



ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL
a minimis incipe

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

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"Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus"

"Our task then is to establish a School of Lord's Service" (Prologue to the Rule of St Benedict)

"That in all things God may be glorified" (1 Pet 4,11; cf. Rule of St Benedict, chapter 57)

MISSION STATEMENT

St Benedict's aims to be an outstanding coeducational Catholic school, offering an excellent all-round education and encouraging principled leadership. St Benedict's aspires to the highest possible academic standards. Pupils are motivated to be independent learners, inspired to be active participants in their learning, and achieve excellent academic results, thereby enabling them to secure places at top universities and colleges. St Benedict's seeks to recognise the gifts and talents of everyone in our community, where all can explore and develop their full potential from the smallest beginnings ("a minimis incipe"). High quality pastoral care and an excellent programme of co-curricular activities support personal development.

There are many opportunities for service and leadership, in the religious life of the school and in activities we offer – from the performing arts to outdoor pursuits to sport, among many others.

St Benedict's has at its core the Rule of St Benedict. This means that, as a Christian community, we work to:

- Show love and forgiveness
- Offer mutual service within the school and in the wider community
- Understand the importance of stability in relationships
- Have the humility to listen and show thoughtful obedience
- Live with the discipline of a daily routine with regular times for prayer and reflection
- Show care for those we live and work with, as well as a sense of stewardship of the environment

1. Our Charism and 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.” (Rt Rev. Marcus Stock (2012), **Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.**)*

This new liturgy policy is commensurate with *To Love You More Dearly* (Prayer and Liturgy Directory) approved by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, October 2023. The longstanding practice of the school is for worship and prayer to take place regularly in the charism of the Holy Rule of St Benedict. What follows encapsulates the approach developed by the monastic community over many years, which has been continued and improved following the establishment of the school as an independent charity.

It is a legal requirement that there be a daily ‘act of worship’ offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single ‘act of worship’ for all pupils, or separate ‘acts of worship’ in school groups. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer, and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

Parents will be informed their children are encouraged but not compelled to participate in ‘Worship’ and the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school will be emphasised.

2. A Catholic and Benedictine School

Guided by our Benedictine charism, our guiding principle is for prayer and liturgy to remain both Catholic and Benedictine. Within such a framework, which is intentionally universal and hospitable to all, every member of our community is included in opportunities for prayer and reflection. Additionally, missionary outreach and servant leadership are fruits of prayer and liturgy, inspiring service in our world.

3. Our Benedictine Patrimony

Our spirituality and charism as a school community is inseparable from our foundation as a Benedictine school. We are stewards and beneficiaries of centuries of Benedictine life and learning. We are guided most fundamentally by the witness and teaching of St Benedict and rely on the model of prayer and service provided by our house patrons. The names of the houses in the Junior School honour the witness of the saints of the Church in England and Wales: Bede, More, Gregory and Fisher. The names of the houses in the Senior School honour the Benedictine martyrs Ambrose Barlow, Thomas Pickering, George Gervase, and John Roberts.

Other aspects of our Benedictine patrimony are recognised in the names given to forms. In the Junior school, the prefix to forms includes names of the disciples of St Benedict, saints Maurus (M) and Placid (P), and the sister of St Benedict, St Scholastica (S). In the Senior school, the forms are prefixed with the names of the former Benedictine headmasters and teachers: Dom Sebastian Cave, Dom George Brown, Dom Bernard Orchard, Dom Dominic Young, Dom Bernard Green, and Dom Francis Rossiter.

A further recognition of Benedictine patrimony is found in the nomenclature used for particular parts of the site: the school dining room is called “the refectory,” the Sixth Form study area is called “the Scriptorium,” and the central thoroughfare is called “the Cloisters.”

4. St Benedict’s Rule: To Prefer Nothing to Christ

The Rule of St Benedict stipulates that the goal of the School of the Lord’s service is “to prefer nothing to Christ” (Rule of St Benedict, chapter 4). The person of Jesus Christ is central for St Benedict. Christ is found in the young and the old (chapter 71), in the sick (chapter 36), in the guest (chapter 53), in the abbot (chapter 2) and in the poor (chapter 37). It follows that Christ is at the centre of the school’s vision. Our vision remains evident in our encounter with Christ’s real presence in Word, Sacrament, and Service. That encounter with Christ is lived in our professional relationships as a learning community as colleagues and educators.

