

Worship, RE and The Law

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from collective acts of worship. The core reason why the school was established, however, was for the very purpose of providing opportunities for Catholic worship and for learning about the Catholic religion. Given the character of the school and the information it provides to prospective parents, the Governors expect all parents and guardians to respect and support the religious provision we make for our pupils.

The role of children in acts of worship

The future of the church:

Children of all abilities are encouraged to play an active role in the liturgical life of the school and take part in Masses and non-sacramental liturgies. This involvement may range from being a Eucharistic Minister, a Reader, a Singer or a Musician through to participating in offertory processions, liturgical dances or visual presentations. Our pupils are invited to lead form prayers, at least from time to time. Pupils are encouraged to ask for their own personal intentions to be remembered, for example, praying for a sick relative, or for success for the whole class as exams approach.

We are the Church gathered, working in partnership with our families and parishes and sharing in our Church's great educational project which is to pass on a knowledge and love of our Faith to the next generation.

Social cohesion

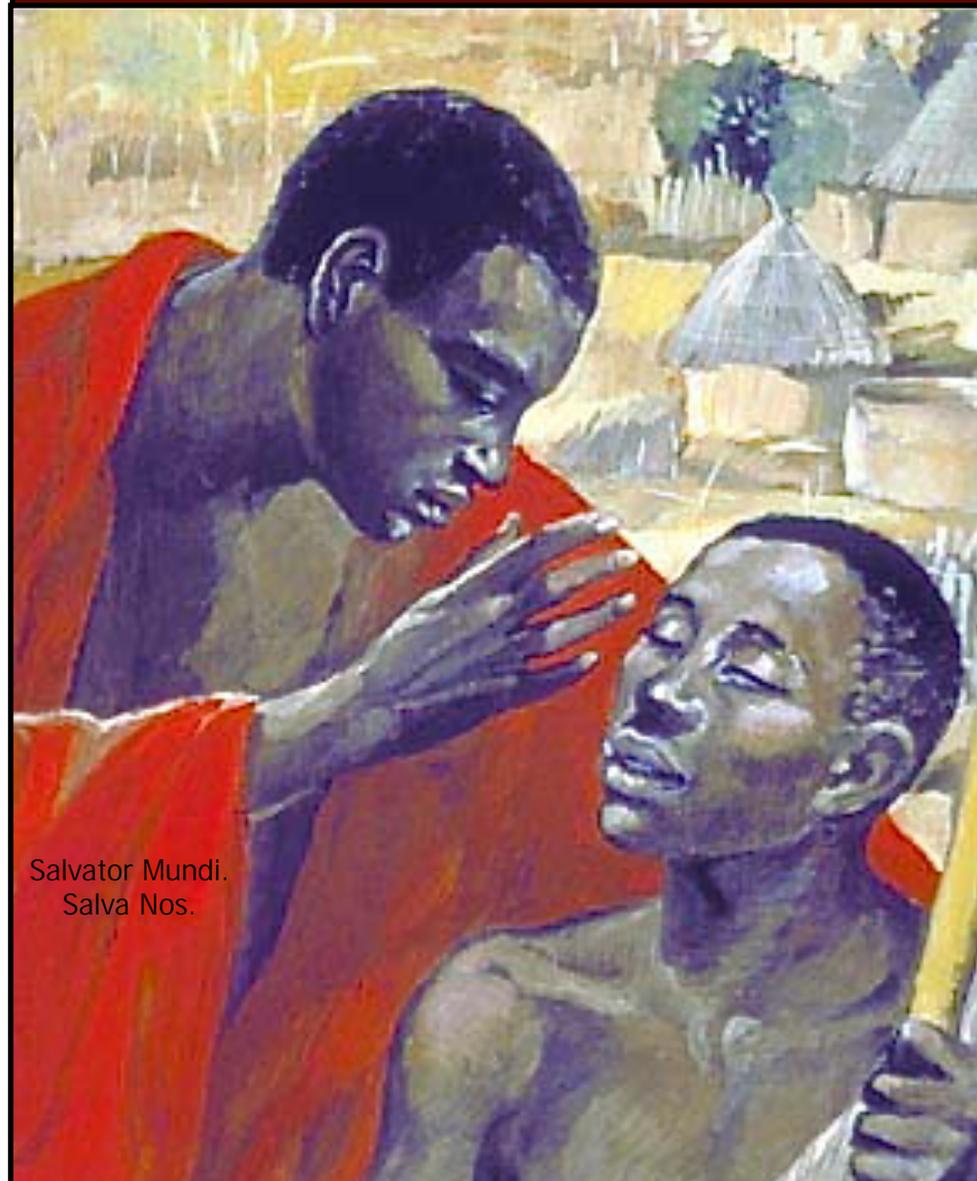
Celebrating diversity

We are committed as a school within the Catholic faith tradition to supporting social cohesion and recognising, affirming and celebrating the diverse nature of our society. This ethos is transparent in our curricular and extra-curricular work. It can also be seen in our approach to liturgy, religious education and the praxis - the practical application - of our faith through:

