

School Advisory Councils

Prayer at meetings



MELBOURNE
ARCHDIOCESE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Reflective of our Catholic tradition

Prayer in School Advisory Council meetings should be reflective of our Catholic tradition and allow for reference to the school charism, mission and the 'signs of the times' where appropriate.

Prayer at a meeting can be a contradiction in terms. Allowing time to discover the most important relationship there is: our relationship with God, seems at odds with the purpose of the gathering: the urgent need of the items of business.

Yet prayer gives us an opportunity to align these two purposes to see the work of the meeting as an expression of our relationship with God.

Traditional prayers – The Our Father, Hail Mary, and Prayer to St Joseph the Worker – have a place here, remembering that prayer is a relationship, not a transaction, so if said with intent and not by rote, then the relationship is honoured.

Sometimes brief prayers will be apt, but at other times the council members may want to spend time on a more extended prayer, particularly if there has been something happening in their school community.

Some schools have a school prayer or prayer associated with a founder or patron that should be encouraged to be used on occasions.

Lastly the liturgical year and seasons of Advent, Lent, Easter and Christmas as well as referencing of the Gospel reading of the day, or the previous Sunday reading are rich sources of inspiration within our tradition. The extensive Daily Prayer resource in the Prayer Life section of the MACS Religious Education website **RESource** is a portal into a rich source of prayer resources. The Daily prayer format models prayer structures that can be used in their entirety or adapted to meet the needs of the audience and local context as required.

We have provided a limited number here for your consideration with some linked resources below, as while some prayer resources are good, too many can become confusing. In short, we encourage you to use these resources if you need but also consider that prayer is contextual.

Links

The extensive [Daily Prayer](#) resource in the Prayer Life section of the MACS Religious Education website [RESource](#).

A selection of [opening prayers](#) compiled by the Sydney Federation of P&Fs and used with the permission of the Council of Catholic School Parents, NSW/ACT.

A simple [prayer book](#). Gathered by the Catholic School Parents WA.

The [definitive guide](#) to prayer: The 5 types of prayer.

The nature of [petitionary prayer](#): Why do we ask God for things?

Our united mission

Dear Lord,

You have called us together as your servants and members of the [insert school name] School Advisory Council to do your call.

Grant us the light of your Spirit and guide us in our united mission.

You give us the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and may we use the gifts in our leadership.

May we;

Work together in harmony and dialogue,

Listen to one another in a spirit of genuine respect,

Encourage and reverence one another's unique talents,

Approach our consensus through discernment and prayer,

Respond effectively to the needs of the children in [insert name of school] and [insert name of parish] parish community.

And may we work in a new spirit of service.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,

The Light of the World

Amen

For guidance, wisdom, and support

Heavenly Father, we come to you today asking for your guidance, wisdom, and support as we begin this meeting. Help us to engage in meaningful discussion; allow us to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of community. Fill us with your grace, Lord God, as we make decisions that might affect the students, staff, parents, alumni and friends of [insert name of school]. And continue to remind us that all that we do here today, all that we accomplish, is for the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of You, and for the service of humanity. We ask these things in your name, Amen.

Prayer before work

Dear Lord, thank you for the opportunity to meet today.

May we engage with each other with faith and perseverance.

May we manage each situation with wisdom and value.

May we speak and serve with integrity and purpose.

Lord, we invite you to work within us today.



Calling us together

Dear Lord,

As we gather here as members of [insert school name] School Advisory Council

We thank you for calling us together.

It is indeed our privilege and our responsibility to support, foster, and advance the mission of [insert school name].

We accept this task in total dependence upon you, for it is you who began this work,

You who guide it and will bring it to fulfilment.

Send your creative spirit upon us;

Open our hearts to recognise your presence among us and respond to your calling

Enable us to draw upon the wisdom and experience of yesterday as we respond to the questions and concerns of tomorrow.

Bless us with the;

Freedom to speak the truth boldly and with kindness

Patience to listen openly, without prejudice

Confidence to discover and explore new possibilities

Wisdom to discern what is right and good and just

Courage to participate in your ongoing work of creation.

All glory, honor, and praise are yours,

Holy God, for all ages.

A Petition for Leadership

Dear Lord,

As those entrusted with leading as members of the [insert school name] School Advisory Council, please help each of us become leaders in balance and realise the importance and impact of our way of thinking and our way of being.

Help us to approach this role as a relationship not just a position...listening, reflective, and intentional;

Help us understand that each of us embodies [insert school name]...setting the tone for what is done and valued...building trust...focusing on a higher purpose of the mission above personal interests;

Understanding that at the centre of collaboration is a true comfort and sincere valuing of diversity of people, ideas and ways of thinking becomes an enormously strengthening factor;

And help us believe during these difficult times, that the challenge of leading change at [insert school name] is about leadership in balance;

We make this prayer, though Christ our Lord, Amen.