5. Responsibility

(a) Governance

The governors, 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 in the Chaplaincy that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

(b) Headmaster

The headmaster 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.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator (Lay Chaplain, Ordained Chaplain & RE Co-ordinator)

The Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator 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
- 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 headmaster 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. Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision:

Prayer and liturgy at St Benedict's School aim to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

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

All acts of prayer at St Benedict's School will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character and Benedictine charism
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise, and lead prayer times
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude, and family backgrounds to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

7. Planning, Content, and Celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons and liturgical calendar, the Benedictine calendar, Come and See, the Religious Education Directory, feast days, the curriculum, and significant dates (e.g. *CAFOD Family Fast Day*, and *Children's Mental Health Week*). Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations. The celebration of collective worship recognises the centrality of the Eucharist (Mass) as the "source and summit" of the Christian life and a variety of prayer styles appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

8. Resourcing

Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic and Benedictine school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources, including staff time, chaplaincy provision, 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 will be furnished and maintained as such and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season and Benedictine calendar.

Staff training and formation costs will be funded separately to ensure that all staff are able to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

9. Training and Formation

All new staff will be supported during induction and beyond, so that they fully understand the responsibility they carry within their individual role for leading prayer and liturgy in the school. Any individual training needs will be identified and addressed through training and formation. There will also be the opportunity for whole-staff professional development at least once a year, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

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

11. Review

The policy will be reviewed annually as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the Head of Religious Education, SMT, SET, and the Governors.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes, and faith backgrounds of pupils.
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy take account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the '*Directory for Masses with Children*'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and the Head to carry out their legal responsibilities regarding prayer and liturgy, including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise (e.g. through modelling different prayer styles planning, recording, monitoring, and evaluating)
- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing *Acts of Prayer and Liturgy* and providing feedback
- Informing the Head of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy communication
- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and the Head regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors, and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education re. professional development/ongoing formation
- Leading and organising in service training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back, and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading resources
- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy (including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, and posters etc)
- Budgeting efficiently

Appendix 2

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy in the Junior School is as below:

Day	Worship/ Liturgical Prayer	Time
Monday	<p>Assembly</p> <p>Led by E Flint (PSHE lead), R Nwaka (Catholic Life and Mission Lead) or R Simmons (Headmaster).</p> <p>The theme is linked to the school's theme of the week, Catholic Social teaching, and our motto, 'a minimis incipe.'</p>	8.45am
Tuesday	Class collective worship linked to the current affairs. How can we implement Catholic Social Teaching in relation to today's world. Pupil-prepared and led.	8.55am
Wednesday	<p>Mass PP2-F2 once a half term and on Days of Obligation.</p> <p>Class Collective Worship using the Wednesday Word, Key Stage Celebration worship, Mark 10 Mission and Ten Ten</p>	11.00am
Thursday	<p>Worship Assembly</p> <p>Children's achievements, offering their good deeds and work to God in a Collective act of worship. House points (KS2), Dojo Points (KS1) and <i>Star of the Week</i> (EYFS & KS1) awards and Excellence and Endeavour awards. Members of the school community are invited to join the celebration. EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2 are alternate weeks. Where stages do not have celebration worship, pupils will participate in the Collective Worship.</p>	12.55am
Friday	<p>Pupil-led Key Stage/ whole school assemblies OR pupil-led class liturgical prayer.</p> <p>Pupil led worship led by classes on a rota basis for each key stage. Where there is no assembly worship will happen in class. Worship is based on the theme of the week or key liturgical themes (e.g. Crowning of Our Lady).</p>	8.45am

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

Adults within the school will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age as per the progression document in Appendix 2.

