

School Mission Statement

Holy Cross Prep is a Catholic school under the trusteeship of the school's charity and the Sisters of The Holy Cross, which provides a Christian education in which the worship of God and gospel values, as well as a knowledge and respect for other faiths and a sensitivity for others, are central to school life.

In the spirit of St Francis, the school is a caring community, which strives to enable each person to realise their full potential spiritually, academically, personally and physically. To achieve this, the school welcomes all faiths and works in partnership with parents, teachers and children to develop the God-given gifts of each person.

1. Context

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.' (Marcus Stock (2012), Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

2. Aims

- We aim to give our pupils a rich and wide experience of Catholic prayer and worship which is age appropriate and actively engaging for pupils;
- For our pupils to become increasingly independent in leading and responding to collective worship;
- To celebrate the Gospel messages of justice and peace.

3. Introduction

As a Catholic school, collective worship plays a fundamental part in our daily school life and enables us to all join together as one in prayer and worship. Worship can link to our liturgical year (e.g. Lent), Catholic social teaching (e.g. solidarity, creation and the environment, the common good), our Catholic values and virtues (e.g. kindness, peace, equality), a special feast day (e.g. feast of the Holy Cross) or the wider world (e.g. Harvest Fast Day).

The school is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Southwark and Religious Education in the school is in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church; and religious worship is in accordance with its rites and practices. At all times the school serves as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Legal requirements

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils (Section 70, 1988 Education Act) that is in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schedule 20; 70 Instrument of Government, clause 2). As an independent Catholic school, we follow the guidance of the diocese.

The law requires all maintained schools to recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children up to the age of 16 from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)). As an independent Catholic school, in which parents choose to educate their child in a Catholic ethos, we expect pupils to engage in collective worship.

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil pupils' entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which pupils in the school will be familiar.

Prayer and liturgy are not designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education.

5. Responsibility

Governance

The trustees, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is a named person(s) who is responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school (the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator)
- the prayer and liturgy policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- there is a budget for prayer and liturgy that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

Headteacher

The headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- they work in partnership with the leader(s) for prayer and liturgy
- those responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school have been given appropriate training and formation to ensure that all guidance is followed and adhered to
- there are suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school.

Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator (RE coordinator)

Those responsible for prayer and liturgy ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is an Annual Plan of Provision for prayer and liturgy across the school year which identifies liturgical seasons and key celebrations, as well as opportunities for the celebration of the Sacraments
- there is daily planned prayer for all pupils, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- pupils are supported in their liturgical formation to take an active role in the planning, preparation, and delivery of prayer and liturgy according to their age and capacity, and in a manner which facilitates their progressive participation
- resources to support the planning of prayer and liturgy are appropriate and readily available to staff and pupils
- induction on prayer and liturgy takes place for new members of staff as required
- staff have access to effective training and formation opportunities
- monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy take place regularly and feed back into planning for future liturgies
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the headteacher and governing body to support whole-school development and the Catholic life of the school

- there is collaboration with local clergy and parishes
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

6. Prayer and worship

Pupils are taught and encouraged to pray in different ways according to their age and personal development. They are taught traditional prayers and are encouraged to use their own words for prayer. During liturgies and lessons there are times set aside to be still, to reflect in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. Children are introduced to a variety of different ways of praying:

- Quiet reflection / meditation;
- Praying together;
- Writing own prayers;
- Prayers through music;
- Learning traditional Christian / Catholic prayers.

Staff are encouraged to pray with children, and to be an example for them. Through prayer, we endeavor to develop our relationship with God.

All classes have a prayer focus area which has displays of pupil's work. This area changes with the liturgical calendar and is prepared to reflect the appropriate liturgical colour. Class prayers are established throughout the school and each teacher uses prayers appropriate to age and ability of the class. Candles, pictures and objects are also used as a focus for prayer.

Pupils take part in whole school liturgies where pupils and staff join together to pray. Pupils are encouraged to pray their own prayers. Classes will have daily acts of prayer and worship including class led and pupil-led liturgy.

All liturgies are relevant to the Liturgical Cycle, foster a sense of community and shared values and relate to the pupil's experience and concerns. Focal points and music create an atmosphere conducive to worship.

