

A Guide to Child Led Liturgy

The Blessed Christopher Wharton
Catholic Academy Trust



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The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust

Introduction

Children have a valuable role to play in liturgy right from the time that they first begin to know what it means to pray and respond to God and God's creation.

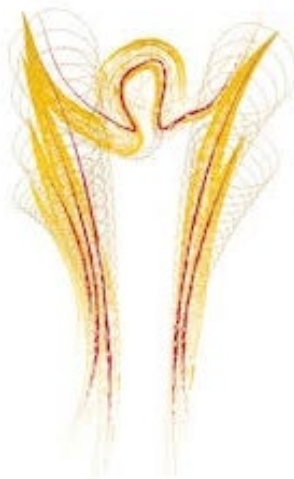
This role, however, differs from the beginning of primary school to the end. What follows is a guide for each child's faith journey through primary school. However, as in all areas in school life, some children will be in advance of their year group where some will still be functioning at an earlier stage.

All children in school also have a role to play in teacher led liturgy, which ranges from small scale worship in the class room to whole school liturgy including parents and parishioners. This document, however, is concerned with what they do to lead and direct the prayer themselves.

Each year builds on the previous year so expectations are not repeated each year. Instead it is assumed that what they can do in one year e.g. in setting up the focus in Year 2 will also be an expectation in the following year unless otherwise stated.

All classes will need to have a box of resources from which the children will choose when setting up the focus for prayer time. What goes in these boxes will vary from year to year to enable progression for the children. Suggestions for the contents are specified in the appendix at the end.

Where it is suggested that year groups lead whole liturgies or prayer time, the expectation would be that sufficient planning and preparation time is given. There is no stipulation for particular planning formats/ language for parts of the worship, schools should use their own preference for planning sheets. However, there are some examples in the appendix which could be used. Also all of the expectations for the year group would not need to be present in every liturgy. The expectations should, however, be covered during the year.



Foundation Stage and Key Stage One

During Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, all leadership, however small, will lay the foundations for leading on a larger scale in Key Stage 2.

The expectation for these younger children is that all of the following will relate to their own class and class prayer time.



NURSERY and FOUNDATION STAGE

Children are just beginning their journey through primary school and have limited understanding and knowledge of their faith at this point in their school life. They can, however, begin to take a very simple part in their own class prayer time which will lay the foundations for leadership as they progress through school.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children experience a regular, simple structure for collective worship
- Children begin to name the elements of the liturgical focus which is present in their classroom such as; Bible, candle, crucifix etc
- Children can choose people and things they want to pray for at appropriate times in the liturgy or class prayer time.
- Children can begin to place items on the liturgical focus under the direction of an adult. These could include things they have brought in themselves, items from a story sack relevant to the Gospel.

Faith practise:

- Make and say the sign of the cross
- Say our morning prayer
- Recognise Jesus on the cross
- Recognise Mary from a painting and know who she is
- Join in a simple formal prayer and say thank you to God
- Share the sign of peace
- Talk about the Christmas and Easter stories
- Bow at the name of Jesus
- Begin to recognise the 'Our Father', 'Hail Mary' and the prayers of the Rosary
- Prayer response: bidding prayer response



YEAR ONE

Children are now becoming more religiously literate and will be able to take a slightly more active part in the choices that are made in prayer time, thus laying further foundations for leadership as they progress.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children recognise and can name the elements of the liturgical focus e.g. crucifix, candle, Bible
- Children will be able to say why these are appropriate for inclusion (possibly also suggesting what is not appropriate)
- Children should be able to finish a prayer, given the first part e.g. Thank you, God, for ...
- Children should be able to help set up the focus for prayer using given elements and direction e.g. "Please place the crucifix and Bible..."
- Children should be able to bring suitable elements to add to the focus at specific times of the year, under the guidance of the teacher. (This will help them to begin to appreciate the liturgical year so, e.g. they could bring flowers at Easter to represent new life)

Faith practise:

- Say the school's daily prayers
- Recognise Mary from a painting and know who she is
- Retell the Christmas and Easter stories
- Say sorry to God
- Use my own words to pray for others
- Sit quietly and think about Jesus
- Recognise the 'Our Father', 'Hail Mary' and the Rosary
- Prayer response: 1st reading response, Gospel reading response