Liturgical Prayer at St Benedict's Junior is planned to follow a structure with reference to the Church' seasons, the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, and significant dates in the curriculum. When planning for Liturgical Prayer, both staff and pupils have an active part and will take the following into consideration:

- The four parts: Gather, Word (Lectio), Response (meditatio / Contemplatio), and Mission (oratio)
- Participation of others
- Religious Education themes
- Liturgical themes
- Celebrations, achievements, and experiences of others
- The 'think, see, hear and do' approach.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy for each class is recorded in the *year group folders* on the *OneDrive* as well as the children's Collective Worship Journey books.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is evaluated and recorded on the Liturgical Prayer Planning Sheet. Classes evaluate their Liturgical Prayer experience at the end of each term. Findings – strengths and areas to improve – are noted and fed back to staff to work on with their classes in the forthcoming term.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

Resources

The school has a wide range of resources which support the delivery of the Prayer and Liturgy calendar. These are in classrooms and the Religious Education store on the top floor of the Orchard Dene.

Eucharist celebrations form an especially important part of our Celebration of the Word. Opportunities for children to participate are maximised and parents and other members of the community and Parish community are encouraged to attend. The celebrations will take the following forms:

- Whole school & Key Stage Masses in church
- Year group in school
- Whole school masses for celebrations such as Saints Days and Holy Days of Obligation

Mini Vinnies

At St Benedict's Junior School, we have a Team made up of Key Stage 2 pupils. The Mini Vinnies are encouraged to be involved in:

- Planning and leading liturgical prayer across the school, including for the whole school and key stages, as well as in classes.
- Evaluating Liturgical Prayer
- Interviewing pupils
- Auditing Liturgical Prayer and resources

The Learning Environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment.'

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference *Come and See* topics (Years 5-6) and the RED (EYFS – Year 4).

St Benedict's Junior School – CELEBRATION OF THE WORD AND PRAYER PROGRESSION

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP SKILLS PROGRESSION		PRAYER PROGRESSION
YEAR	What we want the children to be able to do to plan, deliver, and evaluate acts of worship:	
EYFS	<p>Children to use Collective Worship pro forma and resources to plan and lead liturgies, facilitated and supported by an adult. All children to have opportunity to plan and lead a liturgy by the summer term.</p> <p>Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on pro forma.</p> <p>Teacher to explicitly model liturgy to children a least once a term.</p> <p>Advent/Lent Term – whole class planning Pentecost Term – group planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select appropriate colour cloth for the liturgical time of the year • Select crucifix, open Bible, lit candle and begin to explain why • Select other appropriate artefacts to match the theme • Participate in preparing the focal area with these items • Make the sign of the cross • Put their hands together ready to pray • Know that the sign of the cross is a special sign and that it marks the beginning and the end of the liturgy • With support and from a choice, select how to 'Gather' etc • Teacher selects appropriate scripture passage and reads, explaining how it links to the theme • Offer simple spontaneous prayers, with support • Use appropriate responses as modelled by the teacher, explaining how the activity response links to the theme • Take part in appropriate reflection as supported by staff • Take part in silent prayer times/meditation up to one minute • Teacher articulates the stages within the liturgy • Teacher guides children to evaluate the liturgy • Children can begin to say how the liturgy makes them feel 	<p>By the end of the year, as well as the Sign of the Cross, children are encouraged through Teacher-modelling to generate their own spontaneous 'sorry,' 'asking,' and 'thank you' prayers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Prayer • Lunchtime Prayer • End of the Day Prayer

