

RELIGIOUS  
STUDIES A  
REVISION  
NOTES

FOR EDEXCEL GCSE (9-1)  
SIMPLE, CLEAR & MEMORABLE

**PAPER 1**  
**CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY**



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# USING THIS BOOK

## 1.1 THIS IS A SPECIFICATION CHAPTER

### 1.1.1 This is a specification subchapter

“This is a source of wisdom and authority” – *source ref.*

## Section 1

# 1 BELIEFS AND TEACHINGS

## 1.1 The Trinity

**“I believe in one God, the Father Almighty”** (creator)  
**“I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ”** (saved humanity)  
**“I believe in the Holy Spirit”** (present in Mass)  
– *Nicene Creed*

- Oneness of God:
  - there is one God in three persons
  - each person is fully God
  - each person is different from the other persons
- The oneness of God is significant because it is revealed in the Bible:

**“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord”** – *Deuteronomy 6*

**“Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one”**  
– *Mark 12*

- The Trinity in Catholic worship and belief today:
  - **Baptism**: candidate blessed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
  - **Eucharist**: gives thanks to God the Father, makes God the Son present in the consecrated bread and wine, all through God the Holy Spirit

## 1.2 Biblical understandings of God as a Trinity of Persons

- All the persons of the Trinity were present at the Baptism of Jesus:

(Holy Spirit)

**“he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; **17** and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased’”**

(Father)

(Son)

– *Matthew 3*

- Historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity:
  - **600 BC:** teaching on one God in the Shema
  - **30 AD:** revelation of Trinity at Annunciation and at Jesus’ baptism
  - **32 AD:** passing of Trinity by Apostolic Tradition
  - **270-325 AD:** Arius claims Jesus was just a prophet
  - **325 AD:** Council of Nicea produces Nicene Creed to clarify divinity
  - **381 AD:** Council of Constantinople clarifies Holy Spirit is a person
  - **400 AD:** compilation of Bible (Apostolic Tradition and early beliefs)

## Section 1

### 1.3 Creation

**“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” – Genesis 1**

**“he rested on the seventh day from all his work”**

**“You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die”**

– Genesis 2

**“she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate”**

**“I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself”**

**“the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken”**

– Genesis 3

- Divergent understandings of Genesis 1-3:
  - **Literal:**
    - exact retelling of Creation
    - historical and scientific account
    - Creationism
  - **Metaphorical:**
    - symbolic and sacred stories
    - meditation on nature and purpose of universe
    - incorporates modern science
- Characteristics of God:
  - creator: **“Let there be light” – Genesis 1**
  - benevolent: **“God saw that the light was good” – Genesis 1**
  - omnipotent: **“Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters” – Genesis 1**
  - eternal: **“In the beginning was the Word” – John 1**



## 1.4 The significance of the Creation account in understanding the nature of humanity

**“So God created man in his own image” – Genesis 1**

- Humans bear the image of God by being:
  - **rational:**
    - intelligent and can find way to God
    - can engage in debates about faith
  - **free will and conscience:**
    - can choose right and wrong through the voice of God within
    - make moral choices to uphold Gospel values
  - **relate to God:**
    - can enter relationship with God
    - daily prayer/weekly Mass
  - **give and receive love:**
    - can only find happiness in community of love
    - sacrament of marriage
  - **answerable to God:**
    - accountable for actions
    - judged after death
  
- Divergent views on humanity's relationship with Creation:
  - **dominion:**
    - authority to rule given from God
    - over-farming to feed humans
    - deforestation to suit needs
    - burning fossil fuels to generate power
  - **stewardship:**
    - dominion expressed in loving care and cultivation
    - managing farming/fishing to protect nature
    - recycling where possible
    - using renewable energy

**“There is a growing sensitivity to the environment and the need to protect nature” –  
*Laudato Si*, by Pope Francis**

## Section 1

### 1.5 The Incarnation

**“He was in the beginning with God”** – John 1

**“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us”** – John 1

**“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”**  
– John 1

- Jesus is fully God and fully human:

