

At Holy Name we always strive to provide quality experiences of prayer and liturgy that support pupils' spiritual development. These communal acts of prayer and the liturgical celebrations of the Church form part of everyday life in our school. Every child is given the opportunity to pray by giving praise and thanks to God using traditional prayers of the Catholic Church and many other sources of prayer that enable this to take place. We encourage the children to nurture a relationship with God through words, symbols, song, gestures and silence. Prayer is such an integral part of school life that it can never be confined to 'timetabled' slots but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those specifically structured.

So what might a typical week look like? Central to our prayer life in Holy Name is the weekly Collective Worship. The Eucharist is the very core, the very essence of our Catholic life and therefore is celebrated with the whole school each Monday morning. Children participate in a variety of ways: praying, reading, singing, playing musical instruments, preparing a display to emphasise a specific focus of the Collective Worship, to name but some. In addition to Collective Worship, each class attends our local church to celebrate Mass with our parishioners, in order to further help their understanding of the richness of the Eucharist.

Other opportunities for prayer take place within the classroom at the start of each day, before and after lunch and again at the end of each day. Prayer in the classrooms and in assemblies always includes use of symbols and a focal point for prayer which is appropriate to the liturgical season, for example, Lent, Advent or Easter. During all these times of prayer, both staff and pupils are involved in leading and participating.

In addition to children's Collective Worship, Holy Name staff gather together every Morning morning, before the school day for Staff Prayer and Reflection. This is an opportunity for colleagues to reflect on biblical values and promote Gospel messages.

The school is very blessed in having a very supportive priests (Fr Kevin McLoughlin and Fr Matt Jolley) within the parish who is in school regularly helping our children to experience what it means to belong to, or take part in the worshipping community of the Church. The children are fortunate to be able to experience the richness of the liturgical life of the church in many ways throughout the year such as the Stations of the Cross during Lent, the celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation at least twice a year, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and a joyful Carol Service at Christmas.

It is thus our aim at Holy Name to provide our children with opportunities to experience a variety of forms of prayer that help each individual in the school community to foster their own relationship with God.