<p>KS1</p>	<p>Children to use Collective Worship pro forma and resources to plan and lead liturgies, facilitated by adult.</p> <p>Children to plan and prepare focal point for according to liturgical season/<i>RED</i> topic. Beginning of Yr1 onwards, all children to plan liturgies in groups, facilitated by an Adult.</p> <p>Yr2 to generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy.</p> <p>Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on pro forma.</p> <p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher models the links between sections of the liturgy, commenting on what is happening next and why, giving more detail than EYFS as to how this links • Children more confident in spontaneous prayer • Children know appropriate responses • Children can respond to the Gospel appropriately making the sign of the cross on the forehead, lips and heart and begin to explain why • With support, children can begin to select an appropriate Bible story – the teacher to explain / help the children; and explain why the scripture choice links with the theme • Take part in appropriate reflection as suggested by the children – the teacher to explain / help the children explain why/how the activity links with the theme • Take part in silent prayer time/meditation up to 2 minutes • Takes part in evaluation as guided by the teacher • Children can say how the liturgy makes them feel, what they enjoy, and what they can improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Prayer • Morning Prayer • Lunchtime Prayers • End of the Day Prayer <p>See Prayers per Key Stage Guide (Appendix 3)</p> <p>Learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Father, and Hail Mary • Range of spontaneous ‘sorry,’ ‘asking,’ and ‘thank you’ prayers
<p>LKS2</p>	<p>Yr3 to generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy and plan their own mission for children to complete the liturgy.</p> <p>Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on pro forma.</p> <p>Yr4 – Children to generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy, a response to the word and plan their own mission for children to complete the liturgy.</p> <p>Children to use online resource to support planning of class liturgies from Pentecost Term (if suitable).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Prayer • Morning Prayer • Lunchtime Prayers • End of the Day Prayer • Our Father • Hail Mary <p>Learn:</p> <p>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</p> <p>To be used in liturgies after ‘Sorry’ Prayers:</p>

	<p>Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on pro forma.</p> <p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher supports the children to begin to articulate and explain the links between the stages of the liturgy so that it flows appropriately and the theme follows through from beginning to end • Children can select a Bible story and can begin to explain why and how it links to the theme. Adult to support children’s selection of appropriate Bible story and support them where needed in explaining how it links with the theme • With support, children can plan a ‘response’ or reflection appropriate to the theme of the liturgy • Children are confident in spontaneous prayers • Children can articulate how they can live out the mission • Take part in silent prayer/ meditation for up to 3 minutes • Children can evaluate the liturgy with greater confidence and some independence as supported by staff • Children can articulate how the liturgy makes them feel and give appropriate evaluations 	<p>Learn: ‘Sorry’ Prayer – Oh my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins. For not loving others and not loving you. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.</p> <p>Learn: Guardian Angel Prayer - Angel of God my guardian dear, to whom God’s love commits me here. Ever this night/day be at my side. To light, to guard, to rule and guide. Amen.</p> <p>Range of spontaneous ‘sorry,’ ‘asking,’ and ‘thank you’ prayers</p>
UKS2	<p>Children to use online resource to select a reading linked to the theme provided on liturgical calendar. Pupils to then find the passage in Bible to add to their prayer focus.</p> <p>Children to generate their own gather, response, word, and mission according to the theme. They may use songs, actions, prayers, classroom resources within the liturgy. We encourage active participants throughout.</p> <p>This is overseen by an adult, and the children are guided only when necessary.</p> <p>Evaluation is recorded on pro forma following whole class discussion. Children are encouraged to give reasons for their responses and recommendations.</p> <p>As above plus:</p>	<p>As LKS2 plus:</p> <p>Guardian Angel Prayer: Angel of God my guardian dear, to whom God’s love commits me here. Ever this night/day be at my side. To light, to guard, to rule and guide. Amen.</p> <p>Eternal Rest: Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May s/he/they rest in peace. Amen.</p> <p>Range of spontaneous ‘sorry,’ ‘asking,’ and ‘thank you’ prayers</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children can independently plan and prepare all aspects of the liturgy • They explain confidently why prayers, scripture, responses have been chosen and how these responses link with the theme; and weave these explanations into the liturgy • Adult to support children's selection of a more diverse range of scripture passages linked to theme to enable their repertoire to extend. • Spontaneous prayers are confident • Children can confidently say how the mission links to the theme and its choice is appropriate • Children can take part in silent prayer/meditation for up to 4 minutes • Children can confidently articulate the impact that the liturgy has on them and suggest and independently follow through the outcomes of the evaluations • The liturgy is overseen by the adult, guided only when necessary, with minimal teacher talk and support throughout 	<p>Learn <i>The Angelus</i> as part of lunchtime prayers: The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among 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.</p> <p>Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word.</p> <p>Hail Mary...</p> <p>And the Word was made Flesh: And dwelt among us.</p> <p>Hail Mary...</p> <p>Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.</p> <p>Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.</p>
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Appendix 3

“First of all, every time you begin a good work, you must pray to God most earnestly to bring it to perfection” (Prologue to the Rule of St Benedict)

The timetable for prayer and liturgy in the Senior school includes:

Daily Prayer

The discipline of daily prayer is an important part of the school’s mission. The provision of daily prayer includes a time for form prayer at registration in the morning and afternoon and then finally at dismissal. The prayers include the formal prayers provided in the student planner, which are derived from the monastic offices of Terce, Sext and None. The provision allows for more creative and informal prayers that are designed by the pupils.

