

A guide to the *Catholic Life*

OF BELLERIVE FCJ CATHOLIC
COLLEGE

Christ at the centre



***"I can do all things through Christ
who strengthens me"***

Philippians 4:13

SUAVITER IN MODO
FORTITER IN RE

Our Vision

THE FCJ SCHOOLS VISION

Our vision is that FCJ schools are communities of
personal and academic excellence.

Strong in companionship, the unique giftedness of every person in these faith communities is recognised, nourished and celebrated.

Our hope and expectation is that, through God's grace working in us all, each young person grows into their best self, with zest for life and the generosity and confidence to use their talents and gifts in the service of others.

THE GAUDETE TRUST VISION

Our family of schools and colleges are co-creators of God's kingdom where justice, truth and peace reign.

OUR SCHOOL MOTTO

SUAVITER IN MODO FORTITER IN RE
Strong in manner, gentle in deed



POPE FRANCIS

The Catholic Church is the oldest institution in the western world. It can trace its history back almost 2000 years. Today there are more than a billion Catholics in the world, spread across all five continents. What binds this diverse group of people together is their faith in Jesus Christ and their obedience to the Papacy.

Catholics believe that the Pope, based in Rome, is the successor to Saint Peter whom Christ appointed as the first head of His church. He therefore stands in what Catholicism calls the apostolic succession, an unbroken line back to Peter and has supreme authority. Popes can speak infallibly on matters of faith and morals but in practice rarely do so.

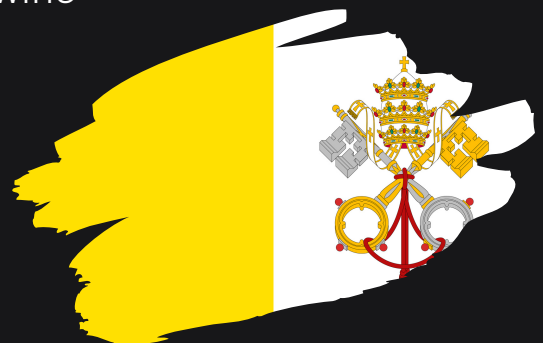
Catholics share with other Christians a belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ, the son of God made man who came to earth to redeem humanity's sins through His death and resurrection. They follow His teachings as set out in the New Testament and place their trust in God's promise of eternal life with Him. Catholicism, however, is distinct from other Christian churches in both its organisation and its teaching.

Catholic doctrine is based upon Scriptures and on the Church's own traditions. It believes that its doctrines were revealed to the Apostles and have been preserved in the continuous tradition ever since. There are several doctrinal issues where the Catholic Church has a distinct position:

- Its devotion to Christ's Mother, the Virgin Mary, who Catholics believe gave birth to Jesus, and who was raised body and soul into heaven where she occupies a special place interceding between God and His people.
- Its belief in transubstantiation, that during the celebration of the Mass, when the priest repeats Christ's words from the Last Supper, the bread and wine become Christ's Body and Blood, though no change takes place in their outward appearance.
- Its celebration and respect for life from conception to natural death (therefore, its opposition to abortion, euthanasia, and the use of artificial contraception).

For Catholics, the celebration of **Mass** is the '*Source and Summit of the Christian life*'; it is the greatest celebration on earth, and prepares us for the big party we are going to have in Heaven. For non-Catholics, however, it can seem quite a daunting and alien prospect. The most important thing to know is that you are welcome! Gathering together, as a community, to celebrate Mass is the most important thing we do at Oaklands, and whatever your faith or beliefs, you are welcome.

Mass is wonderful celebration, with music, readings from the Bible and the celebration of the Eucharist. The priest uses the words of Jesus from the Last Supper and the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. It is often described as a mystery, as the bread and wine do not change to our eye, but are irreversibly changed and Christ is truly present with us. (Amazing, right? Non-Catholics cannot receive Holy Communion during the Mass, but everyone is welcome to come and receive a blessing and share in our communion.



Understanding OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Prayer **LIFE**

Christian prayer is central to being a student at Bellerive.

We begin with prayer each morning and afternoon. We also have assembly each week. Each assembly is designed around a particular theme for the week.

We have a Chaplaincy in school. As part of our Chaplaincy we have a lay Chaplain who contributes to the spiritual and pastoral care of all members of the school community. She has have a central role in implementing the school vision and works closely with the Headteacher in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school.

Our school Chapel (pictured above) is an important place for our community. This houses small groups of students for various prayer experiences during the year, often led by our Chaplain.

Have a look later in this booklet for some of the prayers we use at our school.