- **fully human:**

- born of a human

**“she gave birth to her first-born son”** – Luke 2

- died on the cross

**“he breathed his last”** – Luke 23

- got tired

**“Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey”** – John 4

- cried at his friend’s death

**“Jesus wept”** – John 11

- **fully God:**

- born of a virgin

**“a virgin shall conceive and bear a son”** – Matthew 1

- said he was there before Abraham

**“before Abraham was, I am”** – John 8

- claims He is eternal

**“My words will not pass away”** – Matthew 24

- performed miracles, e.g. healed a leper

**“be clean”** – Mark 1

- **Importance** of Incarnation:

- people were able to see God’s nature

- Jesus is present at every Mass during the transubstantiation

- shows God is so benevolent he came to Earth to bring salvation

**“The Word became flesh for us in order to save us by reconciling us with God”**  
– CCC 457

## 1.6 The events in the Paschal Mystery

- Purpose of His **life**:
  - salvation
    - ▮ **“to save us”** – CCC 457
  - to show us how much He loves us
    - ▮ **“that thus we might know God's love”** – CCC 458
  - to teach us how to be holy
    - ▮ **“to be our model of holiness”** – CCC 459
  - to show us how to be part of the Kingdom of God
    - ▮ **“make us partakers of the divine nature”** – CCC 460
  
- Purpose of His **death**:
  - to show how to respond to cruelty
    - ▮ **“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”** – Luke 23
  - to erase the sins of the world with God's mercy
    - ▮ **“he breathed his last”** – Luke 23
  - the Last Supper is the basis of Mass
  
- Purpose of His **resurrection**:
  - it is the foundation of the Church
  - proves Jesus is God (only God can conquer death)
  - it shows that God is with us as it is a present event
    - ▮ **“I am with you always”** – Matthew 28
  
- Purpose of His **ascension**:
  - reason to believe in eternal life after death with God in heaven
  - prepares Earth for coming of Holy Spirit at Pentecost
    - ▮ **“he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven”** – Luke 24
  
- Redemptive efficacy refers to how the death and resurrection of Jesus guaranteed salvation for humanity:
  - Jesus sacrificed himself for our salvation
    - ▮ **“This is my body given for you”** – Luke 22
  - His ascension promises resurrection for all and ascension to heaven

## Section 1

### 1.7 The significance of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus for Catholic beliefs about salvation and grace

- **Salvation** is the act of saving humanity from sin.
- **Grace** is undeserved mercy from God allowing goodness and holiness.

**“For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him” – John 3**

- Jesus saved the world through His:
  - **life:** if He did not live, he could not die
  - **death:** crucifixion offered salvation
  - **resurrection:** shows we will also resurrect through salvation
  - **ascension:** salvation promises eternal life with God in heaven

**“This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, but which has become the head of the corner” – Acts 4**

- The fact that Jesus is the ‘cornerstone’ means he is the sole reason for salvation; without the cornerstone the ‘building’ will collapse.
- Salvation and grace are received today:

	<b>Salvation</b>	<b>Grace</b>
<b>Mass</b>		blessings to strengthen ability to preach
<b>Baptism</b>	saved of original sin	becomes child of God
<b>Reconciliation</b>	saved of personal sin	repentance restores relationship with God
<b>Eucharist</b>	re-enactment of Last Supper’s salvation	receives body and blood of Jesus Christ
<b>Confirmation</b>		strength through Holy Spirit
<b>Matrimony</b>		strength to love and procreate
<b>Holy Orders</b>		strength to fulfil ministry
<b>Anointing of the Sick</b>		strengthens, unites sufferer with Jesus’ suffering

## 1.8 Catholic beliefs about eschatology

- Beliefs about Life after death:
  - **resurrection** like Jesus
  - **eternal** life in heaven for those who please God
  - **judgement** according to St Paul:
    - “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ”  
– 2 Corinthians 5
  
- Nature of resurrection, judgement, heaven, hell and purgatory:
  - **Resurrection:** re-raising of the physical and spiritual human body
    - “the human body decays and the soul goes to meet God, while awaiting its reunion with its glorified body” – CCC 997
  
  - **Particular Judgement:** instant judgement at death
    - “Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death” – CCC 1022
  
  - **Last Judgement:** judgement of all at the end of time/second coming
    - “Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” – CCC 1038
  
  - **Heaven:** eternal life with God
    - “the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise” – CCC 1027
  
  - **Purgatory:** stage of purification of the soul
    - “but after death they undergo purification” – CCC 1030
  