Assembly Prayer

Prayers are integral to the meetings of divisions (Years) at assemblies. Every assembly begins with prayer. The fundamental structure to assembly prayer is threefold: Scripture (*Lectio*), Reflection (*Meditatio*), and Prayer (*Oratio*). Additions e.g. a life/ news story, or connection of the curriculum to the structure should be made to reflect the age group of the assembly. Prayers should be pupil-led with resources given enable leadership of the pupils in the design of the worship. A rota organises, which form in the division, is responsible for leading the prayers on a weekly basis.

Whole School Assembly

Whole School Assembly takes place in the Abbey Church every Wednesday before lunch. All pupils and staff are expected to attend. Those of other faiths and none are expected to participate as appropriate. For all, the Abbey Church is recognised as a sacred space for prayer. To help everyone pray peacefully, there is an expectation for everyone to keep quiet from the moment they enter the Church. It is also expected that upon entering the Abbey Church, each person will typically:

- Take holy water and make the sign of the cross.
- Either genuflect (kneel briefly on one knee) or bow to the altar to show reverence.

Assembly is a joyful celebration of our school community. To show unity and respect, there is an expectation for everyone to:

- Be attentive to the prayers and reflection provided by the pupils leading the assembly
- Actively join in the prayers and hymns using the Mass book.
- Speak and sing clearly and confidently.

Whole School Assembly begins with prayer, which follows the threefold structure of *lectio*, *meditatio*, and *oratio*. A rota organises the pupils to lead the prayers from each division. The prayers will conclude with a hymn from the Mass book.

School officials join the Head in sitting on the sanctuary area of the Abbey Church but in such a way as to not obscure the altar and ensure reverence towards the sacred space. Pupils are seated down the nave with their form. Senior decans linked to the forms sit at the end of the rows with their form.

The Eucharist (the Mass): “the source and summit of the Christian life”

The celebration of the Eucharist is central to the prayer and liturgy of the school. It is given priority over all other forms of prayer and occupies a central place in the life of the school. The celebration of the Eucharist permeates across the life of the school in the following notable ways.

Joint Junior and Senior School

The celebration of the school’s patronal feast day of our holy father, St Benedict, is marked by a Mass with both the Junior and Senior school. The Mass is customarily celebrated by the local bishop of the diocese or a member of the Benedictine confederation. The Mass marks the beginning of the school’s celebration of its Patronal feast day and is celebrated as a Pontifical Mass.

Whole School

The celebration of the Eucharist occurs with the whole school regularly through the school year but always:

- At the beginning of the Academic Year to mark the beginning of the new school year
- At the beginning of each term in the Lent and Trinity terms
- On holydays of obligation that fall on a school day
- At the end of the school year
- At other times of school and national importance
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Divisional (Year Group)

Each division (year) has a Mass every term to celebrate their progression in the school year. The Mass is celebrated in the Abbey Church. The theme of the Mass is based on the liturgical calendar and the pastoral needs of the division in consultation with the division head and lay chaplain. Planning for the Mass includes training for readers, servers, and musicians.

Voluntary (Weekly)

Mass is celebrated each Friday before school in the Sacred Heart Chapel. The Mass is voluntary and open to all members of the school community: pupils and staff. The Mass is often celebrated for the intention of pupils and staff. Intentions are announced if requested.

The Servers’ Guild of St Stephen

The pupils are invited to be servers at Mass. After some training, they enrol in the Guild of St Stephen.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

The sacrament of reconciliation (confession) is available every Friday after Mass upon request. In the seasons of Advent and Lent, specific times for Reconciliation are advertised in the Chaplaincy.

Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction

The Chapel provides a space for private prayer. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle. At certain points in the year, there is also the opportunity for Eucharistic adoration and benediction.