



PRAYER AND LITURGY HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026



WELCOME

Dear Colleague,

Ratcliffe College is proud to be a Catholic Rosminian School.

Therefore, all that we do reflects the teachings and charism that are instilled by our Founder, Blessed Antonio Rosmini. As educators at Ratcliffe, we not only belong to a universal community of Catholic educators, but we also belong to a smaller yet global community of Rosminian educators.

Rosmini's booklet, ***Maxims of Christian Perfection***, was published for the first time in 1830 in Rome. Ratcliffe College was founded just 17 years later, in 1847. From *Maxims*, we draw our Mission – to ***Learn and Grow in the Light of the Gospel*** – and our Motto – ***Legis Plenitudo Charitas, Love is the fulfilment of the law.***

Our approach to pastoral care and the Chaplaincy is underpinned by Rosmini's introduction to *Maxims of Christian Perfection*:

"All are called to perfection, no matter what their state or condition may be; for all are called to the Gospel. The Perfection of the Gospel consists in the fulfilment of the two commandments of love, of God and of neighbour."

Our half-termly **Gospel Values** provide a golden thread for pastoral and spiritual conversation and reflection. They are each based on a strand of Catholic Social Teaching. Catholic Social Teaching is rooted in scripture, formed by the wisdom of Church leaders, and influenced by the universal Church. As a Catholic school, our Gospel Values are our moral compass. You will see and should use links to the Gospel Values through Celebrations of the Word and the weekly Pastoral Programme, all of which is designed to support you in your conversations with our young people.

Through these Gospel Values, we also fulfil our statutory commitment to educate our students about the **fundamental British values** of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Rosmini reinforces the necessity of this:

"The first thing the will of God lays down is to fulfil with faithfulness, accuracy and promptness, all the duties of the state; to do whatever the relations to which they are bound to other people require of them, using that degree of love and respect that arises naturally."

As a teacher at Ratcliffe College, the minimum expectation is that you join us for our **Celebrations of the Word**. This is so you are fully connected to the academic, co-curricular and spiritual heart of our school, as well as hearing the key notices that are pertinent to all.

In the Senior School, Whole School Celebrations of the word are:

- **Whole School Mass** on holy days of obligation, Benefactors' Mass (September) and the Feast of Blessed Antonio Rosmini (July)
- **Headmaster's Assembly**, Monday 8.35am
- **Chaplaincy Celebration of the Word**, Friday 8.35am
- **Remembrance Service**, 11th November or the closest date.

In the Preparatory School, Whole School Celebration of the Word is:

- **Whole School Mass**, holy days of obligation, Benefactors' Mass (September) and the Feast of Blessed Antonio Rosmini (July)
- **Celebration of the Word**, Monday 8.40am
- **Sing Praise**, Tuesday 8.40am

Colleagues who are attached to a particular year group are expected to attend Year Group Assemblies, which will include Celebration of the Word. If you are a tutor, your tutor group will produce and lead Celebrations of the Word on a termly basis. In the Preparatory School, year groups will celebrate regular Celebrations of the Word together, and there is a rota of classes to lead the Wednesday Celebration of the Word. Our Lay Chaplain, Frances Daw, and the Resident Chaplaincy Assistant, Owen Warner, will be happy to guide you and your tutees in the preparation, presentation, and evaluation of these key moments in your group's journey together.

Finally, this handbook is designed to accompany you in leading prayer with comfort and confidence. The Catholic tradition is rich with many types of prayer, both personal and communal. Part of our Mission is to introduce the value of prayer as means of connecting with God, but also connecting with ourselves and our community. In your interview, we have shared with you the value of daily prayer in the life of our College. At Ratcliffe, we ensure that every child and member of staff benefits from prayerfulness.

Prayer, then, is a non-negotiable aspect of our day – daily with your tutor group and, in the Senior School, at the end of Period 4 and Period 6 with your classes. In the Preparatory school before lunch and at the end of the day. Therefore, your understanding of the purpose and centrality of prayer to our school is central to us fulfilling our Mission.

Thank you for joining us on our journey,

James Rainer,
Deputy Head Pastoral



GUIDANCE FOR STAFF ON OUR EXPECTATIONS OF PRAYER

What is prayer?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (the teachings of the Church) defines prayer as 'the raising of one's heart and mind to God'. When we pray the aim is to help us develop our relationship with God. We believe that God has the power to answer our prayers (not always in the way we might ask him to). Prayer can take many forms. There are formal 'vocal' prayers which have set words that can be said with others e.g. The Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Our School Prayer, you can find all of these prayers in the student planner. Informal prayers don't follow a set format and do not require preparation. They can contain an element of personal reflection.

Why is it important to our community?