  - **Hell:** self-proposed eternal separation from God
    - “definitive self-exclusion from communion with God” – CCC 1033
  
- Importance of eschatological beliefs:
  - an incentive to live a good Christian life
  - an incentive not to sin so as to avoid hell
  - give life a meaning and purpose
  - encourages people to love their neighbours
  
- Divergent eschatological beliefs:
  - universalists believe God is too loving for hell to exist
  - some say purgatory is not biblical so does not exist
  - some add emphasis to Last Judgement as it is final
  - some do not believe in physical resurrection

## Section 2

### 2 PRACTICES

#### 2.1 The sacramental nature of reality

**“The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us” – CCC 1131**

- The sacramental nature of reality is how Catholics find the grace of God in the physical world, through simple items like bread, wine, water, actions and love.

Sacrament (meaning and effect)	Practice	Symbolism	Grace
<b>Sacraments of Initiation</b>			
<b>Baptism</b> - <i>welcoming a person into the family of God</i>	- priest pours water over child and blesses them in the name of the Trinity - child anointed with Oil of Chrism - parents given lighted candle	- water washes sin - oil shows child is chosen by Christ - candle represents presence of God	- frees child from original sin - strengthens child to continue Jesus' mission
	<b>“Holy Baptism is [...] the door which gives access to the other sacraments.” – CCC 1213</b>		
<b>Confirmation</b> - <i>receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit to strengthen one's faithful life</i>	- candidate renews baptismal vows - anointed with Oil of Chrism - candidate takes a new name	- laying of hands symbolises gift of Holy Spirit - oil shows child is chosen for a task - new name symbolises new phase of life	- gives candidate the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit - spiritual strength
	<b>“Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” – CCC 1285</b>		
<b>Eucharist</b> - <i>receiving the body and blood of Christ</i>	- bread and wine become body and blood through Holy Spirit - received weekly	- consuming the consecrated body and blood unifies Catholics with Christ	- reminder of Jesus' Passion and our salvation
	<b>“The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life” – CCC 1324</b>		

<b>Sacraments of Healing</b>			
<b>Reconciliation</b> - forgiveness of sins	- contrition - confession - absolution - penance	- heals spiritual illness of sin	- offer of mercy, forgiveness and advice from God
<b>“the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin” – CCC 1423</b>			
<b>Anointing of the sick</b> - healing and forgiveness of sins to prepare for afterlife	- priest lays hands on ill person - anointed with oil of the sick - sins are absolved - receives viaticum (Holy Communion)	- heals physical illness with spiritual blessing - oil shows they had been chosen for a task they have come to an end of	- spiritual strength to overcome illness - forgiveness is granted to allow them to enter heaven
<b>“the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them” – CCC 1499</b>			
<b>Sacraments at the Service of Communion</b>			
<b>Holy Orders</b> - receipt of a distinct mission within the Church	- bishop lays hands on candidate - anointed with Oil of Chrism - given Paten and Chalice to minister Eucharist	- oil shows they are chosen for a mission in the Church	- strength to lead congregation(s) - given God’s authority to minister Eucharist
<b>“the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time” – CCC 1536</b>			
<b>Matrimony</b> - joining a couple as one in the Church	- vows are made - rings are exchanged - Nuptial Mass	- rings symbolise never-ending love	- spiritual strength to raise a family - God is present in their life-long relationship
<b>“The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life” – CCC 1601</b>			

- Divergent Christian attitudes to the sacraments:
  - **Orthodox Christians recognise all seven** sacraments
  - **Anglicans only recognise Baptism and the Eucharist** as sacraments
  - **Quakers do not recognise any sacraments** as a communication of God’s grace, but as an expression of faith

