



Daily Collective Worship and Liturgy Policy

Thornton College is a living Christian community in the Catholic tradition and as such, prayer and liturgy are central to the life of our school. We value the continual prayer of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary for us, and among us and endeavour to ensure that prayer remains at the heart of our school community. Considering our school mission statement, our JM preference to create spaces to experience an encounter with God, and our JM commitment to the Global Compact on Education we understand the prayer and liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all students and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To enrich religious experience
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To take time out to 'wonder at', 'come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.

The real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is at the heart of our school. In all our JM houses worldwide, we have a chapel where all can find a sacred space in communal prayer as well as in personal worship. It is always open to those who want to find a haven of peace in the midst of a busy and challenging life.

As a result, worship at Thornton College is more than just an expectation. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

We:

- Pray with students at the beginning and end of each day
- Help students to reflect
- Celebrate prayer and learning through assemblies
- Participate in prayer as a staff
- Share with students in liturgical celebrations, the Eucharist Celebrate Harvest Festival with the community, including parents
- Invite parents into school to pray at our Parent Prayer services

Prayer, worship, and liturgical celebration are central to the Catholic tradition. We recognise that at Thornton we have students and staff from other Christian traditions and other faiths, as well as no faith and we seek to be sensitive to their views, respectful of their gifts and mindful of their needs, but we also want to offer them an opportunity to understand why prayer and worship is important to Catholics. Individuals should not feel compelled to respond to collective worship in a particular way. A wide range of responses should be possible including awareness, appreciation, respect, commitment and devotion.

Our prayer can take various forms. It is led by staff or students in class groups, form groups, Houses or formal assemblies, where we meet as a whole school or separately, as Seniors and Prep. The "Tutor Group Prayer Book", theme of the week biblical quote and other prayer resources exist to help with prayer for Assembly and for morning and end of the day prayer.

We come together to celebrate the Eucharist and for other non-sacramental liturgies. We encourage the active participation of all concerned and involve both staff and students in the preparation. All academic staff are expected to attend assemblies and other services.

Monitoring of prayer and worship:

- The Head of RE (Religious Education) will meet with a link governor and the Head Teacher at least once a year to evaluate whether the prayer and liturgy programme meets the needs of all students and whether students are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.
- Staff are supported through regular opportunities to participate in CPD in prayer and liturgy and have access to various resources, including books and a Form Prayer book.
- Monitoring and evaluation of prayer and worship takes place twice a year to ensure the school's provision meets the needs of all students. Monitoring takes the form of student voice (school council); staff voice (diocesan survey) and evaluations of assemblies. The link governor for Catholic life and Collective Worship is Rosemary Kaye (Chair of the Ethos Governor Committee)

Health and Safety:

- Battery operated candles are used in classrooms and the chapel for health and safety reasons.
- If candles are being used in the Chapel or for the celebration of Mass, staff or parent prayer, a risk assessment is in place to ensure the effective and safe provision of lit candles. Candles are extinguished as soon as practical and never left unattended. Any use of candles by students is supervised by an adult and appropriate instructions are given.
- Visits to places of worship are carried out in compliance with the Educational Visits policy, which includes thorough risk assessments.