YEAR TWO

As they approach the end of a key stage, the children will be developing a deeper understanding of their faith and what is and is not appropriate during prayer time. They will be familiar with leadership roles in the classroom such as monitor duties and will easily transfer these to prayer time and liturgy. A box of items to use for the prayer focus will now need to be available for the children. These should just include the elements relevant to that month's/season's liturgical theme so that they do not have to choose between too many things.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children will be able to set up the focus for class prayer, choosing items from a given set of resources, and be able to explain why they have chosen each item.
- Children will be able to write their own simple prayers for inclusion in the liturgy. These will be written to a formula and will encompass prayers of intercession, praise, thanks and regret.
- Occasionally children may lead by reading a simple text or by choosing an appropriate hymn with guidance.

Faith practise:

- Show you how to make the sign of the cross
- Lead class prayers
- Know and say a morning and evening prayer
- Say simple grace before and after meals
- Know how to join in with the bidding prayers
- Ask known saints to pray for us (e.g. school saint, St George, St Teresa, St Blaise)
- Know when to genuflect
- Begin to join in with saying 'The Our Father', 'The Hail Mary' and the Rosary'
- Recognise the 'Glory Be' prayer



Lower Key Stage Two

The children, through their involvement in class prayer time in the lower key stages, will now have some experience of the things that leaders of liturgy need to do. During years three and four, the children will build on this and, by the end of year 4, should be able to plan and lead a liturgy or prayer time for their own class.



YEAR THREE

As children enter the Key Stage 2 phase of their primary years, they will be increasing in confidence and experience, having been part of many liturgies and different forms of prayer in Key Stage One. Many of them will be preparing to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Expectations are in addition to what is expected at the end of Key Stage One.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children will be able to write and read their own prayers in different liturgies with appropriate guidance from the teacher.
- Children will be able to read the readings during different liturgies.
- Children choose a 'gather' (or 'welcome') and a 'going forth' (or 'witness')
- Children can choose from a selection of readings provided for the 'Word'

Faith practise:

- Say the 'Hail Mary', 'Our Father' and the 'Glory Be'
- Say the 'Act of Sorrow'
- Participate in the Rosary correctly
- Pray for people who have died
- Know and join in with some of the responses at Mass, e.g. 'I confess'
- Take part in the Gospel procession
- Sign my forehead, lips and heart to greet the Gospel
- Know why I must genuflect
- Use holy water properly



YEAR FOUR

By the end of Year 4 children should be much more confident in their understanding of what constitutes prayer time and simple liturgy. By this stage in their school life they need to be laying the foundations for leading whole school liturgy which is the expectation by the end of Key Stage Two. For this reason they should, by the end of Year 4, be able to plan and lead a simple prayer time or liturgy for their own class. Teacher support is essential but the main elements of the liturgy will be organised and led by the children.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children should be able to lead their own class liturgy with appropriate support from an adult or faith leader - e.g. they may need to be provided with links within the liturgy.
- Children should be able to set up an appropriate focus
- Children should be able to choose appropriate hymns or music from a selection
- Children should be able to choose appropriate readings to suit a given theme with some guidance.
- Children should begin to develop skills in the breaking of the Word e.g. through reflection, drama, art, explanation or dance

Faith practise:

- Take part in periods of quiet stillness and thought
- Know that Jesus is truly present in Holy Communion
- Receive Jesus with respect (if sacrament made)
- Respond to simple psalm prayers and blessings
- Write own bidding prayers
- Begin to lead the prayer of the Rosary with others
- Organise a simple Act of Class Worship
- Tell you the Church's Liturgical Seasons
- Prayer responses: Recognise and join in with many of the responses in Mass, e.g. Eucharistic Prayers; The Sanctus, Orationes, Lamb of God, The Mystery of Faith etc



Upper Key Stage Two

As children approach the end of their primary school life, they will be well equipped to start planning and leading liturgy on a wider scale. They should be able to choose all of the elements that are appropriate to different liturgies and put them together to create worship for children other than their classmates.