## Section 2

### 2.2 Liturgical worship within Catholic Christianity

- Mass is the central act of Catholic worship, celebrated every day.
- Catholics are expected to attend mass weekly.
- Structure of Mass:
  - **Introductory Rites:** community gather, penitential act
  - **Liturgy of the Word:** Bible readings, homily, intercession
  - **Liturgy of the Eucharist:** offertory, transubstantiation, communion
  - **Concluding Rites:** announcements, blessings, call to preach the Word
- Importance of the Eucharist during Mass:
  - it is the source and summit of Christian life
    - “**The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life**” – CCC 1324
  - CCC describes it as the most important sacrament
    - “**the Eucharist occupies a unique place as the Sacrament of sacraments**” – CCC 1211
  - Jesus instructed us to celebrate the sacrament
    - “**Do this in remembrance of this me**” – 1 Corinthians 11
  - it makes Catholics part of the Church, the Body of Christ
  - it makes Catholics part of one another
    - “**we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another**” – *Lumen Gentium* 7
- Importance of liturgical worship in Catholicism:
  - based on unchanged **Apostolic Tradition**
  - **the Creed is recited unchanged**, since the Council of Constantinople
  - **keeps Mass as the central act** of worship
- Importance of less structured worship in Protestantism:
  - **unrestricted connection** with God
  - the **Creed is not always recited**
  - stronger **focus on the Bible**
  - **more involvement by the congregation** is seen as a better connection



## 2.3 The funeral rite as a liturgical celebration of the Church

- Practices associated with the funeral rite:
  - **in the home:** Vigil of Prayer and watching over the deceased
  - **in the church:** Requiem Mass
  - **in the cemetery:** Rite of Committal and Commendation, goodbyes

**“Our great hope is that we will be redeemed from death by Christ’s great victory”**  
– *Preparing for my funeral, Cardinal Vincent Nichols*

- Aims of the funeral rite:
  - **Communion with the Deceased:**
    - efficacious prayer to support the deceased on their journey
    - reassurance that they can support people even after death
  - **Communion of the Community:**
    - connects the living and the deceased through the Church
    - reassurance of connection through prayer and Eucharist
  - **Proclamation of eternal life to the community:**
    - reminder that death is not the end but the start to eternal life with God in heaven
    - gives hope for the world to come

## Section 2

### 2.4 Prayer as the 'raising of hearts and minds to God'

**"Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God" – CCC 2559**

- Nature and significance of different types of prayer:
  - **intercession**: praying for others
  - **thanksgiving**: expressing thanks to God
  - **adoration**: praising God
  - **petition**: asking God for personal needs
  - **repentance**: asking for forgiveness of sins
- The Lord's Prayer:
  - given to us by Jesus Christ
  - **"Pray then like this: Our Father..." – Matthew 6**
  - reminder of key qualities of Christianity
  - **"The Lord's Prayer is the most perfect of prayers" – CCC 2763**
  - unites Christians globally
- Formulaic prayer:
  - **connects to the Church's history** and tradition
  - **unites Catholics** through similarity, e.g. in Mass
- Extempore prayer:
  - unplanned, own words **make communication with God easier**
  - applicable in **unique situations** of need
- Importance of prayer:
  - brings **inner peace**
  - **strengthens relationship** with God
  - **a way to follow Jesus' teachings**
- Importance of having different types of prayer:
  - different **moods** or **stages** of life
  - different **locations**
  - different **needs**

## 2.5 The role and importance of forms of popular piety

- **Popular Piety** is non-liturgical worship, such as praying the Rosary.

**“The religious sense of the Christian people has always found expression in various forms of piety” – CCC 1674**

- **The Rosary:**
  - sets of beads joined together in a sequence, each colour representing a different prayer
  - used in private prayer, suitable in most locations
  - focuses on key events in Jesus’ life and the grace of God
  - **Importance:** meditation on God’s grace through Jesus, honours Mary
  - **Divergent views:** Protestants do not recognise Mary’s importance
- **Eucharistic Adoration:**
  - prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament
  - Body of Christ placed in monstrance
  - **Importance:** focused on prayer just as Jesus said “watch and pray” at the Garden of Gethsemane
  - **Divergent views:** Protestants do not believe in the transubstantiation
- **Stations of the Cross:**
  - 14 stations of Jesus’ Passion, placed around the walls of a church
  - each station consists of an image and a caption
  - each station is meant for a specific prayer or meditation
  - **Importance:** links Catholics to Jesus’ suffering, reminder of salvation
  - **Divergent views:** Protestants say some scenes are not Biblical
- Importance of having different types of worship:
  - simply **different ways** of communicating with God
  - some are **private**, some **public**
  - different **moods**

**“These expressions of piety extend the liturgical life of the Church, but do not replace it” – CCC 1675**

## Section 2

### 2.6 Pilgrimage

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- Nature, history and purpose of pilgrimage:
  - A pilgrimage is a journey to a religious place
  - **0 – 300AD:** pilgrimages started taking place
  - **1500AD:** destruction of major sites
  - **1800 – present:** increased pilgrimages
- People go on pilgrimages to pray, connect with other Christians and get closer to God and away from the business of life.