Religious **EDUCATION**

Religious Education (RE) is taught as a compulsory subject. It is the 'Core of the Core' subjects - making it even more important than those subjects used as a performance measures (English, Maths and Science). All students study RE up to GCSE - and we also have Core RE in Sixth Form which debates world issues and influences, evaluating the Church approach.

Liturgical **CELEBRATIONS**

We have a wonderful Christmas and Easter every year... but that is just the start!

Rather like the cycle of the natural year with its various moods and senses, the Church Year is made up of different Seasons and Festivals. Students at Bellerive consider these days of prayer and special observances.

Students take part in the celebration of Mass at various times throughout the year as well as having access to the Sacrament of Reconciliation when available.

Social **JUSTICE**

We do our bit to make sure we do our Christian duty of serving those in need. We hold various charity events throughout the year which emphasises the need to support one another. Through our work, we advocate for human rights, address poverty and inequality and work towards a society where every person's inherent worth and rights are respected and protected.

FCJ **VALUES**

You'll see these around the school and you'll study them in RE when you join the school. These outline the way we are with each other - both inside and outside of school.

**- HOPE - JUSTICE - DIGNITY -
COMPANIONSHIP - GENTLENESS
- EXCELLENCE -**

CHAPLAINCY AT BELLERIVE



DID YOU KNOW?

The origin of the word chaplain comes from the medieval latin 'capella' referring to the legend of St Martin de Tours, a roman soldier, who placed his cloak over a beggar on seeing him suffer in an act of loving kindness.

Chaplaincy at Bellerive FCJ continues the tradition of chaplains serving their community and being example of the love of Jesus Christ in our school community.

We have a beautiful chapel, housed in Bellerive building. The chapel is an inclusive and welcoming space for all in school. We are privileged to have the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the chapel, making it a sacred and special place at the centre of our school community. Students and staff have access to the chapel in times of celebration and in times of need. Our Chaplain, Mrs Henry is available to students who seek prayer, peace and guidance in their faith and life. Many chaplaincy activities take place in the chapel and radiate from it into the wider school community. We celebrate Masses in the chapel, pray weekly, students meet here for groups and retreats take place here.

Students are encouraged to develop their personal relationship with God and to act in service to those in need through prayer, fundraising, volunteering and campaigning.



A guide to

CATHOLIC LIFE

at Bellerive FCJ

What is unique about a Catholic school?

The role of a Catholic school is to help discover the true value and dignity of each and every human being. Our school focuses on the education of the whole person and is centred on Gospel values, reflecting the teaching of the Church. Our Catholic school strives to be a faith community, a place of belonging, growth and service.

We are also a community which perceives life as a faith journey.

The ultimate aim of a Catholic school is to develop the full potential of all young people, leading to their life-long activities being guided by the Spirit and presence of Christ, in the service of God and of others.

What is unique about an FCJ school?

All FCJ schools in the UK hold firm the values of Companionship, Dignity, Excellence, Hope, Justice and Gentleness.

There are five FCJ schools in the UK, but there are FCJ schools and centres around the world, all under the Trusteeship of the religious society the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ). All share a common vision which was inspired by the Gospel and true to Marie Madeleine's founding ideal.

Marie Madeleine d'Houët founded the religious order of Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ).



Madeleine de Bengy de Bonnault d'Houët

The school was founded by the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, a religious order of women whose foundress is affectionately known as 'Marie Madeleine'; mother, wife, daughter, widow, friend and loving grandmother and eventually Religious sister. This makes her an excellent role model, not only for young women of faith, but for all people from all walks of life be they single, married, lay, professed, etc.

Today, FCJ sisters are living in Asia, Australia, Europe and the Americas. Organised into provinces they are one body committed to living the charism of faithful companionship with Jesus.

"My God, I only desire your holy will.
Grant me the grace to accomplish it
faithfully as soon as it is made
known to me"

MARIE MADELEINE



WE ARE PART OF THE

Gaudete TRUST

ENGLISH: /GAU'DEɪTEɪ/ GOW-DAY-TAY, ECCLESIASTICAL LATIN: [GAU'DETE]; "REJOICE" IN LATIN)

FOR CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ORDER SCHOOLS



What does this mean for Bellerive?

We have a huge family of support from which to draw from. We will network with other Religious Order schools around the country. Currently our growing family of schools consists of 16 state funded schools and two independent primaries. This represents up to 20% of Catholic state funded schools under the trusteeship of Religious Orders.

What does Gaudete mean?

It is a name that tells us to rejoice!

All within the Gaudete Trust rejoice in the Good News of the Gospel.

We rejoice in the Holy Spirit who is enabling us to create something new and is teaching us what true collaboration means.

We rejoice in the rich heritage of Religious Orders in education.

But most of all every school within the Gaudete Trust rejoices in the young people in their schools, for whom this trust was built.

