

Religious Life of the School

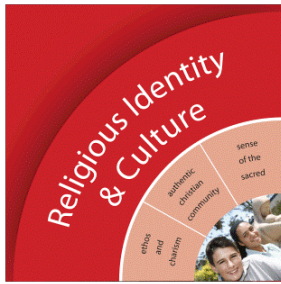
The Religious Life of the school, which is reflective of the second dimension of the Religious Education – ‘teaching people to be religious in a particular way’ (Moran, 1991), provides a lens through which our school community at St Thomas More can develop and enrich its religious life.

The four interrelated components: Religious Identity and Culture; Evangelisation and Faith Formation; Prayer and Worship and Social Action and Justice provide an important focus for the development of the religious life of our community. They are reflected in the following ways:

Social Action and Justice at St Thomas More

- Project Compassion – Caritas Carnival, weekly assembly prayer
- Focus on values for Assembly prayer
- St Vincent de Paul Christmas hamper appeal
- Anzac Day liturgy and participation in local community marches
- Prayer for justice and peace
- Marist Solidarity fundraising opportunities to support Marist mission
- Catholic Missions activities
- Promoting the resources and activities of Catholic Social Justice and Peace agencies for prayer and action through involvement in Caritas, Marist Solidarity, Catholic Missions, St Vincent de Paul
- Reflection for social justice included in whole school, staff and class prayer
- Marist Forum for staff
- Mini Vinnies projects at school
- Curriculum planning acknowledges social action and justice in curriculum units
- Outreach to local community from the school
- Marist Mums hampers and meal banks
- School leaders involved in Year 6 service day





Religious Identity and Culture at St Thomas More

- Marist Charism central to our school story
- Marist Characteristics named, communicated and lived in community
- Focus on a particular Marist characteristic for the year
- Celebrating days of religious significance to focus on the school values, mission and ethos
- Celebration of Feast days – St Marcellin Champagnat, St Thomas More, Nano Nagle, St Mary of the Cross, Francis Xavier
- School house teams connected with school saints
- Learning the stories of the saints and the messages from these stories -
- School iconography – symbols, statues, murals
- Induction of new staff – Marist induction program through Marist Ministries
- Sharing the school story with new staff each year
- Communication through the school newsletter, school website and parent portal
- Staff development days at the beginning of the year – focus on school charism and story, staff mass
- Staff involvement in school and parish masses as musicians
- Playground companions\Mini Marists\Lunchtime game clubs
- Connection with St Teresa's College – student visits, Champagnat day
- Marist prayer group operates each month with staff and parish members attending
- Champagnat Award given each semester
- Weekly Marist and 'You can do it' award given on assembly
- Students acknowledged on assembly for birthdays
- School song, prayer and pledge are known and used by students at school assemblies and celebrations
- Staff Spirituality weekend for staff - this is an optional spirituality retreat that is well supported each year
- Grandparents' Day celebrations

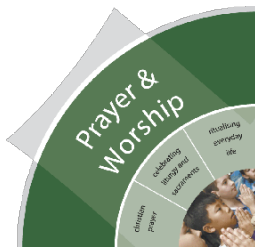




Evangelisation and Faith Formation at St Thomas More

- Strong links with Noosa District Parish – Priests are present to students and families. Many opportunities exist to celebrate as a community.
- Parish Family Mass – held once per term
- Whole school masses and liturgies held throughout the year. Year levels have the opportunity to also celebrate through year level masses and liturgies.
- Sacramental program - although parish based, is led jointly by parish and school staff
- School song and prayer are used with students, staff and parents
- Our school newsletter highlights feast days, information about scripture, celebration, prayer and liturgy
- Staff RE News each week informs and supports staff
- Pastoral worker employed 3 days per week. Pastoral parents provide a link between parents and the school community
- Marist Mums prayer group
- Year 6 student leadership retreat
- Patron Saint chosen as a focus for each year
- Exploring the values and messages contained within the school Characteristics – Presence, Simplicity, Love of Work, Family Spirit, In the Way of Mary
- Students involved as altar servers for school and parish celebrations
- STM Rules
- Visiting presenters inform, inspire and educate students and teachers – e.g. Andrew Chinn, Michael Fitzpatrick, Maurice Ryan, Beth Nolen.
- Year 6 Students attending Parish Anointing Mass
- Parish Children's Activity days each term – link faith with music, art, drama and scripture.
- Meeting the pastoral needs of families through school initiatives – Marist Mums care packs, welcome packs to new students, Thinking of You bags
- Use of class strategies such as 'Prayer Journals' and 'Prayer Bear' to help make connections with the home prayer life of students.
- Teachers supporting in the leadership of the Parish Sacramental student preparation sessions





Prayer and Worship At St Thomas More

- School prayer is an important part of class and school prayer
- Prayer is an important part of weekly school assemblies
- The Religious Education Calendar for the year prioritises school feast days and liturgical celebrations.
- Staff gather weekly for staff prayer, led by staff members.
- Staff meetings, parent meetings and administration meetings begin with prayer
- School led parish masses allow students to lead prayer as part of school celebrations
- Class groups lead weekly assembly prayer
- Prayer focus areas are set up for Lent, Holy Week, Champagnat feast day
- Champagnat week prayer focus enables students to learn the story of St Marcellin Champagnat
- Marian prayer is an important focus of student, staff and parent prayer experiences
- The school chapel is used as a place for prayer and reflection
- Meditative prayer practices are used in the classroom setting and also as part of Lenten prayer focus spaces e.g. Labyrinth, Stations of the Cross focus spaces,
- Class prayer spaces are well resourced, varied and updated with symbols according to the liturgical year
- Staff prayer packs support staff in the development of the prayer life in their classroom
- Lenten prayer groups and the local Marist prayer group enable staff to be involved in varied prayer experiences
- Opportunities to pray the Rosary are made available to all community members during the month of the Rosary
- Prayer packs are sent home to families following the death of a family member
- Prayer is an important part of all school celebrations
- Teachers involved in Professional development to broaden and deepen their understanding of prayer
- Use of the Arts to enhance prayer – movement and drama as part of liturgical celebrations and the school choir leading school celebrations
- Induction of Year 6 leaders with student retreat
- Celebrating special days; Mother's Day liturgy and morning tea, Grandparents' Day and Father's Day breakfast
- Parents welcome to be part of the prayer life of classroom