**“Pilgrimages evoke our earthly journey toward heaven” – CCC 2691**

- **Jerusalem:**
  - location of last week of Jesus’ life
  - holiness of Jesus’ tomb
  - common pilgrimage site for all Christians, as it is based on Jesus’ life
- **Lourdes:**
  - site of Mary’s appearances to St Bernadette
  - reports of healings
  - Protestants do not recognise Mary’s importance
- **Rome:**
  - contains Vatican City, home of the Pope, head of the Catholic Church
  - four Papal Basilicas in Vatican City
  - Protestants do not recognise the Pope’s authority
- **Walsingham:**
  - Mary instructed a woman through three visions to build her a replica of her home in Nazareth
  - destroyed in 1538 and rebuilt in 1897
  - both Catholic and Protestant Churches visit

## 2.7 Catholic Social Teaching

### “Love your neighbour as yourself” – Mark 12

- Seven teachings:
  - **sacredness of life** and dignity of a human
  - **call to family**, community and participation
  - **human rights** and our responsibility to protect them
  - **protecting the poor** and vulnerable
  - **dignity of work** and rights of workers
  - **one solidary family** with all people
  - **stewardship** and care for God’s creation
- Teachings about justice, peace and reconciliation:
  - **justice**: eliminating injustices in everyday life
  - **peace**: preventing war and conflict by encouraging harmony
  - **reconciliation**: protecting dignity of workers internationally

- The inclusion of the poor in society:

**“If we, who are God’s means of hearing the poor, turn deaf ears to this plea, we oppose the Father’s will and his plan”**

- *Evangelli Gaudium 187*

**“we must never forget that the planet belongs to all mankind and is meant for all mankind”**

- *Evangelli Gaudium 190*

- The sheep are the good in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, as below:

<b>“I was hungry and you gave me food”</b>	(feeding the hungry)
<b>“I was thirsty and you gave me drink”</b>	(giving water to the thirsty)
<b>“I was a stranger and you welcomed me”</b>	(sheltering the homeless)
<b>“I was naked and you clothed me”</b>	(donating clothes to charity)
<b>“I was sick and you visited me”</b>	(visiting the sick)
<b>“I was in prison and you came to me”</b>	(visiting the imprisoned)

**“as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me”**

– *Matthew 25*

- What CAFOD does and why:
  - **helps everyone** as it is rooted in the Catholic Community
  - **helps countries to develop** to maintain dignity
  - **fights global injustice and poverty** for global neighbours
  - **emergency aid** to ‘comfort the afflicted’
  - **raising awareness and educating Catholics** for long-term change
  - **working with employers** to protect the dignity of worker

## Section 2

### 2.8 Catholic mission and evangelism

- History of mission and evangelism:
  - God sent his son to save the world
  - Jesus sent his apostles to preach His word
  - the apostles and their successors evangelised
  - missionaries evangelised globally
  - the magisterium authoritatively evangelises due to Apostolic Tradition
  
- Ways of evangelisation:
  - **Individuals:**
    - **locally:** through career and family life
    - **nationally:** by attending national events
    - **internationally:** through social media, attending global events, supporting charities
  - **The Church:**
    - **locally:** leading a congregation, Mass, sacraments
    - **nationally:** hosting national conferences
    - **internationally:** encyclicals, global charities

**“Spirit-filled evangelizers means evangelizers fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit” – *Evangelii Gaudium* 259**

- Importance of evangelism:
  - **fulfils Jesus’ instruction** to “go make disciples of all nations”
  - helps people **become better disciples**
  - helps **strengthen the Church**

### 3 SOURCES OF WISDOM AND AUTHORITY

#### 3.1 The Bible

- Development of the Bible:
  - written by 40 authors
  - written over 1500 years
  - originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek
  - was compiled in 400 CE

