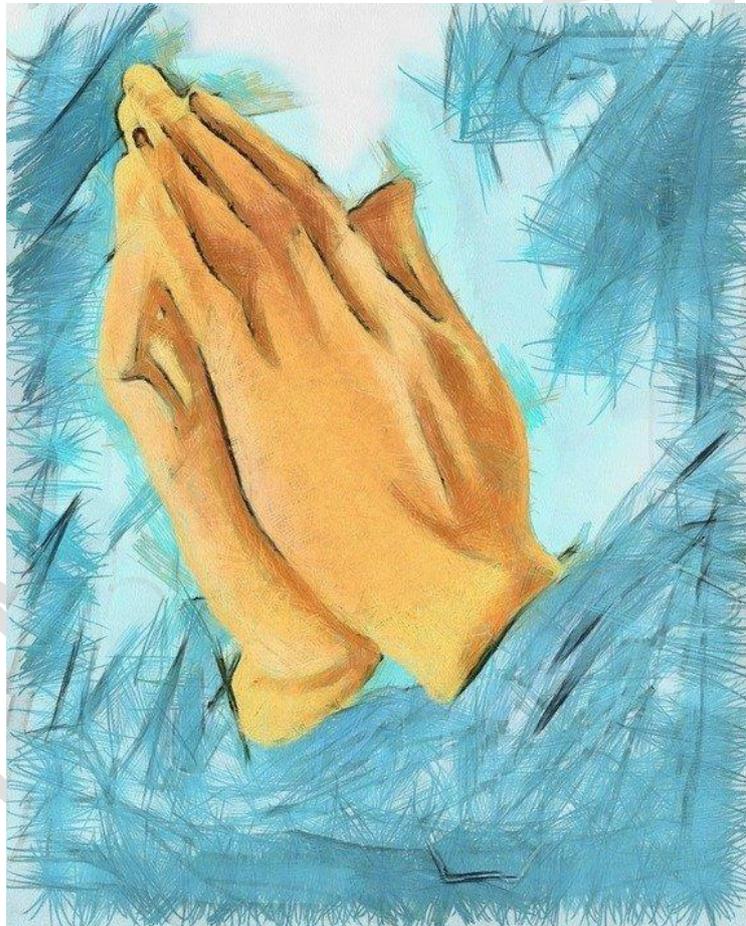




St Nicholas Catholic Primary School

**A Guide to
Prayer, Liturgy & Worship**



Prayer Tables

Pupils can take responsibility for setting these up in their own/other classrooms as well as around the school. They can assist leaders with maintaining and monitoring them regularly. Members of the Chaplaincy Team could be involved in setting these up and overseeing them around the school. They may get other pupils to help with this in individual classes.

CAN INCLUDE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cloth – liturgically correct*• Religious artefacts eg Cross/crucifix, candle, Bible (perhaps opened at a relevant piece)• Link to scripture/message/ liturgical season (eg 'Heal us, Lord') or class topic• Plant/fresh flowers• Prayer (eg prayer book, prayers written by pupils etc)
DO:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that it is liturgically correct• Make sure that it is respectful and holy (Catholic)• Make sure it is tidy• Involve the pupils where possible eg prayer table monitors

*See Liturgical Year Ideas document

Prayer Boxes

This should include, among other objects:

OBJECT	NOTES
Cloths	<p>Liturgical colour include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• green for ordinary time;• white for Christmastide and the Easter season; purple for Lent and Advent;• red for martyrs' feast days/Pentecost/Holy Spirit;• gold can be used in place of white;• pink for Gaudete Sunday during Advent and Laetare Sunday during Lent;• blue for Marian feasts. <p>Other colours can be used for general use although they are not linked to the liturgical year eg red/black for Remembrance/November.</p>
Cross/crucifix	<p>This should be age appropriate. There are lots to choose from and the pupils could be actively involved in this. If setting it on the table, it might be useful to consider how it can be raised so it can be seen.</p>
Bible/prayer book/stories of Jesus	<p>This should be age appropriate. There are lots to choose from. Ideally, pure scripture will be used and the text will be changed regularly to reflect the liturgical season/RE topic/theme.</p>
Plant/flowers	<p>These can be real/artificial/made by pupils. If they are real, pupils could take responsibility for looking after them.</p>