Prayer for Catholic Education

O Holy Spirit,
source of truth and grace
for those entrusted with
Christian development of children,
enlighten our minds,
strengthen our wills, and fill our hearts with
generosity so that our homes,
our parishes and our schools may
co - operate effectively with you,
and with one another in the
exalted mission of catholic education.
we make our prayer through Christ,
Our Lord.
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, pray for us.
Amen.

Enrich our lives

O God,
you created all people in your image.
We thank you for the astonishing variety
of races and cultures in the world.
Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of friendship,
and show us your presence
in those who differ most from us,
until our knowledge of your love is made perfect
in our love for all your children;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen

Bless all our endeavours



Lord,

We ask you to preside over our meeting and our labours, and to bless all our endeavours.

Help us to build a community united in harmony of love and service.

Watch over our families at home, at work and at school.

We thank you, Lord, for everything that widens our knowledge and equips us more fully for the task of life and living.

Give us the knowledge and prudence which will enable us to live our life well.

Teach us to know our own weaknesses that we may ever be on our guard against them.

Teach us to know our own strengths that we may use, to the full, the gifts and talents which you have given us.

Help us to share a loving concern for each other at all times.

Above all, Lord, help us to really know you, for this is the beginning and end of all wisdom, this is eternal life.

Amen

May we always be mindful

Lord,

Look lovingly on this group gathered here.

During this meeting, as we discuss and deliberate on issues of importance to this school, help us to be guided by you Spirit.

May we be wise in our discernment, balanced in our judgment, fair in our decision and visionary in our planning.

Though we may, at times, have differing views, may we listen to one another and be guided by our common goals.

May we always be mindful in our words and actions of what is best for all children in our school.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen

Opening and closing prayer pairs

HOPE AND COURAGE

God of our hope, we give thanks for this day and these people, and for your Gospel that gives this day meaning and provides your people direction.

Encourage us; ground us in you. Make us desire your life in us. Amen



Through the power of your compelling Spirit, may we grow in courage, that our actions might reflect the love we profess.

We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

SPIRIT

In gathering here we acknowledge the presence within and amongst us of a Spirit, present in all places at all times in this vast universe.

To having the power of the Spirit at work in us we say...Amen



We experience the Spirit in our lives as a Spirit of truth and goodness, love and beauty, care and generosity. To all that the Spirit can do in each and all of us we say... Amen

RELATIONSHIP AND THANKS

We acknowledge the Spirit as the source and sustainer of everything that exists, bonding all things in relationship and connectedness, a Spirit of constant movement and new possibilities.

To being filled with the Holy Spirit of God we say...Amen



We give thanks for the way Jesus has led us to awareness of the Spirit in our everyday living. He set us free so that we would live in peace, in God's presence all the days of our lives. Amen

SERVICE AND GROWTH

Indwelling God enable all of us to be women and men enthusiastic for your ministry, contagious in our love, and eager to be among your people as ones who serve.

This we ask through Jesus Christ who is brother and servant to us all. Amen



God of faithfulness we come to you at the end of the school day and find ourselves needing to begin again on new projects and new ideas. We are in need of energy and new hope. Give us the insight to recognize the ever - present possibility for change and conversion and growth. Amen.

WONDER

Loving God, we believe you Spirit is at work in our world. Give us eyes of faith that we might see such wonders in our midst and the courage to live in hope. Amen.



We live graciously, filled with wonder, for the marvel of creation that surrounds us. We marvel at the way the Spirit came to expression in this planet, especially in human life form, a life - form giving the Spirit unique ways to express intelligence, love, choice, care, and concern. Amen

WE GIVE THANKS

We give thanks, God our Creator, because you have given us life. You have made us in your image and breathed your Spirit into us. We are alive with divinity and your glory is made manifest in us and all those we work with.

We have all been touched by God. Amen.



In the name of our God who shares divinity with us, in the name of our God who shares humanity with us, in the name of our God who unsettles and inspires us let us give praise and thanks. Amen.



LOVE, FRIENDSHIP AND HOPE

God, our creator and sustainer, you loves us long before we knew ourselves to be lovable and love us still. Give us, we pray, a greater awareness of your love for all people, and a confidence in the action of your grace in us, our families, and our school community. Amen.



We give you thanks, God of abundant life, for bread and friendship and hope. With these gifts we are nourished. With these signs of your presence, we are able to be faithful. Continue to nourish us, inspire us, and call us that we might help make your kingdom more of a reality in our day. Amen.

THE SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES

God of history, we give you thanks for men and women in many places, at many times throughout human history who have opened minds and hearts to the reality of the Spirit in our midst, searching for words and images to express human connectedness with this mystery and with everything that exists. Amen.



We give thanks for the way Jesus has led us to awareness of the Spirit in our everyday living. Calling us to be neighbour in ways that cross religious, cultural, and social barriers, He challenges us to give the Spirit free reign in our lives so that the human community and our personal lives may be characterised by compassion and a concern for justice. Amen.