**“The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures” – CCC 125**

- Structure and literary forms:
  - **Old Testament:**
    - **Law:** 613 commandments revealed Moses
    - **History:** history of the Jews
    - **Prophets:** prophecies of warning
    - **Writings:** Poetic and Wisdom writings about God
  - **New Testament:**
    - **Gospels:** detail Jesus' life
    - **Letters:** formal letters about how to behave in the Early Church
    - **Revelation:** apocalyptic description about the end of the world
- Divergent views about which books are to be in the Bible:
  - the **Council of Trent (1545)** affirmed the inclusion of seven deuterocanonical books in the Catholic Bible
  - the **Protestant Bible does not contain these books** due to 'irrelevance'
  - some **Eastern Orthodox Churches' Bibles contain additional scriptures** which are not recognised as canonical by the Catholic Church

## Section 3

### 3.2 Interpretation of the Bible

- Catholics believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God:
  - it is **written by humans**
  - as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit, **God is the primary author**
  - the **message of the Bible is true**

**“All Scripture is inspired by God” – 2 Timothy**
  
- Divergent interpretations of the authority of the Bible:
  - **literal Word of God:**
    - infallible as it is written by God
    - taken as word for word truth
  - **revealed Word of God:**
    - written by humans under God’s influence
    - God’s message is true and intact

**“The inspired books teach the truth” – CCC 107**
  - **source of guidance and teaching:**
    - to be read as a prayerful activity
    - the Church guides interpretation of the Bible
    - comforts believers in times of need

**“Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written” – CCC 111**
  
- Implications of different interpretations today:
  - most Catholics are liberalists and accept science in collaboration with scripture
  - belief in Jesus remains more important than belief in the Bible’s truths

**“the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture”**  
– CCC 110

**“God’s Word shall establish articles of faith”**  
**“A simple layman armed with Scripture is greater than the mightiest Pope without it”**  
– Martin Luther (Lutheranism)



### 3.3 The magisterium of the Church

- The ordinary magisterium:

- is the **living teaching office of the Church** (e.g. through homilies)
- is the **authentic interpreter of scripture**

**“The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church”**

- CCC 100

- is the **supreme authority for Catholics** through Apostolic Tradition

**“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church” –**  
*Matthew 16*

- The extraordinary magisterium:

	Meaning	Function	Importance
<b>Conciliar Magisterium</b>	an ecumenical council	clarifies key beliefs of the faith through the entire Church	- considers multi-denominational views - usually produces a key document which we can refer to, e.g. Nicene Creed or Lumen Gentium
<b>Pontifical Magisterium</b>	ex cathedra; a declaration by the Pope	clarifies key beliefs of the faith through the head of the Church	- have only been two (declared Immaculate Conception and Assumption of Mary as infallible) - makes a belief official for all Catholics

- Importance of the magisterium:

- **addresses modern issues** such as abortion or euthanasia
- **gives ex cathedra** so a Catholic can understand their faith fully
- holds **ecumenical councils** to clarify key beliefs in the Church
- **regulates and updates** the celebration of Mass

## Section 3

### 3.4 The Second Vatican Council

- Nature and history of Vatican II:
  - 11 Oct 1962 (John XXIII) – 8 Dec 1965 (Paul VI)
  - St Peter's Basilica, Vatican City
- Importance of Vatican II:
  - **published four Constitutions** clarifying beliefs and updating procedures
  - **published three Declarations** of the faith
  - **published nine Decrees** answering specific questions
- The four Constitutions:
  - **Dei Verbum:** (*divine revelation*)
    - Jesus is the Word of God
    - Bible and tradition are equally important
    - the Bible is the inspired Word of God
    - Gospels are the most important

**“Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it” – Dei Verbum 4**
  - **Lumen Gentium:** (*beliefs*)
    - defines possibility of non-Christian salvation
    - explains role of Mary
    - emphasises importance of laity
    - encourages Bishops and Priests to work together more

**“the individual bishops represent each his own church, but all of them together and with the Pope represent the entire Church”**  
– *Lumen Gentium* 23
  - **Sacrosanctum Concilium:** (*liturgy*)
    - introduces Eucharistic ministers
    - allows vernacularism (Mass said in local language)
    - Eucharist received in both forms
    - revises lectionary for Mass to feature more Bible readings

**“Such participation by the Christian people is their right and duty by reason of their baptism” – Sacrosanctum Concilium 14**
  - **Gaudium et Spes:** (*modern Church*)
    - highlights importance of talking with non-Christians
    - highlights negative impact of science and technology on faith
    - covers economics, poverty, social injustice, culture and ecumenism