We want our students and staff to be able to rejoice in the person they are and so achieve the fulness of life of which Jesus spoke.



Prayers used in a CATHOLIC SCHOOL

"Our Father"

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.

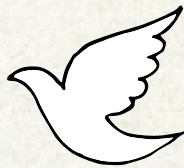


"Hail Mary"

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou
amongst 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"

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.



"Sign of the Cross"

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



Meet our Form Patrons

St Anne

In Christian tradition, Anne is the mother of Mary and so she is Jesus' grandmother. She is honoured by Catholics for this special role.



St Martha

Martha, along with her siblings Lazarus and Mary, was a close friend with Jesus. You can read more about her in Luke 10.



Ruth

The book of Ruth is found in the Old Testament. When her husband dies, she promises to take care of his mother and continue with his faith.



Sarah

Sarah was the wife of Abraham. Her story can be found in Genesis. She shows trust in God through her doubt.



St Theresa of Kolkata

St Theresa founded the missionaries of charity, a religious order who work with the very poor.



Judith

Judith was a wealthy woman who lived simply but used her wealth to overthrow a malicious ruler. Her story is found in the book of Judith in the Old Testament.



An Introduction to The Mass

“At the heart of the life of the Catholic Church has always been the celebration of the Eucharist, or the Mass, as Catholics often call it.

Taking part in the Mass is the hallmark of the Catholic, central and crucial to our Catholic identity.”
(Celebrating the Mass 1)



With thanks to the
Education Commission for the Roman
Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark
for the content of the following pages

Introduction to the Mass

One of the special features of all Catholic schools and colleges is the regular celebration of Mass. Those new to Catholic education can be concerned about not knowing what is happening, and why.

The aim of these pages is to introduce the Mass, with a little information about its history and theology, and an explanation of why it is so important in Catholic life.

It also gives some guidance on the various aspects of the Mass, and reassurance that everyone is more than welcome to participate in whatever way we can.



What is expected of me?

Just to reassure you: the vast majority of both students and staff gain from their participation in the Mass.

We talk about 'celebrating Mass' and it is indeed a celebration. At Mass everyone is welcomed to join in the prayers and the singing, as well as offering the Sign of Peace.

During the distribution of Communion, although only Catholics can receive the Host, everyone is invited to receive a blessing from the minister of Communion.

Service sheets are usually provided (or a PowerPoint shown) with the prayers and responses that we say together. No one is compelled to say or do something that they don't believe in. However, there is an expectation that everyone is respectful.





About the Mass

Mass is celebrated at various times of the year, when the whole school (or part of the school) community gathers together.

Teaching staff are usually expected to be present in any Mass attended by their students – either a Mass for the whole school, or for your year group or tutor group. A Mass can be celebrated indoors or outdoors, it can be small and intimate, or have hundreds in the congregation.

Mass can be quiet and reflective, or full of music and singing.

HISTORY

From the earliest time in Christian history the followers of Christ have been gathering together to 'break bread'.


The Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament, in the Bible, tells of the first disciples meeting in each others' houses to share this symbolic action – and they did so because Jesus told them to.

The earliest Christian writings pass on his instruction at the Last Supper with his disciples ... 'the Lord Jesus took some bread, after he had given thanks, he broke it, and he said: "this is my body, which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, with the cup...'

THEOLOGY

The essential theology of the Mass is the 'sacramental presence of Christ'.

The concept of sacrament is vital in understanding why the Mass is so important for the Catholic community. A sacrament is about making visible something that is invisible. The Mass makes visible the love of God in the form of bread and wine – the offering and sacrifice of Christ on the cross is made present at Mass. The Mass is also called 'Eucharist', which is Greek for thanksgiving. At Mass bread and wine are offered by the priest. During the Eucharistic prayer at the centre of the Mass these become the sacramental presence of Christ – because they are no longer bread and wine but the real presence of Christ himself.



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COMMUNITY

The presence of Christ is also celebrated in the community itself. Jesus said: "where two or three are gathered, there I am in the midst of them." The Mass is a celebration by the community and of the community. By sharing faith, by feeding that faith, and by celebrating that faith, the Mass brings the community together.

Understanding the Mass

The Mass has 4 distinct parts.

1. INTRODUCTORY RITES

GREETING: we start (and finish) Mass with the sign of the cross, and the priest usually greets us and introduces the theme of the Mass

PENITENTIAL RITE: this is the section of the Mass when we seek reconciliation with God for the times we have failed to love God by failing to love our neighbour, saying sorry for what we have and have not done.

(**GLORIA:** because we know we can be forgiven, we praise our God with joy. The Gloria is usually only used on Feast Days and on Sundays.)

2. LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE WORD: we listen to God's word given to us through and New the old and the the Old and New Testament books of the Bible, all inspired by God.

