



**Prayer and Liturgy at St Joseph's RC Primary School  
Encountering God during Lent and Easter  
In the Year of Prayer 2024  
Report to the Governing Body – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



## **Introduction**

In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year “Pilgrims of Hope”, 2024 has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. He asks us all to join in a great “symphony” of prayer, “to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him.”

**“Prayer unites us; it makes us brothers and sisters.**

**It is in prayer that our hearts find the strength not to be cold and insensitive in the face of injustice.**

**In prayer, God keeps calling us, opening our hearts to charity. ”**

***Pope Francis***

At St Joseph's RC Primary School, we have been exploring ways that we open our hearts and minds to encountering God through prayer, liturgy, song and art.

During the Seasons of Lent and Easter, we have introduced pupils and our families to a variety of ways in which we can become closer to God, asking God to guide and direct us on our journey through faith, love and life with Him.

## **Aims**

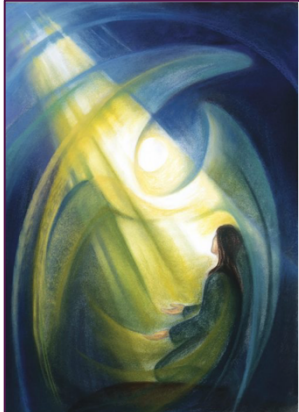
Prayer and Liturgy at St Joseph's RC Primary School aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff to:

- contemplate something of the mystery of God;
- reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- understand that life involves choices of belief, attitude and behaviour;
- experience a sense of awe, wonder and mystery;
- explore their own beliefs;
- respond to and celebrate the meaning, purpose and value of life;
- grow in liturgical understanding and development;
- deepen and widen a child's emotional response;
- develop a sense of self-worth and the value of others;
- reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;
- contribute to a sense of unity and community;
- participate fully; and
- enrich religious experience.

## Encountering God during Lent and Easter

### The Angelus and Regina Caeli

During Lent, all pupils said the Angelus at the start of each day and during Easter, they said the Regina Caeli. The Angelus recalls the Incarnation when the Word was made flesh and lived among us. The Angelus was used as part of classroom prayer and in whole school liturgies. The Regina Caeli is an antiphon addressed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is said between Easter Sunday and Pentecost.



**The Angelus**

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.  
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

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.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary:  
V. And the Word was made flesh.  
R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary:  
V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.  
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

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.


**Regina Caeli**

V. Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.  
R. For He whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.

V. Has risen, as he said, alleluia.  
R. Pray for us to God, alleluia.


V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.  
R. For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

Let us pray. O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord.  
R/. Amen.



### Spontaneous Prayer

Spontaneous Prayer is an unplanned prayer where children say a short prayer in the moment. They pray within a theme, or it is more open. The prayer can be silent or out loud. Prayers can also be written down and added to a class prayer journal. To support our pupils with spontaneous prayer, we prepared simple structures to guide the children based on whether they would like to say: 'Thank you', 'Sorry', ask for help or to praise God.