Prayers can have different purposes according to the type of prayer. Set 'vocal' prayers help us to come together and worship as part of a community. Informal prayers can be used when someone wishes to communicate with God privately and reflect on their relationship with God in a more personal way. Prayer is important to us because it helps to create time and space in our busy school day to remind ourselves that we are working towards important goals as a community and as individuals e.g. our mission statement. It is important that we set the right tone and place the right value on this experience.

What should it 'feel' like?

Prayer times should be respected by all staff and students. This means that we have high expectations of students during prayer. Whilst students (and staff) should not be forced to pray it is essential that staff ensure that prayer happens at the agreed times and that everyone shows respect for prayer. We would ask that all students are encouraged to gain something from the experience of prayer moments. We can ensure this happens by talking to students about the importance of taking time to stop, reflect, be calm, still and to create a positive mindset. These are valuable experiences for us all, regardless of our personal religious beliefs.

This means that when we pray everything else stops. The mood in the room should change. It should be silent, reflective, respectful. Students should be sat down, with all books/items put away so as not to distract them. Prayer should always begin and end with the sign of the cross.

Prayer should not be seen as a task to tick off our list of jobs to do that morning/lesson/day. It should be a celebration of something that makes our community different to other school communities and the act by which we order our lives to God. Ideally it will be student led. This means that we create an environment where students are confident to share their thoughts, prayers, reflections with each other knowing that the culture of respect exists.

GOSPEL VALUES 2025-26



Autumn 1 – Dignity
Autumn 2 – Solidarity
Spring 1 – The Common Good
Spring 2 – Peace
Summer 1 – Charity
Summer 2 – Care for Creation



The College Prayer

Lord,
We ask you to bless our hearts, as we gather here together.
Compassion, forgiveness and kindness, we treasure.
Let us learn and grow and accept our flaws
As we remember that love is the fulfilment of the law.
We pray for Antonio Rosmini, our blessed school founder;
For the community spirit and the love we encounter.
We show gratitude to you, O Lord, and we warmly acknowledge:
We are one family, one school, we are Ratcliffe College.

Amen

Blessed Antonio Rosmini
Pray for us.



SENIOR SCHOOL PRAYERS

Prayer to Start the Day

Lord, I give you all that I am
this day.
I look to you and trust you
are with me.
Amen.

Grace

Bless us, O Lord, and these
your gifts, which we are
about to receive from your
goodness.
Amen.

Prayer to End the Day

Lord, we adore you.
May our minds be silent and
ready for rest.
Let our hearts rejoice in the
blessings from this day.
Amen.

Tutor Time Prayers

Leader: Let us make the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: We will begin our day by saying together our morning prayer [or one of the prayers
below]

**All: Lord, I give you all that I am this day. I look to you and trust you are with me.
Amen.**

Leader: Now we will pause in silence for a moment to think about anything we want to pray
for today. Maybe something personal to you or that is happening in our world.

[Tutors and students can choose to share their prayer intention with the tutor group.]

Leader: Blessed Antonio Rosmini.

All: Pray for us.

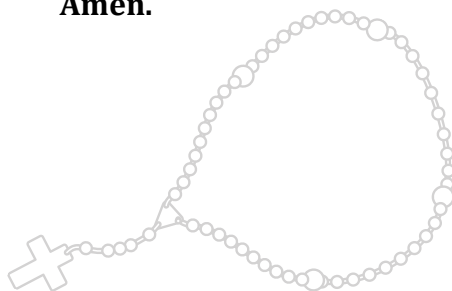
Leader: We end by making the Sign of the Cross.

**All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

PREPARATORY SCHOOL PRAYERS

Before Lunch Prayer

Bless us, O Lord, As we sit
together, Bless the food we
eat today, Bless the hands
that made the food. Bless us,
O Lord.
Amen.



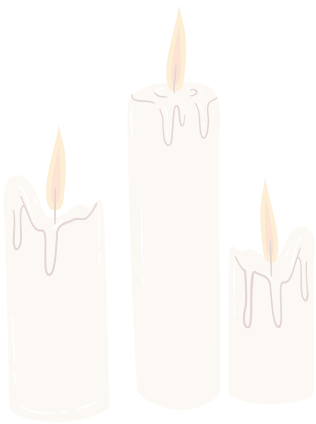
End of the Day

God, our Father,
I come to say,
Thank you for your love
today.
Thank you for my family,
And all the friends you give
to me.
Guard me through the dark
of night,
And in the morning, send
your light.
Amen.

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.

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now,
and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy Will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who
trespass against us.
And lead us not into
temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.



OUR TEAM AROUND THE STUDENT



School
Counsellor



Medical



Safeguarding



Student
Listeners



Heads of Year
and Boarding



Learning
Support



Wellbeing
support and
guidance



Chaplaincy



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