Candle	This may be artificial depending on the age of pupils. Consideration must be given to the storage of matches/lighters for health/safety reasons. These can reflect the liturgical season/theme.
Rocks/stones/pebbles	These can symbolise a variety of things including the Earth. Pupils can make different shapes for them (eg cross/heart).
Images/icons	These can link to various themes etc and can be of various styles (eg Jesus, the Holy Spirit). They may even be created by pupils. There is a set of images within your boxes.
Words/letters/Scripture	These can be versatile or specific. For example, packs of wooden letters can be changed to suit the theme. Scripture can be written on card/wood/ stone etc or framed.
Statues/objects	These can be linked to school/class saint or the liturgical year eg Mary. It is also useful to have abstract ones which can suit various themes eg praying hands, family, friends etc
Holy water/oil	These could be used for blessing each other during prayer/worship. They could also be used simply as visual symbols. (Fragranced) oil could be used be burned and linked to the Liturgy providing it is done safely.

Prayer Focal Area: Planning and Monitoring

Key questions to think about when planning my prayer focus:

- Is the prayer table/area in a prominent in the classroom, readily accessible to the children?
- Are there appropriate items on display (Bible, cross, candle)
- Is the prayer corner / area attractive and well cared for? (Focus changed regularly to reflect the liturgical time of the year?)
- Are the statues and pictures good quality religious art? Do they create a sense of a sacred space?
- Do the children help with the planning and/or maintenance of the prayer corner / area?
- Is there a selection of books connected to the topic available for children (these can be kept in a box near the prayer focus)?
- Is there evidence of children's work and/or prayers? Are they used?
- Has each classroom an RE display? Is it up-to-date and based on the current topic?
- Are there traditional/school prayers on display to support learning?

Prayer Experiences

Pupils can be involved in reading, composing or sharing in a variety of types of prayer, many of which are listed below (as appropriate by age). These can be based on the special times and themes listed in this document, although they may also be based on the pupils' own life and needs. It is important that they will be exposed to a positive, rich and varied experience of prayer and that these will be modelled and taught in a meaningful and engaging way. There is a plethora of resources available to support with this. The importance of personal and genuine prayer that develops a relationship with God should always be at the heart of prayer.

TYPE	EXAMPLE
Examen	<i>Beginning prayer, review of the day, reflection of God's presence and personal response, prayer of thanks/penance/praise</i>
Praying the psalms	<i>Give thanks to the Lord.... his faithful love endures forever [Psalm 136]</i>
Traditional prayers	<i>Glory be to the Father, Our Father, Hail Mary (and lots more)</i>
Repetitive prayer [mantra]	<i>'Come Lord Jesus', repeated several times, slowly</i>
Meditation	<i>Scripture reflection with use of imagination eg Guided Meditation</i>
Bodily prayer	<i>Raising hands in praise, bowing, dancing, kneeling, being still</i>

Prayer of the heart	<i>Stillness to listen to God: 'Come to me and I will give you peace'</i>
Spontaneous prayer	<i>Speaking to God from the heart</i>
Prayer of petition	<i>Asking God for his help in our lives and the lives of others</i>
Prayer of penance	<i>Asking God for forgiveness and for help to forgive others</i>
Prayer of praise/thanksgiving	<i>Praising/thanking God through words/song</i>
Contemplation	<i>Looking at a scene from nature, a piece of art etc</i>
Gestures	<i>The sign of the cross, the sign of peace, prayer actions</i>
Hymns	<i>Traditional and modern hymns</i>
Music	<i>Listening to God through quiet, reflective music, hymns, Christian rock, appropriate pop music etc Praying through song</i>
Litanies	<i>For all you have given us: Thank you Lord</i>
Processions	<i>Gospel procession with sung 'alleluia'</i>

Prayer services and liturgies	<i>Formal and spontaneous prayer using holy water, candles, incense and other symbols</i>
Stations of the Cross	<i>Reflecting on the suffering and death of Jesus</i>
Novena	<i>Eg to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Knots</i>
Rosary	<i>Meditating on a time in the life of Mary/Christ (eg could be one decade or the joyful mysteries etc)</i>