7. Collective worship

Collective Worship as a Community

Collective worship in our school community provides opportunities to:

- deepen our relationship with God
- grow in spiritual, moral and liturgical understanding
- grow in understanding of our living faith tradition; develop a sense of wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ
- reflect upon our own individual faith journeys and develop the skills of prayer

Collective worship is celebrated in a variety of ways including:

- whole school worship
- class worship
- worship through hymns and learning of prayers and liturgy of the Mass
- class Mass or class liturgy
- whole school Masses during the year, including special feast days and holy days of obligation during term time

The prayer room and prayer garden is regularly used as a special area for praying the rosary, the Stations of the Cross and Collective Acts of Worship.

Pupil -Led Collective Worship

Pupils are encouraged to prepare and lead collective acts of worship in their classrooms and for whole school gatherings and assemblies as appropriate. The format for Pupil-Led Collective Worship for our will be:

1. **Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)
2. **The Word** – every liturgy will focus on at least one piece of scripture from the Bible, with the reading of the day being the first source. The Word of God will be proclaimed from the Bible.
3. **Response** – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer.
4. **Mission** – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

The following resources are used to support Acts of Collective Worship:

- Ten Ten: whole school liturgy
- CAFOD: pupil-led class liturgies
- Pray Together: teacher-led class liturgies

Whole school masses

Mass is attended by the whole school at least 3 times per term, including special feast days, and on Holy Days of Obligation. Whenever Mass is celebrated, an open invitation to the school community, including parents are invited to join.

We begin the academic year with a mass for our staff as well as a Welcome Mass for new pupils and families. We also ensure that our Collective Worship timetable takes into consideration feast days, solemnities and other special occasions within the church that may occur when pupils are in school.

During Mass pupils enter the hall in a quiet and reflective manner. Music provides a signal that the gathering part of the Mass has begun and pupils are encouraged to behave in a respectful manner. Teachers remind pupils that the Eucharist should be received in a reverent way (clean hands) and how to cross arms if they are receiving a blessing.

Whole school liturgical services

Each class in the juniors is timetabled to prepare a liturgical service for the rest of the school. This gives an opportunity for prayer, reflection and celebration. Parents are welcomed to share in these services. Pupils in year 3 prepare a 'Service of Inscription' to celebrate the start of a faith journey for those who are embarking on their First Holy Communion sacramental programme in their own parishes and a final Going Forth Mass celebration. During Lent, services to mark the events of Holy Week are prepared by pupils: Palm Sunday (liturgy), Holy Thursday (The Last Supper liturgy) and Good Friday (A Lenten Reflection and Walk through the school grounds). Parents are encouraged to participate.

Sacraments

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide pupils with regular opportunities to experience the Sacraments as part of school life. During Lent, all pupils whose faith development has reached the appropriate stage are invited to attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation, facilitated by our parish priest. Catholic children aged 7-8 years enrol onto parish sacramental programmes where they are prepared to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy communion. The school supports the children and their families. In the autumn term there is an inscription Mass for those children which marks the beginning of the preparation, and at the end of the summer term there is a 'Going Forth Mass' to celebrate as a whole school community.

Collective worship and prayer timetable

Day	am	pm
Monday	Whole school collective worship in Gospel assembly led by SLT	Prayers in class
Tuesday	Teacher - led class liturgy	Prayers in class
Wednesday	Whole school collective worship as part of hymn practice, service or Mass	Prayers in class
Thursday	Whole school collective worship during class led assembly	Prayers in class
Friday	Child-led class liturgy	Prayers in class

Prayer takes place at the start and end of the day, as well as before and after lunch. Pupils learn, and experience, all forms of prayer so that they can adore, give praise and thanks, express sorrow to God on their own behalf and on behalf of others, as well as offer prayers of petition and intercession. Each class provides a prayer focus within their room, in the form of a display, collection of artefacts, Bible and candle etc. where the children can focus during time of class prayer or private reflection during the day.

The role of the teacher

We believe that leading pupils in prayer is a vital and essential part of Catholic education. It is expected that teachers will:

- Provide opportunities for pupils to pray
- Provide pupils with meaningful prayer experiences
- Assist pupils to develop the language of prayer
- Teach pupils the traditional prayers of the Church
- Help pupils to develop habits of prayer

Faith leaders

Our Faith Leaders are children in Year 3,4, 5 & Year 6, who promote the Catholic Ethos of our school. They are a very dedicated team who have a vital role in enhancing the Religious and Spiritual Life of our school. Their roles include delivering class Prayer and Worship, leading prayers and reflections in liturgies and attending diocesan Masses.