**“By virtue of their methods these sciences cannot penetrate to the intimate notion of things” – Gaudium et Spes 57**

### 3.5 The Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God

- Nature and significance of the Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God:
  - the Body of Christ means the individuals making up the Christian community
    - all the members of the Body of Christ are **strengthened in unity**
  - the People of God means the individuals who have found faith in Jesus
    - all the People of God **were made part of the Church by baptism**

**“though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another”**  
– *Romans 12*

**“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”** – *1 Corinthians 12*

- Importance of the Church as the Body of Christ and People of God:
  - Christians form one body, **united with one another and with Christ**
  - it shows that **Christians can be different yet be a unity**
  - it shows the **importance of Mass in sharing the Body of Christ**
  - it shows that **Jesus’ Body is still with us** after his ascension
- Divergent attitudes to the Church as the Body of Christ:
  - **Catholics believe the Pope is the head of the Church** and has the authority to preach the Word of God
  - **Orthodox Christians do not recognise the Pope** as the head of the Church, but the councils of patriarchs
  - **Protestant Christians believe in ‘Sola Scriptura’**, that the Bible is the only authority of the Church

## Section 3

### 3.6 The meaning of the four marks of the Church

**“We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church”**

– *Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*

- **One:**
  - meaning one body, one Church
  - united through one Mass
  - united through one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
  
  - Importance:
    - ecumenism (of Vatican II)
    - regardless of denominations
    - prompts us to pray with other Christians

**“The Church is one because of her source [...] in the Trinity of Persons” – CCC 813**

- **Holy:**
  - instituted by Christ for a purpose
  - united with Christ
  - visible sign of holiness
  
  - Importance:
    - Church is an opportunity to take sacraments
    - a way to get closer to God through prayer
    - teaches people how to live God’s word

**“United with Christ, the Church is sanctified by him” – CCC 824**

- **Catholic:**
  - universal Church
  - Jesus is universally present
  
  - Importance:
    - Churches found all over the world
    - worldwide organisations such as CAFOD
    - strengthened by global history, e.g. visions worldwide

**“Where there is Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic Church.” – CCC 830**

- **Apostolic:**
  - Apostolic Tradition
  - Apostolic Succession (authority of magisterium)
  
- Importance:
  - magisterium addresses modern issues
  - duty to teach and pass on faith
  - duty to defend the people of God

**“She was and remains built on the foundation of the Apostles” – CCC 857**

## Section 3

### 3.7 Mary as a model of the Church

- **Joined with Christ in the work of salvation:**

- she assisted Jesus during his crucifixion
- doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is about both Mary and Jesus
- ascended into heaven just like Jesus

**“Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ”**  
– CCC 964

- **Model of discipleship:**

- first disciple; a follower of Jesus since conception
- dedicated life to caring for Jesus
- still prays for us | **“pray for us sinners”** – *Hail Mary*

**“I am the handmaid of the Lord”** – *Luke 1*

- **Model of faith and charity:**

- immediately trusted in Angel Gabriel
- encouraged Jesus' first miracle through charity
- had faith to watch Jesus die on the cross

**“By her complete adherence to the Father's will [...] the Virgin Mary is the Church's model of faith and charity”** – CCC 967

- Implications of this teaching today:

- the Rosary
- Marian prayers, e.g. Hail Mary
- apparitions
- statues in Churches

### 3.8 Sources of personal and ethical decision making

- Jesus as an authoritative source for moral teaching:
  - loved others (golden rule during Sermon on the Mount)
    - “whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them” – *Matthew 7*
  - forgave
    - “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” – *Luke 23*
  - served
    - “[He] began to wash the disciples' feet” – *John 13*
  - socially just
    - “Preach good news to the poor” – *Luke 4*
  
- Jesus was an obedient Jew who fulfilled the Law of Moses:
  - “I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them” – *Matthew 5*
  
- **Natural Law:**
  - the moral order to the universe given by God at creation
  - discoverable, never changes, and applies to all humans
  - comes from St Thomas Aquinas
    - “Good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided”  
– *St Thomas Aquinas*
    - “Depart from evil, and do good” – *Psalms 37*
  