Child Led Acts of Worship



	EXAMPLES/IDEAS
Starting point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to topic/theme or specific lesson (eg Memories) • Link to liturgical year (eg Lent/Pentecost) • Link to special feast days (eg St David's Day) • Link to wider world (eg Festival of Light, Fast Day)
Variety of content and presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Scripture • Artefacts/stimuli • Different presenters (teachers, pupils etc) • Stories/drama/poetry/reflection/dance (linked to theme/word) • Music (background, singing of group or all) • Whiteboard (for word, reflective questions, mission etc) • Video clips • Focal points eg a picture, candle, cloth, symbol of theme

<p>Involvement of pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being encouraged to share • Acting/miming a story (with props) • Reading • Pupils' artwork can be shown on screen for reflection • Poems or prayers written by pupils can be read out • Songs of prayer/praise written by pupils can be sung • Recording their prayers or completing an activity for the response
<p>Different ways to pray/worship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Song • Dance • Drama • Words of praise • Prayers • Readings and teachings • Listening • Thoughtful silence/mindfulness • Meditation • Contemplation • Service • Symbolic action

<p>Think of all pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage active pupil participation (not just those leading) • Make it part of the routine BUT also try to make it varied so that they enjoy it and it is memorable and meaningful • Think of different intelligences and learning styles – offer these to God • Try to include: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic Make the children feel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special in God’s eyes • Part of the community • Valuable to all
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Pupil Participation in Acts of Worship

<p>Important note to remember</p>	<p>All pupils are valuable in their participation simply by being present – there is not just an emphasis on ‘doing’ but also in ‘receiving’ – both roles are equally important</p>
<p>Opportunities for pupils to lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a focal area with different symbols/images linked to theme • Get the music ready. Choose an alternative song or scripture if appropriate • Complete the activity beforehand to model what pupils can do • Prepare a PowerPoint based on the ideas given • Choose alternative activities eg write a short song or poem based on this scripture and offer these as prayers • Choose an alternative mission • Link this to learning in class, Wednesday Word, the liturgical year or quotes from special people

**Pupil involvement
BEFORE worship**

SETTING UP

- Sorting song words
- Selecting and setting up CD/ICT
- Putting out/moving chairs
- Preparing prayer table

WELCOMING

- Greeting (eg at door)
- Meeting visitors at entrance

PLANNING

- Choosing music/songs
- Finding or writing prayers; choosing others' prayers
- Preparing video and visual materials
- Training for new helpers

**Pupil involvement
DURING worship**



GATHERING

- Singing as others arrive
- Lighting candle
- Saying a welcoming sentence/greeting

ENGAGING

- Introduce a visitor/pupil etc
- Share the word (eg on screen)
- Drama
- Holding props
- Telling or reading the story
- Showing a clip

RESPONDING

- Asking and answering questions
- Reading or saying prayers
- Leading prayer
- Singing or playing instruments
- Leading actions or signing to songs or prayer

SENDING

- Explaining the Mission
- Giving examples
- Distributing resources eg bookmark, challenge/mission
- Saying closing prayer
- Choosing music/songs
- Blowing out candle

**Pupil involvement AFTER
worship**

CLEARING UP

- Supervising pupils leaving respectfully
- Holding doors
- Putting away equipment

RECORDING

- Leading evaluation (asking others what they thought)
- Complete a CW record form for evidence file

EVALUATION

- Record evaluation (own and others')
- Share evaluations with as required

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EVALUATIONS

(Examples of questions that can be discussed with each other and other pupils. Pupils could choose which ones to discuss and rotate these as necessary. They may come up with their own questions also)

- How did it make you feel?
- Has it helped you to understand more about God? How?
- What did it make you think about?
- What have you learnt?
- Did you find out anything new about yourself or others?
- Do you think you will behave differently as a result of it?
- Did it give you a chance to pray if you wanted?
- Do you want to ask anything about what you heard about/ experienced?
- What did you enjoy about it? Why?
- What will you remember about it?

- What might you have done differently?
- How do you think it might be improved?

GATHERING

- Is there a sense of calm, excitement, intrigue, respect, community?

ENGAGING

- Is it engaging and appropriate for all present? For example, does it have story, song, visitors, questions, images, meaningful resources?

RESPONDING

- Is there space for pupils' response? For example, is there singing, praying, discussion, sharing, action, silence?

MISSION

- Is there a sense of mission? For example, do pupils leave with a sense of purpose, challenge, resolve, blessing?



