



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. It provides opportunities for children, staff and families to come together to celebrate our faith, encounter Christ and reflect on God's presence in our lives.

Through Collective Worship, we gather as a community of faith to give thanks to God, listen to the teachings of Jesus and consider how we are called to live as disciples. It enables us 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 reflects the mission of our school by placing Christ at the centre of all that we do and encouraging everyone to respond to God's love through faith, compassion and service.

The Purpose of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St Philomena's aims to:

- provide opportunities for the whole 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 reflect on the Gospel message and how it guides their lives;
- deepen pupils' understanding of the Church's traditions and celebrations;
- recognise and celebrate important moments in the life of the school community;
- support pupils in developing reverence, reflection and respect;
- encourage a response to God's love through acts of kindness, justice and service.

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

Forms of Collective Worship

Collective Worship provides opportunities for our community to gather together and celebrate our Catholic identity. These times allow us to reflect on Scripture, recognise important events in the Church's year and celebrate the achievements and experiences of our school family.

Whole school worship may include:

- reflections on the Gospel;
- celebrations of the liturgical seasons;
- recognition of saints and significant feast days;
- opportunities to celebrate the life and achievements of pupils and the wider school community;
- responses to events affecting our local, national and global community.

Liturgical Year

Collective Worship follows the rhythm of the Church's year, helping children to understand and celebrate the different seasons and significant moments of our faith.

Throughout the year, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the importance of:

- Advent and preparing for the coming of Christ;
- Christmas and the celebration of Jesus' birth;
- Lent as a time of reflection and preparation;
- Easter and the joy of the Resurrection;
- 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.

Eucharistic Celebrations and Links with the Parish

The Eucharist is central to the life of the Catholic Church and is an important part of our worshipping community.

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

These celebrations help pupils to recognise that they are part of a wider Catholic community and encourage them to participate fully in the life of the Church.

Pupil Participation in Collective Worship

At St Philomena's, children are encouraged to take an active role in the worship life of the school. Through formation of leadership, children develop confidence, responsibility and a deeper understanding of their role as members of the Catholic community.

Children are encouraged to contribute through:

- sharing reflections and readings;
- supporting worship celebrations;
- participating in responses and music;
- representing the school through chaplaincy and faith groups;
- helping others to experience a sense of belonging and community.

Who Leads Collective Worship?

Collective Worship is led by members of the whole school and parish community, recognising that worship is the responsibility of everyone. Those involved include:

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders who ensure that Collective Worship remains central to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school.

Teachers and Staff who support opportunities for pupils to encounter Christ 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 celebrations throughout the year.

Collective Worship and Our Catholic Mission

Collective Worship at St Philomena's is an expression of who we are as a Catholic school community. It allows us to come together in faith, celebrate God's love and reflect on how we can follow the example of Jesus.

Through Collective Worship, we aim for every member of our community to experience a sense of:

- faith;
- belonging;
- celebration;
- reflection;
- encounter with Christ.

Together, we continue to grow as a community of faith, keeping Christ at the centre of our school life.

Prayer, Worship and Liturgy Celebration Schedule

Prayer, worship and Liturgy celebration				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning, lunch and end of day prayers.	Morning, lunch and end of day prayers.	Morning, lunch and end of day prayers.	Morning, lunch and end of day prayers.	Morning, lunch and end of day prayers.
Scripture	Hymn practise	Wednesday Word	Celebration of the Word	Class Assembly
		Child Liturgy	Weekly class Mass	Class Liturgy
Other opportunities for collective worship include staff meetings, weekly class bidding prayers, weekly year-group Masses, half-termly whole-school Masses, termly year-group assemblies, termly year-group newsletters, termly RE newsletters, termly governor meetings, parent workshops, parent PTA coffee mornings, whole-school Masses on Holy Days of Obligation, special Feast Days and other significant celebrations.				

Inclusive, invitational, and inspiring

At St. Philomena's Catholic School, we ensure that our collective worship is inclusive, invitational, and inspiring for all members of our school community. We follow a range of approaches to invite everyone into worship, offering opportunities for all to participate in prayer, reflection, and spiritual growth.

- **Inclusivity:** We make sure that all children are able to engage meaningfully with worship, with appropriate provisions and consideration for all needs. We provide a variety of ways for children to participate, whether through quiet reflection or by taking part in prayers, songs, and Bible stories. Worship is planned to be accessible to all, with adaptations suitable for a range of needs.
- **Invitational:** The whole school community is invited to join in daily acts of worship, whether as part of a whole-school assembly, class-based reflection time, or Mass. Children are encouraged to contribute by leading parts of the service, sharing prayers, or responding to the Bible message.
- **Inspiring:** Our collective worship is designed to inspire action and reflection. By sharing stories of Christians who have made a difference in the world, real-life miracles, and passages from the Bible, we encourage children to apply these teachings to their lives. We also provide opportunities for the school community to plan and lead worship regularly, fostering a sense of ownership and connection to their spiritual growth. We aim to challenge and engage children with thought-provoking questions, inviting them to reflect deeply on their faith and its application in the world. We link to Catholic social teaching, encouraging children to live out values such as social justice, care for the poor, and respect for the dignity of every human being.

Through these practices, we ensure that our collective worship at St. Philomena's is a vibrant and enriching experience that draws the whole school closer to God, strengthens our community, and deepens our spiritual journey.