YEAR FIVE

In Year 5 children should build on the experience of planning and leading liturgy and prayer time for their own class and begin to create liturgy suitable for another class. Teacher support will still be an element in this as guidance will be needed to ensure that all of the elements are appropriate to the theme and the audience but, if the children have had the experience of developing their leadership skills throughout the school, then planning and leading for others is the next step.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children should be able to plan and lead a liturgy appropriate to another class, with guidance where necessary.
- Children should be able to select from a range of resources which relate to the whole liturgical year to set up an appropriate focus for a particular theme. Some guidance should be offered.
- Children should be able to select elements that promote a spiritual atmosphere e.g. music at the beginning and end of a liturgy.
- Children should be able to choose a theme and appropriate readings with guidance where needed.
- Children should be able to choose hymns appropriate to the theme from a wider selection.
- Children should begin to explore creative elements within liturgy e.g. thoughts for going forth, planting seeds to represent new life, pouring water to signify forgiveness and cleansing etc.
- Children should continue to develop skills in the breaking of the Word using a wider range of ideas e.g. reflection, poetry, dance, drama, art.

Faith practise:

- Know the psalms in Mass come from the Old Testament
- Share in the people's prayers and responses in the Mass
- Organise class Acts of Worship
- Say what Catholics believe based on their Baptismal Vows
- Have an understanding of the Holy Rosary, lead prayers and share in its mysteries
- Prayer responses: Gloria, Apostles' Creed



YEAR SIX

By the time they are in Year 6 children should be able to plan and lead a key stage act of worship. Some children will lead whole school prayer time or liturgy. This will involve choosing all of the appropriate elements and organising the liturgy from beginning to end and so, an expectation is that they understand the components of liturgy. They may wish to ask for adult support or for an adult to play a part in the liturgy at some point, however. This would be part of their planning.

Expectations at this stage

Collective worship:

- Children should understand and be able to include the main components of a liturgy.
- Choose a theme appropriate to the liturgical year
- Select and set up an appropriate focus
- Use correct liturgical vocabulary where necessary
- Choose appropriate readings suited to their theme
- Choose appropriate hymns suited to their theme
- Include traditional prayers as well as their own prayers.
- Use a variety of prayer types such as meditation, liturgical dance and music.
- Select and use different creative elements within their liturgy e.g. stones during Lent, flowers or seeds at Easter.
- Children should be more confident in their ability to explain or reflect on the Word so that it is relevant to their audience.

Faith practise:

- Organise, plan and deliver key stage and whole school acts of worship
- Lead key stage and whole school prayers of the Rosary
- Have an understanding of the Psalms from the Old Testament
- To recognise the fruits of the Spirit in their and others' lives
- Prayer responses: Children know all Mass responses



APPENDIX 1

Resource box for setting up focus

All boxes should include the following basic items

- Crucifix
- Candle (battery operated)
- Drapes (seasonal)
- Bible
- Prayer book
- Pebbles/shells

These can then be added to with items suited to the liturgical year/time of year such as

September - nature elements to represent harvest

October - statue of Mary or rosary to remember Our Lady

November - book of remembrance, poppy

December - Advent promises or Advent promise card (Today we promise to... children decide each day what they wish to do.) The Advent Wreath will be a permanent feature throughout December, Nativity set

January - something to represent parish links or links to Cafod or global awareness. Alternatively you could choose something to represent gift to link with the Epiphany

February and March - Lenten elements such as stones, crosses, water, ashes, twigs or seeds

April - Items to celebrate Easter - flowers, plants, Easter gardens, crucifix showing resurrected Christ

May - statue of Mary or rosary to remember Our Lady

June - elements suited to Pentecost such as flames, the gifts of the Spirit on cards, images of doves.

July - Items reflective of the school year or elements to represent success or achievement during the year.

Individual schools may have themed weeks during the academic year and these could also be incorporated into the boxes. Also, images, icons, statues to represent the school's patron saint.

APPENDIX 2

Examples of Collective Worship planning sheets:

Theme:	
Focus/ Focal point- worship	
Who is leading it / Taking part	
Stage of Worship	What are you going to do?
Gathering - welcome and introduction	
Word of God	
Explaining the word: (Breaking the word open)	
Response:	
Prayer/Sending out	

Collective Worship Planning ~ Children

Welcome /Gathering

- What music might you play?
- How will you arrange the children?
- Will you light a candle?
- Can you find an appropriate picture artefact?



Respond

- How will you help your friends to reflect on what they have read?
- Will you say prayers that need a response?
- Who will lead the prayers?