Act of Worship Toolkit

Chaplaincy Teams can support with the implementation, development and evaluation of Acts of Worship throughout the school. This can be done in a variety of ways depending on the needs and vision of the school. It is essential that the pupils liaise with the appropriate adults in order to make this process most effective and valuable.

Toolkit aims

- To provide pupils with the tools to plan a daily Act of Worship
- To provide a range of meaningful themes drawn from a range of resources and the seasons of the Liturgical Year
- To provide resources to ensure that pupils know the traditional prayers of the Church
- To provide examples of children planning and leading the daily Act of Worship in the classroom

Toolkit notes

- The Toolkit for staff and pupils should be used as best fits the needs of the school; changed and adapted as necessary
- This is most suitable for use in a classroom/group prayer setting
- The Act of Worship should last for about 10 minutes

The Toolkit provides pupils with:

- Ideas to choose from
- Confidence in using the correct structure
- Inspiration on ways to gather or respond to the Word and a model for making additional cards
- THE RESPONSIBILITY REMAINS WITH THE TEACHER!

Toolkit: Before you begin

- Gather, Response to the Word & Mission are generic
- Use a suitable edition of the Bible to read the suggested Scripture
- Worship based on a season or theme, e.g. Mary, are located in the same folder

Toolkit: How it can be used

- Select a group of children
- Children need to be given time to plan
- TA or class teacher to act as a scribe to complete plan & evaluation
- Children can create their own ideas
- At a convenient time in the school day, the teacher sets the sacred space and invites the children to lead the act of worship
- Children should have a sense of ownership
- Evidence of a planned act of worship will be found in 'Pupil Planning & Evaluation'
- Materials on Slack contains printable traditional prayers appropriate for the different key stages

GATHER

Some ideas to choose from:

- Make the sign of the cross
- Play reflective music as you gather
- Ring the bell until everyone is gathered
- Make the sign of the cross on your forehead and heart
- Sit in a circle, light a candle and remember that Jesus is the light of the world
- Pass round a bowl of water, dip your fingers and make the sign of the cross
- Pass round a symbol or object to remember Jesus and that we all belong to God's family

WORD

Choose from a topic in your RE programme or a liturgical year season for the appropriate key stage.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD Some ideas to choose from

- Drop a pebble in a bowl of water remembering the important message of God's word that you have just heard and saying a silent prayer in your heart
- Together, pray a litany of thanks to God in response to the Word you have listened to
- Pray silently to God about what you feel and what ideas you have about hearing the word
- Reflect on what God is saying to you in the 'Word' today. What is God saying to you today? Talk to God in your heart. When you have finished make a sign of the cross in the water bowl
- Reflect on the word you have heard and write a prayer on a cut-out leaf in response to it. Share your prayer with the class and make a prayer tree

- Listen to some of the reflective music and place the word you have just listened to in the centre of the circle. Use collage materials (flowers, glass beads...) to surround the word. Say a prayer to thank God for his word.
- Think about the times you have forgotten to talk to God, ask God for forgiveness
- Place a stone at the foot of the cross whilst the class prays for you in their heart

MISSION

- Find a few moments in the day to say 'thank you' to God
- Greet someone with a smile
- Tell someone in another class what you have prayed about today
- Be an example of Jesus today: help someone in need, share with someone, be kind, look after our world
- Care for God's world by picking up a piece of litter
- Do something helpful at home
- Invite someone who is lonely to play with you
- Care for God's world by picking up piece of litter
- Do something helpful at home
- Invite someone who is lonely to play with you at break time
- Take a few moments during the day to say a quiet prayer in your classroom prayer corner

Useful links

Details	Website link
<p>CAFOD: Resources for prayer, liturgy and reflections.</p> <p>Prayers and assemblies for young people.</p> <p>Resources for Children's Liturgy</p> <p>And more!</p>	<p>https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources</p> <p>https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayers-for-young-people</p> <p>https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy</p> 

Mission Together: For resources to support prayer, worship and mission during the liturgical year visit the website

<https://missiontogether.org.uk/>



Sacred Space: For prayers linked to social justice which can be used with adults of pupils visit this website.

<https://www.sacredspace.ie/>



Loyola Press: For innovative and enjoyable child-friendly resources.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholicfaith/family/catholic-kids>

For **3 minute retreats** see:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreatsdaily-online-prayer>

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