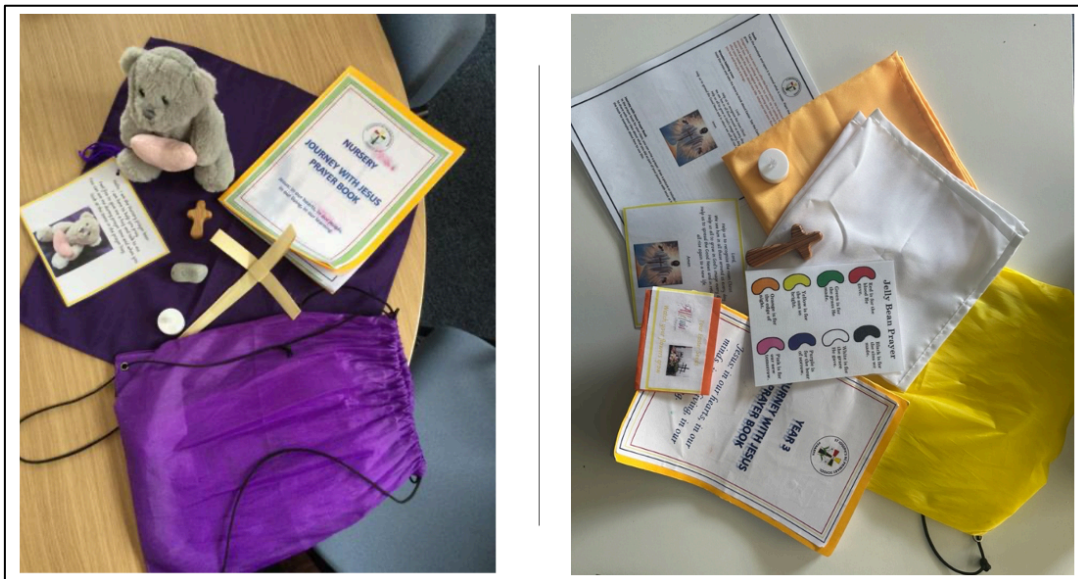
**Spontaneous Prayer**

Light a candle  
Join our hands  
Make the sign of the cross  
Play reflective music  
Ask the child to stand  
Repeat each line after the child.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praise God</li> <li>• Say silently in your hearts what you have done wrong</li> <li>• Say you are sorry</li> <li>• Ask for forgiveness</li> <li>• Promise to make a fresh start</li> <li>• Thank God for his love</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank God for his love</li> <li>• Say how you feel</li> <li>• Say what you need</li> <li>• Ask for God's help</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell God he is wonderful</li> <li>• Tell God what he has done for you</li> <li>• Thank him for what he has given you</li> <li>• Tell him you love him</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praise God</li> <li>• Say sorry to him</li> <li>• Ask him for his help</li> <li>• Make him a promise</li> <li>• Thank him for his love</li> </ul>

## Prayer Bags

During Lent and Easter, we sent home Prayer Bags. The pupils take the Prayer Bag home to their families for two nights to pray with. The next day the bag then gets passed on to another family. There are several items in each Prayer Bag with a list of contents provided on the front of a 'Journey with Jesus' Class Prayer Book. The 'Journey with Jesus' Class Prayer Book provides an opportunity for families to add their own prayers, pictures or photographs, which is a lovely record of prayer at home. We hope that families enjoy the opportunity to spend time praying together as a family.



## St Richard Gwyn Cluster Holy Week Service, 'Faithfilled and Hopeful'

During Lent, our pupils joined with St Helen's RC Primary School, Barry and St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School to remember the events of Holy Week. Our pupils led the events of Palm Sunday and the Resurrection excellently, with reverence and confidence.



## Holy Week Living Liturgies

During Holy Week, we celebrated 'Living Liturgies' where the pupils journeyed with Jesus through the events of Holy Week. We used our beautiful school grounds and were transported to the streets of Jerusalem as we waved palms for Palm Sunday, shared bread together at Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples in the school hall, prayed with Jesus in our orchard as we entered the Garden of Gethsemane, carried the cross with Jesus as we travelled across the playgrounds to the amphitheatre, and, finally celebrated Jesus' resurrection with streamers and decorated eggs as we sang 'Alive, alive, alive for evermore!'.

### Holy Week 2024

#### Palm Sunday

On Tuesday, Years 1 and 2 led us in our Palm Sunday Living Liturgy. We remembered how Jesus came into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. The crowd waved their palms and shouted 'Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' They shouted 'Hosanna!' a Hebrew word that means 'Save!' because they knew that Jesus had come to save them. We all shouted Hosanna and waved our palms.



#### Maundy Thursday

On Wednesday, Year 6 led us in our Maundy Thursday Living Liturgy. We remembered how, before sitting down for the Passover meal, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples giving us an example of how we should serve others. We then remembered the words of Jesus at the Last Supper when he gave us his body and blood and shared bread together. Finally, we joined Jesus in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and watched as he was arrested by the soldiers.



#### Good Friday

On Thursday, Years 4 and 5 led us in our Good Friday Living Liturgy. We followed Jesus after his arrest as he was questioned by Pilate and Herod and condemned to death. The crowd shouted 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' We walked with Jesus as he carried his cross, falling 3 times, meeting his mother Mary and Veronica in the crowd and when the soldiers stripped him of his garments. Finally, He was nailed to the cross. He said, 'Forgive them Lord. They do not know what they are doing' and he died.



#### Easter Sunday

On Friday, Reception and Year 3 led us in our Easter Sunday Living Liturgy. We joined the women as they entered the tomb to find that Jesus was gone. The angel appeared and proclaimed, 'Do not be afraid! Jesus is Risen!' We all shouted 'Alleluia!' We laid our decorated eggs in the tomb as we sang 'Alive, Alive, Alive for evermore!' We will hang our decorated eggs on our prayer table trees in our classroom to remind us of the good news that Jesus has risen from the dead.