- i] a sustained commitment to working on behalf of the poor and the marginalised [through CAFOD, Traidcraft and other agencies];
- ii] celebrating our faith in a range of liturgical forms such as prayer, dance and images which reflect the human energy and cultural diversity embedded within the universal church of Christ;
- iii] our openness to, respect for, and desire to learn about other religious and cultural traditions, resourcing opportunities for these experiences to happen.

Fidei heredes

Jesus Christ, The Saviour of the World



Salvator Mundi.
Salva Nos.

Saint Augustine's Roman Catholic High School
Collective Worship
For approval by the Governing Body in April 2012

Governors, teachers, parents and children have all contributed to the formulation of this policy.

The collective prayer life of our school is an essential and integral feature of our daily activities as a Christian community. It is the means by which we maintain our relationship with God who is the source of our life.

It is the principal way in which we share with each other the faith upon which our school community is built.

It is impossible to gather the whole school together on a daily basis. However, the school provides a variety of opportunities for shared prayer and worship. All our pupils are entitled to share in the full prayer life of the school.

All our staff are expected to ensure that our prayer times are observed in a calm and dignified manner at appropriate times every day.

This expectation is made of all colleagues, whatever their religious affiliation or curriculum area.

If any colleague needs advice on these matters the Curriculum Leader for RE and the school's Liturgy Assistant will provide support and assistance. The school provides all staff with the resources needed for classroom prayer.

We mark key times in the Liturgical Year with meditations on large screens linked to the prayers used in form period. We are committed to expanding our stock of religious resources as aids to prayer and finance this through whole school funds rather than departmental capitation.

Sacramental Liturgies

Masses for the whole school community:

School Masses, which all staff and pupils attend, are usually celebrated towards the end of each term.

Parents and friends of the school are invited to attend these Masses. All staff and departments are invited to collaborate in the preparation of liturgy.

Family Masses:

There is a Family Mass each year to which pupils, their parents and other family members are invited. New Intake pupils and their families are invited to this evening Mass which is held in the summer term before children move up to us. Our annual Year 11 Leavers' Mass is also always attended by large numbers of parents and grandparents

Voluntary Masses:

Voluntary lunchtime Masses are scheduled at regular intervals throughout the school year.

These Masses are prepared by pupils, form teachers and our Liturgy Assistant. Priests from partner parishes are invited to celebrate these Masses with us.

Praying with pupils

Prayers at Assemblies:

A key element in the content of our assemblies is an act of worship often linked to a talk or presentation about an aspect of the wider work of the Church.

Responsibility for preparing and leading worship rests with those who have organised the assembly.

Each year group holds an assembly in the hall one morning per week, except when public examinations or exceptional circumstances make the hall unavailable.

Whole school assemblies are impossible because of logistical difficulties involved with an ever-rising roll.

Prayers at Registration:

Every pupil begins the day with morning prayers during registration and the school day concludes with prayers at the end of the final lesson.

The School Chapel:

The School Chapel is open throughout the day during the school week and is stocked with resources for private and small group prayer. It has a prayer box for individual intentions. The Chapel is also used during RE lessons for prayer, reflection and meditation.

Rosary Group:

This voluntary group meets every Thursday lunchtime in the chapel.

Praying and worshipping as a Staff

Morning Prayer in the staffroom:

At Saint Augustine's each morning's staff briefing begins with a prayer. This collective act of worship, always respectful of the diversity of staff backgrounds and beliefs, is a way of professing our shared values and reminding us of our common purpose.

Shared prayer is a powerful means of comforting colleagues at times of illness and bereavement.

Staff Masses:

On some CPD Days, such as the start of the academic year, we celebrate the Eucharist together as a staff. There are other occasional staff liturgies during Lent and Advent or to pray for a particular colleague.