

Philosophic and Foundational Commitments 1101 Prayer in the School		Administrative Application	
		Last Reviewed /Approved on:	August 14, 2024
References:	Catechism of the Catholic Church Policy 1 – Division Foundational Commitments and Board Strategic Plan Policy 12 – Role of the Director		
	Status:	Operational	

Preamble

“Prayer is powerful not because it changes God or God’s plans, but because it changes individuals and communities, one heart at a time...”

~ Pope Francis (General Audience May 27, 2020)

The Catholic Church calls us to “a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God” and that “this relationship is prayer” (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2558). Prayer is “God’s gift, covenant and communion.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 32559-2565). It is with this background that the following guidelines are offered to assist staff with prayer in the classroom, school gatherings, meetings, and formal gatherings.

Application

1. Prayer within the Regina Catholic School Division (RCSD)

a. Opening School Day Prayer

While prayer occurs throughout the day in our Catholic Schools, morning prayer is especially important as it reminds us of our relationship with God and sets a prayerful tone for the day.

Prayer should be prefaced by a land acknowledgement.

Prayer begins with students and staff making the sign of the cross together.

The prayer should then be one of the five types of prayer enumerated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: Blessing and Adoration, Petition, Intercession, Thanksgiving, and Praise. (See #2. Selected Resources: Five Types of Prayer below)

When determining who to pray for see #2. Selected Resources: Pope Francis’ Five Finger Prayer.

b. Meetings

Meetings held at the school level, staff and/or committee meetings always begin with prayer.

c. School Assemblies Other than Liturgies

All activities of the Catholic school promote gospel values; even when prayer is not the reason for gathering, there should always be a short introductory prayer.

d. Special School Events

These are opportunities to acknowledge that we are a Catholic school division, and we believe prayer is central to our relationship with God, others and the world. Thus, special school events such as Meet the Teacher Night, CSCC Meetings, Awards evening, etc. should begin with prayer.

e. Sports Events

Sports events are an important aspect of Catholic schools. A short introductory prayer prior to a sporting event asking for God's protection on all those who are competing is encouraged.

2. **Selected Resources**

Consult the Catholic Education Services Coordinator for a list of up-to-date prayer resources. We also maintain many prayer and faith resources online at our Catholic Education Services Web Resources under the [Liturgical Resources](#) and [Faith Online](#).

Five Types of Prayer

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (Paragraphs 2626-2643), describes five (5) basic types of prayer. Here are brief descriptions of each.

a. Blessing and Adoration (Worship)

In prayers of adoration or worship, we call to mind and celebrate the greatness of God, and we acknowledge our dependence on God in all things. The Mass and other liturgies of the Church are full of prayers of this sort, such as the Gloria (or Glory to God). "We praise you; we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory."

b. Petition

Prayers of petition are the type of prayer with which we are most familiar. In them, we ask God for things we need—primarily spiritual needs, but physical ones as well. The "Our Father" is a good example of a prayer of petition; the line "Thy will be done" shows that, in the end, we acknowledge that God's plans for us are more important than what we desire.

c. Intercession

Prayers of intercession are a special form of prayers of petition. In a prayer of intercession, we are not concerned with our needs but with the needs of others. Just as we ask the saints to pray for us, we, in turn, pray for our fellow Christians, asking God to shower love and mercy on them by answering their requests.

d. Thanksgiving

Perhaps the most neglected type of prayer is prayer of thanksgiving. While Grace before meals is a good example of a prayer of thanksgiving, it is good to nurture the habit of thanking God throughout the day for the good things that happen to us and to others.

e. Praise

Prayers of praise acknowledge God for what God is. The Psalms are perhaps the best-known example of prayers of praise. Psalm 8 - "O Lord, Our God, how wonderful is your name in all the earth." Prayers of love are another form of prayers of praise—expressions of our love for God, the source and object of all love.

Five Finger Prayer of Pope Francis

- a. The thumb is closest finger to you. So, start praying for those who are closest to you. They are the person's easiest to remember. To pray for our dear ones is a "Sweet Obligation."
- b. The next finger is the index. Pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you. They need the support and wisdom to show direction to others. Always keep them in your prayers.
- c. The following finger is the tallest. It reminds us of our leaders, the governors and those who have authority. They need God's guidance.
- d. The fourth finger is the ring finger. Even though it may surprise you, it is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems. They need your prayers.
- e. And finally, we have our smallest finger, the smallest of all. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. When you are done praying for the other four groups, you will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective, and you will be able to pray for your own needs in a better way.

