

Chaplaincy at MSJ

MSJ chaplaincy welcomes students, staff, parents and all members of our community to join us on our journey of faith. We aim to help everyone to engage positively, generously and intelligently as a **community of learners, believers and friends**, and to embody our wider school values of **Respect, Resilience and Responsibility**.

Vocation Prayer

LORD, make me a better person, more considerate to others, more honest with myself, more faithful to you.

Make me generous enough
to want sincerely to do your will
whatever it may be.

Help me to find my true vocation in life,
and grant that through it
I may find happiness myself
and bring happiness to others.

AMEN

The Aim of This Handbook

The aim of this handbook is to make you familiar with what chaplaincy is. You may be new to working in a Catholic school and are unfamiliar with what chaplaincy may be, and hopefully this handbook will answer a few of your questions.

Also, this handbook will give you an explanation of prayer during form time, which is a statutory requirement in Catholic schools. As facilitation of prayer is an important part of the form tutor role this handbook will hopefully help with familiarising you with the resources available.

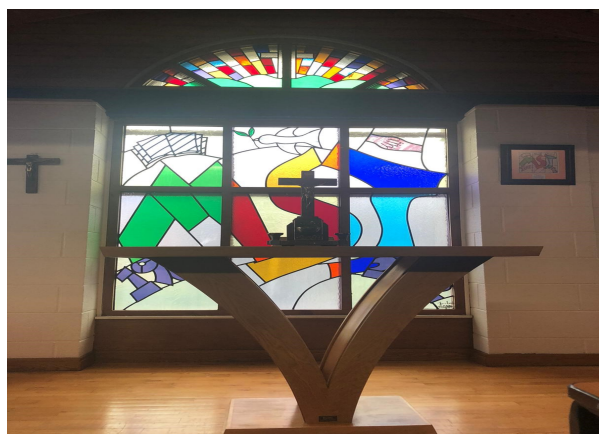
The Purpose and Nature of Chaplaincy

Although Catholic schools share much in common with their secular counterparts, there are several features of a school like Mount Saint Joseph which sets it apart as having a distinct Christian quality.

The ethos of a Catholic school is not marked out by religious statues or a crucifix placed in a classroom, but by the presence of relationships built on trust and understanding, even in the most challenging of circumstances. We aim to put this at the heart of what we do, emphasising that all students are loved by God and have an important and valuable part to play in the world He has created. This is further supported by the motto and identity of the school as **"a community of learners, believers and friends"**.

Mount Saint Joseph's lay chaplain, Mr Haughton, also teaches religious education. We are extremely lucky to have the support of many of the local parish priests as well as the Schoenstatt Fathers who have their Shrine in Kearsley. Mount Saint Joseph is part of the St Joseph Deanery within the Diocese of Salford.

We have a school group, the **Growing In Faith Together Team** (or **GIFT team**) which all members of our school community are welcome to join. The **GIFT team** visits our local primary schools as part of our outreach programme, and help organise the various charity events throughout the year.



Chaplaincy Vision

MSJ chaplaincy welcomes students, staff, parents/carers and all members of our community to join us on our journey of faith. We aim to help everyone to engage positively, generously and intelligently as a community of **learners, believers and friends**, and to embody our wider school values of **Respect, Resilience and Responsibility**.



Form Time and Chaplaincy?

Classroom Prayer.

A key feature of any Catholic school is that every student is offered the chance to take part in a time of prayer and reflection **each day**. This should happen every morning, either in form time or in assemblies. It is the responsibility of the form tutor to ensure that it is delivered during form time.

Every Friday morning the Chaplain sends out the prayers and themes for the following week. This message contains:

- The weekly theme
- A short summary of the weeks Gospel reading and what it means.
- The prayers for the week and the Friday reflection



The purpose of prayer is to invite students to spend a few moments in the presence of God (as they understand Him). The prayers are Christian in nature, but the themes are universal to all religions and therefore can still be of meaning to people of other faiths.

The prayers and themes are designed in such a way that they enable those with little or no experience of prayer to grasp key concepts and ideas and allow those who are already experienced in prayer to engage in a deeper way. This can be true for both students and staff, and Mr Haughton is always available to lend advice and assistance.

Short Version

Form time prayer is...

- To allow students to spend a few moments connecting with God
- To facilitate the requirement that all Catholic schools conduct a form of collective worship.
- To enable the form tutor to facilitate this requirement using the resources provided.

How Do Form Teachers Use the Prayers?

The aim of the prayers is to assist and enable you to grow in confidence if you are unfamiliar to this activity. We are not asking you to lead your own prayers, though you are very welcome to do this. We do, however, ask that you provide this reflection time for all students, every day.