Listen

- Who will read
- What will you read:-
Scripture / Prayer / Psalm Poet
Hymn
- Will you act out the reading.
- Will you use a picture or power point to illustrate the reading.



Go Forth

- What do you want your friends to take away from this Act of Worship to remember its message?



Remember ~ enjoy preparing and leading the worship.

Suggested Themes

Here are some suggestions however you will probably have many of your own.

Things to think about when you are choosing your theme:-

Has there been a big event in the liturgical year e..g. Lent, Advent, a special saints day?

Has something happened at school you would like to celebrate?

Does someone particularly need our prayers?

General Themes:-

Stories, Poems etc from the New Testament; Forgiveness;
Love; Happiness; Honesty; Truth; Gratitude
(Thankfulness); Justice; Anti-bullying; Kindness; Joy; Healing; Creation; Je-
sus the Teacher; Saints; Gifts; Choices; Fairness; Family; Choices; Mary;
Joseph.



Peace

Liturgical Year (Church Calendar):-

Advent ~ Visitation; Annunciation; Preparing for Jesus; John the Baptist; Getting Ready;

Lent ~ Ash Wednesday; Forgiveness; Reconciliation Temptation.





Holy Week ~ Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday.

Collective Worship Planning Sheet ~ Children

Names _____ y _____

What will you put on the focus table/altar? _____

Where _____ Date of Worship _____

<p>Welcome /Gathering</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	<p>Listen</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>Respond</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	<p>Go Forth</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •

Remember ~ enjoy preparing and leading the worship.

APPENDIX 3

The following cards can be used as a resource to support children's independence in planning a collective worship, or, for the younger children, choosing elements to include. It is useful if each type is photocopied onto a different coloured paper, e.g. 'Gather' cards on yellow paper, 'Mission' on green etc. In this way, cards do not become mixed up and children are clear as to which liturgical element they can support. Younger children would benefit from only having a limited amount to choose from. (These are based on resources originally from the Shrewsbury diocese).



EYFS/KS1 Welcome/Gather - how we come together.

Make the sign of the cross.



Bible

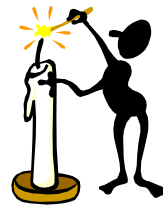


Sing 'Alleluia!'

Play music, sit in a circle.



Light a candle.



Hold a pebble



**Ring the bells until everyone
is seated in a circle ready to
pray.**



Be still.



Make a sign of the cross



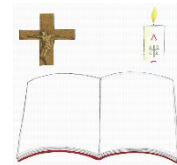
KS2 Welcome/ Gather - how we come together.

Make the sign of the cross.



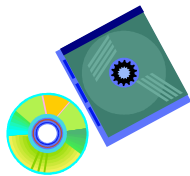
**In the name of the Father,
and of the Son and of the
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

**Place our special book, the
Bible, in a central position
where everyone can see**



**Join hands in a circle
around the Bible and sing
'Alleluia!'**

**Play reflective music as you
gather in a circle.**



**Sing 'Come and join the
circle' as you make a
circle.**

**(from the CD by Bernadette Farrell:
Share the Light)**

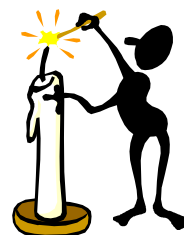


**Sing 'God made me as I am'
as you make a circle.**

**(from the CD by Bernadette Farrell:
Share the Light)**



**Sit in a circle, light a
candle and remember that
Jesus is the light of the
world.**



Repeat 'Help me to be a child of the light' as you gather in a circle.



Sit in a circle in silence and think about your breathing.



**Breathe in God's peace.
Breathe out any worries.
Be still inside and out.**

Pick up an object (a pebble, shell, glass bead, candle, shape) and place it around a candle before silently finding a space in the circle.



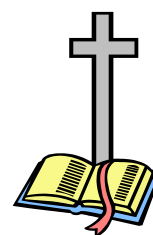
Ring the bells until everyone is seated in a circle ready to pray.



Make the sign of the cross on the forehead, lips and heart - 'May Jesus be in my mind, on my lips and in my heart'.



Sing Alleluia and pass the Bible reverently around the circle.



Pass around a bowl of water,
dip in your fingers and make
the sign of the cross.



Use your thumb to make
the sign of the cross on
the forehead of the
person sitting next to you.



Pass around a symbol or
object and remember that
Jesus is with us and that we
all belong to God's family.