Collective worship and Religious Education (RE) are two distinct aspects of the spiritual and academic life of the school and are not used interchangeably. Religious Education is an academic subject, where children learn about the Catholic faith, the beliefs of other Christian denominations, and the different world religions. It provides knowledge about faith traditions, teachings, and religious practices. In contrast, collective worship is an opportunity for children to engage in the presence of God, approach worship with reverence, and experience the Catholic faith in action. It allows pupils to reflect on Scripture, engage with prayer, and deepen their personal spirituality.

While Bible stories may be explored in both RE and collective worship, the focus and motivation for these stories will differ. In RE, they are studied as part of an academic understanding of Christianity, whereas in collective worship, the stories serve as a means to draw closer to God and reflect on His teachings.

Collective Worship Structure

The structure of our collective worship uses the 4W's as follows:

- Gather (Welcome): We come together in prayer, using candles and other religious artefacts to signify that we are preparing for worship.
- Engage (Word): We listen to Scripture, allowing God's Word to speak to our hearts.
- Respond (Worship): We respond to the reading with prayer, offering our thanks and petitions to God.
- Mission (Witness): We are sent forth to live out the Good News, following God's call to serve others in our daily lives.

Weekly liturgy is planned and led by children to encourage their active participation in the spiritual life of the school, fostering a deeper understanding of their faith and providing them with the opportunity to lead the school community in prayer, reflection, and worship. The following framework is used as guidance.

	Gather	Engage	Respond	Mission
Biblical Context	The next holy day almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. Acts 13:44	Jesus told them a story to teach them that they should keep on talking with God and not give up. Luke 18:1 He taught them by telling many stories in the form of parables. Mark 4:2 Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work. 2 Tim. 3:16,17	But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. Luke 15:6 In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. Matthew 6:14	So the word of God spread Acts 6:7 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. John 13:15

Key Ideas	We gather together to meet with each other We all come to play a part in this community . We are preparing to meet God.	We engage with the big things and the little things in life We encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible We are listening for God's message for us.	We have responded to what we have heard and seen . We respond together as individuals. We are given the opportunities to worship God.	We are sending out to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world. We are all sent out with God's blessing
Involving the School Community	How might you involve the school community? Planned or spontaneous? (some examples: light the candle, say the bidding prayer, welcome the school community)	How might you involve the school community? Planned or spontaneous? (some examples: drama, reading the Bible passage, talk partners, helping with an illustration, leading the sung worship)	How might you involve the school community? Planned or spontaneous? (some examples: spontaneous or planned prayers, share what they might do as a response to the worship today, answer a question)	How might you involve the school community? Planned or spontaneous? (some examples: blow out the candle, say the sending prayer/liturgy)

Questions to consider when planning an act of Collective Worship	How do we prepare the space for worship? Does it feel like a special space? (If worship is held in a multipurpose space, how does it feel different to assembly or a RE lesson?) Is everyone who is involved in worship today ready and prepared? Do they all know what they are doing? How do we prepare all those arriving for worship and to meet with God? (some examples: quiet music, video clip playing, central image or quote up) How might you expect the school community to enter the worship space? How will we signal that worship is about to begin? How will we gather today to greet each other?	How will you engage the whole school community in sung worship? How does the song link to the theme for the day? How will you engage the school community in the Bible passage, message and or theme for the act of worship? (some examples: story, video clip, drama etc.) How will the school community engage with the Bible text and know where in the Bible it comes from? (Will it be read out, displayed, told in own words?) What questions will you ask the children to engage them into the story, teaching or message? Some examples: 'I wonder what you think this story might teach Catholics or us as a school community?' 'I wonder why Jesus told this story?' 'I wonder if this story makes you think of a situation in your life?' I wonder why Catholics might think this story is special? How will you link it to real life ('take it back to the playground or at home') or events in the local community or world? Link to Catholics around the world, charity events.	How will you allow the school community to respond? (Think, question or act) Some examples 'I wonder what you might do differently after hearing the story today?' 'I wonder how you felt after watching that video clip?' I wonder what you can do to ... help/care for others, forgive, persevere or be a better friend etc.? How might you incorporate reflection, silence or stillness into worship? What opportunities will there be for formal or informal prayer? (for example, teacher-led, child-led, spontaneous, planned, up on screen, personal in head, call and response, prayers used as part of Catholic liturgy)	What thought will you send the community out with as they leave? (for example, a soundbite, activity or key message from the act of worship to reflect on as they leave worship and over the rest of the week.) How will the school community leave the act of worship? (for example, singing, silently?) What special words, final blessing or prayer will be used as the worship finishes? (this is an opportunity to use some Catholic liturgy)
Key features	Altar table, Bible and candle, props for the act of worship. Calm atmosphere created? Music on, focal image up.	Sing together. Read from the Bible. Share the message. Use a variety of strategies. (Video, artwork,	Opportunity to respond – discuss, question, think. Reflection time (silence, stillness) Listen to a piece of music to reflect	Blow candle out. Send the school community out with a thought or action.

	Share a bidding prayer or greeting Light the candle	music, drama, props etc.) Discuss and question the children.	on. Prayer time	Share a sending prayer / blessing as the children leave.
--	--	---	--------------------	--

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of collective worship will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: children, parents, staff, clergy and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.