Resources

Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources, including staff time, and dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy. The Catholic character of the school is reflected in religious artefacts and images on display throughout the building. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy (prayer room) are furnished and maintained as such and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season. Staff training and formation costs are funded separately to ensure that all staff can fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

Bibles and prayer table resources are kept in each class. Each class will have a Child Led worship pack– with wallets containing resources for the four parts of the collective worship act. Posters, books, and religious artefacts are also available to support prayer and worship. We also have a subscription to Ten:Ten, which provide online prayer, liturgy and worship resources for liturgies and classrooms.

Parental involvement

- Class led services are attended by parents and families
- Parents are invited to all Masses
- The school provides a special celebration for Year 3 (and pupils from other year groups) following their First Holy Communion
- Our year 6 leavers celebrations, including Leavers' Mass are planned with parents being central to this important celebration
- Parents are invited to nativity plays, class assemblies, mini Holy week, and community events e.g Remembrance Day parade.

APPENDIX I Prayers

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven Give us
this day, our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil.
Amen

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is
the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother
of God,
pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our
death.
Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning
Is now
And ever shall be
World without end
Amen

Act of Contrition

O my God,
Because You are so good,
I am very sorry that I have sinned
against You, And by Your help
of Your Grace,
I will not sin again.
Amen

N.B. It is important to encourage spontaneous prayer and to use prayers written by the children themselves.

Morning Prayer

Heavenly Father, I give you today,
All that I think and do and say.
Uniting it with what was done
On earth, by Jesus Christ, Your Son.
Amen

Evening Prayers

God our Father,
I come to say,
Thank You for Your love today. Thank You
for my family
And all the friends You give to me. Guard
me in the dark of night
And in the morning send Your light.
Amen

Angel of God
My guardian dear
To whom God's love entrusts me here
Ever this day be at my side
To light and guard
To rule and guide
Amen

Help me Jesus,
Know Your ways,
Through the nights
Through the days,
Give me love to show a friend
You're always there
You never end
Amen

Grace before meals [sung or spoken]

At the table, at the table
Bless this food, bless this food.
Bless this food we ask You
Bless this food we ask You
And us too
And us too
or
Thank You for the world so sweet,
Thank You for the food we eat.
Thank You for the birds that sing,
Thank You Lord for everything
or
Thank you God for the food we have eaten
Thank you God for all our friends
Thank you God for everything
Thank you God
Amen

Mission Statement – Pre-prep

A Prayer for Our School

Dear God,
Thank You for our school, Holy Cross Prep.
We love You and want to be like Jesus—
Kind, caring, and full of love.
Help us to learn about You,
To respect others,
And to be good friends every day.
Thank You for our teachers, families, and friends.
Together, we grow, learn, and shine bright like stars.
Amen.

Mission Statement – Juniors

A Prayer for Our School Community

Dear Lord,
Thank You for the gift of Holy Cross Prep,
A place where we love You and follow in the
footsteps of Jesus.
Help us to learn more about You each day,
And to live like Jesus—kind, respectful, and caring to
all.
Like Saint Francis, may our school be a joyful and
loving home,
Where everyone feels safe, valued, and special.
Guide us to grow in every way—
In spirit, in knowledge, in kindness, and in self-care.
We welcome all Your children, from every faith and
background.
Bless our families, teachers, and friends,
As we work together to discover and share
The unique gifts You have given each of us.
Amen.

9.5 Common prayers

This list is introduced in section 7.10 ('Common prayers').

Age phase	5–7 (KS1)	7–9 (Lower KS2)	9–11 (Upper KS2)	11–14 (KS3)
Prayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sign of the Cross • The Lord's Prayer • Hail Mary • Glory be • Grace before meals • Grace after meals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Apostles' Creed • An Act of Contrition • Angel of God • Come, Holy Spirit • The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Offering • The Rosary • The Magnificat • Act of Faith • Act of Hope • Act of Love 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Benedictus • The Angelus • Hail Holy Queen • The Memorare • Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you • Eternal Rest