Choose:

- A red poppy
- An autumn leaf
- A shell
- A pebble
- A candle
- A cross

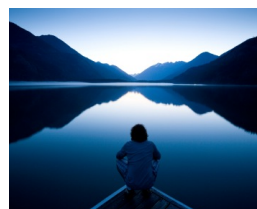


Sit quietly in an outside
space and remember how
beautiful God's creation
is.



Sing a simple Taize song until
everyone is sitting in the circle
and ready to begin.

Be still.



The quieter you become
the more you will hear.

**Make a fist of friendship -
focus on one hand. Imagine
each finger is a person in
your life**

1. a friend you are proud to have
2. a person who needs your friendship
3. a person you find difficult
4. a person who needs your prayers.

Think about each person and curl your fingers up, holding them with your thumb.



Place your fist against your heart as you listen to God's Word.

Place both hands together like a bowl. In your mind place into the bowl a memory that is sad or scary.

Blow on your hands to blow the memory away.



Get ready to listen to the Word of God, knowing that God is always our friend.

**Breathe in and in your mind say 'Father, Son, Spirit'
Hold your breath and say 'Father, Son, Spirit'
Breathe out slowly and say 'Father, Son, Spirit'
Repeat.**



**Light a candle and say:
'This is Jesus the light of the World'**



Watch the flickering flame and feel the presence of Jesus as you listen to God's Word.

EYFS/KS1 Witness/Mission/Going Forth - Here children come to reflect on what they would like to hold on to, to understand and express how faith is lived out in the school community, at home, in the parish, the local and wider community. They identify ways of applying faith to life.

Make a promise to follow the message of Jesus.



Shake hands



Find a few moments in the day to say thank you to God.



Say a prayer



Show love



Care for God's world by picking up a piece of litter



KS2 Witness/Mission/Going Forth - Here children come to reflect on what they would like to hold on to, to understand and express how faith is lived out in the school community, at home, in the parish, the local and wider community. They identify ways of applying faith to life.

Make a promise to follow the message of Jesus.



Shake hands



Find a few moments in the day to say thank you to God.



During the day, find a quiet place and say a prayer for someone in need.



Tell your mum/dad you love her/him.



Care for God's world by picking up a piece of litter



Greet someone with a smile.



Do something helpful at home.



Create a postcard that reflects what you have heard today and take it home to share with your family.



Remember before you go to sleep to thank God for your day and say sorry for the times you have not lived out his message.



Tell someone in another class what you have prayed about today.



Is there someone whom you need to forgive?

How could you show that person that you have forgiven them?



Invite someone who is lonely to play with your at playtime or lunchtime.



Remember to use good manners all day!



Say please and thank you!

**Take a few moments during
the day to say a quiet
prayer in your classroom
prayer area.**



**Be an example of Jesus
today - help someone in
need, share with someone,
be kind and patient, look
after our world.**



Worship/reflect/response to the Word

Note to teachers:

Remember that this is a special time to respond to the Word of God in prayer. Make sure that children are given quiet time to internalise the message and to respond within. If practical, consider using a symbolic action to express or accompany a prayerful response. Creative movement helps children to know that there are many ways to express praise, joy, sorrow, thanks, sadness, love.

Drop a pebble in a bowl of water remembering the important message of God's Word that you have just heard and saying a silent prayer in your heart.



Reflect on the Word you have heard and write a prayer on a cut -out leaf in response to it. Share your prayer with the class and make a prayer tree.



Think of an important phrase in the Word you have heard and repeat it as a mantra.



Together, pray a litany of thanks to God in response to the Word you have listened to.



Reflect on the Word you have heard and say a spontaneous prayer by passing around a heart/

**Listen to some reflective music and place the 'Word' you have just listened to in the centre of the circle.
Use collage materials/flowers/glass beads to**

**stone/ pebble/ shell/
candle.**



**surround the Word with
decoration.**

**Say a prayer to
thank
God for his
Word.**

**Pray silently to God about
what you feel and what
ideas you have after
hearing the Word.**



**Reflect on the Word you
have heard and pray quietly
in your hearts, thanking and
praising God for the many
gifts he has given us.**



**Think about the times
when you have forgotten
to talk to God - ask God
for forgiveness and help.**



Pray for the needs of others.

