PRAYER AND WORSHIP POLICY

RATIONALE
Prayer and Worship are rich and valued aspects of our Catholic Christian tradition and faith life at St Mary’s School; they are closely linked to the liturgical life of the parish community. They allow a deepening of our relationship with God through an expression of faith and trust which connects us with our spiritual selves and develops oneness with God. This policy gives expression to the following values, inherent in the creation of a school community of faith and life: respect, reverence, praise, inclusivity and thanksgiving.

POLICY STATEMENT
Prayer and Worship have prime place in our Catholic school culture. All children enrolled at St Mary’s School will participate in regular liturgies and prayer celebrations, recognising our relationship with God and the development of a sense of belonging to a worshipping community. Celebrations will include Class, Year Level and whole School experiences. Prayer and Worship opportunities should meet the pastoral needs of the students involved. Formal prayers that are part of our Catholic tradition will be taught to the children.

CONSEQUENCES
• Ecumenical sensitivity and inclusive practices will be practised at all times to support all members of St Mary’s School community.

• The APRE is responsible for monitoring liturgies, assemblies, Masses and R.E. Professional Development. The APRE will review all liturgy plans and attend these worship events when possible.

• The APRE is responsible for the Administration Sacred Space created with symbols, images and objects representing appropriate liturgical seasons and colours, showing a clear sign of the presence of Christ among us.

• The teacher of the class preparing the liturgy will ensure all planning is prepared and shared with the Priest prior to the celebration.

• After checking for any special feasts, commemorations or liturgical seasons, teachers should start with the gospel from the Lectionary for Masses with Children.

• The class preparing the liturgy will invite parents and community to attend, using the internal communication system of the school, invitations and newsletters.

• Students not fully initiated into the Sacramental life of the Church will be encouraged to come forward to receive a blessing at the time of communion.

• Readers are expected to understand the text, believe what they read and have ability to proclaim it well.

• Those proclaiming the First / Second Reading should be fully initiated into the Sacramental life of the Church

• Altar servers are to be fully initiated into the Sacramental life of the Church.

• Prayer opportunities will include multiple expressions (vocal, meditative and contemplative) and forms (petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise) to meet the needs of participants.

• Traditional prayers and Mass Responses outlined in the Diocesan Religious Education Program will be formally taught as part of the school Prayer and Worship Scope and Sequence.
As a school dedicated to Our Lady, prayers and devotions to Mary, including the Rosary, will be highlighted.

**LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**

**DAILY**
- Staff Prayer
- Morning Prayer Greeting
- Meal Prayers
- Final Afternoon Prayer

**Upper Campus**
- Staff Prayer
- Morning Prayer Greeting
- Meal Prayers
- Final Afternoon Prayer

**All Classrooms**
- Morning Prayer Greeting
- Meal Prayers
- Final Afternoon Prayer

**WEEKLY**
- **Tuesday**
  - Staff Prayer
  - Staff Meeting Participants

- **Wednesday**
  - Class Liturgy
  - or Year Level Mass

- **Thursday**
  - Parish Mass

- **Friday**
  - School Assembly

**ANNUAL**
- Leadership Mass
- Beginning of Term Masses
- Ash Wednesday Liturgy / Mass
- Holy Week Liturgy
- Anzac Day Liturgy
- Catholic Education Week Mass
- Feast of the Assumption Mass
- All Saints Day Mass
- Nativity Liturgy
- End of Year Graduation Mass

- **Whole School**
- **Prepared by APRE**
- **Prepared by Upper Campus**
- **Prepared by SMW/ACW APRE**
- **Prepared by Lower Campus**
- **Prepared by Year 7**

**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Children aged 7 years and above will be invited to participate in the Parish sacramental program to prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist. The Parish Sacramental Coordinator and APRE will work closely together to support parish families.

**PRAYER LIFE IN THE CLASSROOM**

Opportunities for classroom prayer are to be provided on a daily basis. Initiatives to promote children’s prayer are highly commended. There will be a sacred space created in every classroom with symbols, images and colours showing a clear sign of the presence of Christ among us. There is usually a prayer table, a bible, appropriate prayer books, a candle and other Christian artefacts.

Children pray together at the beginning and end of each day and at lunchtime. Opportunities for spontaneous prayer and individual reflection exist in both collective worship and in the classroom. There will be opportunities for students to create and facilitate prayer experiences.

**STAFF SPIRITUALITY OPPORTUNITIES**

All staff meetings will commence with staff prayer. All staff attend the annual Bishop’s Inservice Day to broaden and deepen their understanding of the worship we share. Teachers participate in annual Professional Planning and Development Religious Sessions. All staff will be given the opportunity to attend Diocesan Retreats.

**PARENTAL SPIRITUALITY OPPORTUNITIES**

Parents will be invited to participate in the prayer life of the school in classrooms, assembly liturgy and other special liturgies and masses. Families are encouraged to commit to regular family prayer and worship and to follow up prayer classroom activities.