CREED: having heard the word of God we can confidently proclaim the basis of our faith. The Creed is one of the oldest statements of the Church – we are maintaining the central components of the faith that has sustained the Church for 2000 years. The Creed is followed by the Bidding Prayers for our community and for the wider world, usually written and led by students.

3. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

OFFERTORY: gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar, and we symbolically offer ourselves.

HOLY, HOLY: composed of verses from both Old and New Testaments, in the most solemn part of the Mass this response reminds us that we are participating in the eternal sacrifice of the Lord, a quiet and reflective moment.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: the most solemn part of the Mass as the priest echoes Jesus' words over the bread and wine at the Consecration, where the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ.

OUR FATHER: we have been made a community within Christ's sacrifice, and we now pray using the words that he taught us.

SIGN OF PEACE AND COMMUNION: we are about to receive the Lord and we seek to be transformed into the body of Christ, but first we need to recognise that we must be at peace with the world, beginning in our own community. This peace is a special grace from the Lord. It will permeate the world through our actions.

At Communion we become united in the most special way with the Lord.

4. CONCLUDING RITE

DISMISSAL: we have heard the word of God and received the Lord in Holy Communion. We are now tasked to go out to be disciples in our community and in the world, renewed to live joyfully in the peace of Christ.

To sum up the Mass:
in the Liturgy of the Word
Jesus feeds us with his Word,
and we respond in faith and action.

And in the Liturgy of the Eucharist
Jesus feeds us with himself,
and we then go out into the world,
nourished with Christ and his Word,
to live out the Gospel in our communities.



The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

OUR SCHOOL FEAST DAY

We celebrate our school feast day each year on the Friday closest to the solemnity of the immaculate conception (8th December).

On this feast day we celebrate the Virgin Mary who was born without sin. We look to Mary's life and example as inspiration for our own lives. Like Mary, we aim to show complete faith and trust in God in our lives.



Our Feast Day is the highlight of our school year. We come together as a school community to celebrate Mass, and play games and have fun together in our form groups.

“It is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness;
He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you;
He is the beauty to which you are so attracted;
it is He who inspired you with that thirst for fullness
that will not let you settle for compromise;
it is He who urges you to shed the masks of a false life;
it is He who reads in your hearts
your most genuine choices,
the choices that others try to stifle.”

St John Paul the Great





DAILY EXAMEN

A PRAYER TO END THE DAY

Many people speak of wanting to 'do God's will' in their lives, but how do we find what that is?

St Ignatius of Loyola discovered that God's will for each of us is not something preordained and external. He learnt in the context of living out his faith and reflecting on the graces he received that God's will is revealed through our honest responses to what we really believe is right in the ups and downs of daily life.

The prayer of awareness or 'examen' of the Ignatian spiritual tradition helps us become sensitive to how God speaks to us day by day.

This daily examen was important to Marie Madeleine.

*Begin with a pause and a slow, deep breath or two:
become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

Thanksgiving Spirit of Gratitude

I become still in the presence of God who created me and looks at me with love. I bring to mind all the gifts of creation, the gift of my very self — forgiven, called by Christ and graced by the Holy Spirit.

I bring to mind the particular gifts of this day. What am I especially grateful for in the past day

The gift of another day? The love and support I have received? The courage I have mustered?
An event that took place today?

Petition seeking light

I ask for God's light to help me to see in my experience what God wants me to see. Where have I felt God's Spirit to be near and where have I felt isolated from God?

Review of my day

I ask for the light to know God and to know myself as God sees me. God is always at work in my life, labouring to bring about my greatest good and the good of others. I am invited to cooperate with the action of God in my life, so I look for those moments in the day when I have been open to God and have experienced God's grace and the fruits of the Spirit: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22)*. I pay attention to these times of life, light and energy whether they were striking or modest. I also become aware of any sense of distance and dislocation when I felt far away from God's grace. I try not to be judgemental but simply to notice. These questions might help me to get in touch with the movement in my spirit; Where have I felt true joy today? What has troubled me? What has challenged me? Where and when did I pause today? Have I noticed God's presence in any of this?

Response

Deepening my desire to cooperate with God's action in my life. In light of my review, what is my response to the God of my life? I speak with God as one friend speaks to another.

A look ahead in the light of God's grace

As I look ahead what comes to mind? With what spirit do I want to enter tomorrow? ***I ask for the graces I need to live more faithfully in the way I am being drawn by the Spirit of Christ.***

**Il nous aime plus que nous
aimons nous-mêmes et
rien ne lui est impossible.
(Marie Madeleine)**



**He loves us more than
we love ourselves and
nothing is impossible for him.
(Marie Madeleine)**