Step 1:

The prayers can be said either standing or seated. Begin with the sign of the cross.



All students should have their hands clasped together; this is not a Christian act but a universal sign of respect for faith.

Step 2:

The prayer can be said together or by a single student, but should **not** just be said by the teacher.

If you wish you can ask for anything any of the students in the class may want to pray for, nothing is too simple and the prayer can be for anything (within reason).

Step 3:

Complete the prayer with "**St Joseph - Pray for us**" and make the sign of the cross again.

The Gospel:

The Gospel summary is there to allow a reflection for the week. The Friday reflection is a short passage which allows for students to think about the week that has just ended.



Assemblies

An important part of school life is assemblies and the chaplaincy is heavily involved with this. There are many chaplaincy house assemblies throughout the year based on various themes, usually delivered by Mr Haughton but also by the GIFT team.

Chaplaincy assemblies are focused on either a school event which the chaplaincy team are involved in or on a theme within the church calendar.

Masses, the Chapel, Liturgies and the Sacred Space.

The Chapel is at the heart of the school and was consecrated by Bishop Brain to celebrate the Centenary of the school in 2002. It is located at the top of the main staircase. The staff prayer group meets here on a Friday and it is used for small masses throughout the year.

Mass is celebrated during the school year and all students will experience the celebration of the Eucharist. The masses take place in the hall and are in either year groups or houses. During Mass it will be your responsibility to ensure students are behaving in a respectful manner and to be a role model to the members of your form.

There are also two staff masses during the year where we come together as a Catholic community to celebrate the Eucharist. Regardless of religious persuasion we come to celebrate God as we understand Him and the influence He has on our lives.



Liturgy

Students will also take part in liturgies during the year. A liturgy is a form of Christian worship and is different from Mass. It consists of a theme around which there will be prayers, hymns and a presentation given on how this is relevant to the life of the school community. Liturgies are led by Matthew Haughton and take place at the beginning of the school year, Christmas, Easter and the end of the school year.

The Sacred Space

Our Sacred Space is located near the reprographics room on the top floor of the school. This is a space that allows students of all faiths to express their beliefs in quiet time. The space is open before school, at break, and after school for private prayer.

Please see Mr Haughton if you would like to use this so that everyone can be accommodated in a suitable way.



Short Version

The Sacred Space is for...

- Prayer and quiet time for all faiths
- Reflective time

The Sacred Space is not...

- A place to chat

Year 7 Retreat Programme

In the first term we take all our year 7 form groups on a day retreat to the Schoenstatt Shrine in Kearsley. The purpose of the day is to allow students to understand and get to know each other a little better, and form lasting bonds with the people they will be with in their form groups over the next five years.

The students, along with two members of staff, visit the shrine to undertake a programme of activities where the theme is **"You, The Adventurer"**. Activities are based around understanding their place in their school community, and how they can contribute to it in a positive way.

Year 7 form tutors will also be given the opportunity to attend the retreat with their forms and will lead one of the activities.

The day is organised, and all resources planned by Mr Haughton.



Growing in Faith Together Team (GIFT)

At Mount Saint Joseph we have an active team of students who contribute to the spiritual life of the school; they are known as the GIFT team and referred to as "student chaplains". The GIFT team is open to students of all faiths and we actively welcome people from all parts of our school community.

What Do the Student Chaplains Do?

Student chaplains help to prepare and promote the different chaplaincy based events throughout the year.

Primary Outreach Work

The chaplains are involved in visiting our feeder primary schools to look at and work upon different liturgical themes. On these visits we involve student chaplains in the work and running of the session. This often means working with small groups or even helping to lead sessions. The involvement of students is popular with parents, teachers, and the primary school children, and the student chaplains themselves enjoy this aspect of their role.

The outreach work is continually growing, with new avenues and opportunities constantly being discovered. The work we do also varies from location to location.

Primary Chaplaincy Days

Three times a year we host all the feeder primary school chaplains for a themed day in the conference suite. This has been established over several years and now they are very well attended. The MSJ student chaplains take a lead role in delivering sessions and assist Mr Haughton throughout the day. The day always concludes with the celebration of Mass.

Charity Events

Student chaplains assist in the delivery of charity events throughout the year.

Christmas Food Appeal - As a community we collect as many tins of food as possible which will be donated to the Destitution Project based at the Victoria Hall in Bolton, which supports refugees and asylum seekers.

Macmillan Coffee Morning - An extremely popular whole school event where we encourage students to put aside their healthy eating for one day to indulge in various sweet treats and raise money to support Macmillan.

St Joseph's Penny - The annual charity appeal run by the Diocese of Salford through its schools and colleges to support the work of charities within the local area working with the disadvantaged.