- **Virtue:**
  - high moral standards
  - enables people to analyse ethical situations effectively
  - cardinal virtues, e.g. justice, and theological virtues, e.g. faith, according to St Thomas Aquinas
    - “A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good” – *CCC 1803*
  
- **Primacy of conscience:**
  - the voice of God in one's mind
  - a sacred obligation to follow an informed conscience
  - informed by the Bible and prayers of the magisterium
    - “For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God” – *CCC 1776*
  
- Divergent implications of natural law, virtue and conscience:
  - “good” and “evil” can be interpreted differently
  - modern issues (e.g. abortion) have very wide interpretations
  - Protestants rely on the Bible (*Sola Scriptura*) and not the magisterium

## Section 3

### 4 FORMS OF EXPRESSION AND WAYS OF LIFE

#### 4.1 The common and divergent forms of architecture, design and decoration of Catholic Churches

**“this house ought to be in good taste and a worthy place for prayer and sacred ceremonial” – CCC 1181**

- Architecture:
  - **pews facing east:** where the Sun rises, and from where Jesus rose
  - **cruciform shape:** reminder of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross
  - **round shape:** reminder of God’s eternal nature
  - **high ceilings and spires:** connects to heaven
- Design:
  - **altar:** site of transubstantiation, on raised sanctuary
  - **nave:** site of people’s prayers
  - **tabernacle:** stores consecrated host; reminder of Jesus’ presence
  - **lectern:** readings are read here; reminder of Bible and teachings
  - **candles:** reminder that Jesus is the light of the world
- Decoration:
  - **stained-glass windows:** tell stories of saints and the Bible
  - **Sacred Heart of Jesus:** reminder of God’s eternal love
- Divergent features:
  - multiple altars
  - some star-shaped to let in God’s light
  - different material to suit the era, e.g. Neo-Byzantine, concrete, or brick
- Uses of these features:
  - people sit in the nave
    - “[worshippers] are the living stones, gathered to be built into a spiritual house – CCC 1179**
  - most of Mass celebrated at altar
    - “a house of prayer in which the Eucharist is celebrated” – CCC 1181**
  - Bible readings at lectern
    - “a suitable place for announcing his message so that the attention of the people may be easily directed” – CCC 1184**
  - Eucharist kept in tabernacle
    - “the dwelling of God with men” – CCC 1180**



**4.2 The different internal features of a Catholic Church including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 1182-1186**

**- Lectern:**

- book stand from which readings are read
- important because scripture is an important part of Mass
- redemption is achieved through responding to the Word of God
- facilitates worship by hosting the Liturgy of the Word

**“a suitable place for announcing his message” – CCC 1184**

**- Altar:**

- table on an elevated sanctuary
- important because represents Last Supper
- redemption is possible due to Jesus’ sacrifice
- facilitates worship by being the site of transubstantiation

**“On the altar [...] the sacrifice of the Cross is made present” – CCC 1182**

**- Crucifix:**

- a cross with Jesus’ body on it on or near the altar
- important reminder of Jesus’ suffering
- redemption is possible due to Jesus’ crucifixion
- facilitates worship by being carried in procession

**“Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven” – CCC 618**

**- Tabernacle:**

- a box storing the consecrated host
- important because it contains Jesus’ body and blood
- redemption is made possible by worship, e.g. Eucharistic Adoration
- facilitates worship by storing leftover Eucharist

**“The tabernacle is to be situated in churches in a most worthy place with the greatest honour” – CCC 1183**

## Section 3

### 4.3 The meaning and significance of sacred objects, including sacred vessels, sarcophagi, and hunger cloths within Catholicism

- **Sacred vessels:**
  - the vessels used for the bread and wine (paten, ciborium, chalice)
  - **importance:**
    - most holy objects as they are used to hold the Blessed Host
    - washed and wiped clean after every Mass
    - crucial to the belief of transubstantiation
  - also used to give the Eucharist to those unable to attend Mass
  
- **Sarcophagi:**
  - a box-like container for a corpse
  - **importance:**
    - contain bones of saints
    - reflect Catholic beliefs about holiness of saints
  - also used for praying to certain saints
  
- **Hunger cloths:**
  - large cloths with biblical paintings, traditionally hung on sanctuary
  - **importance:**
    - depict scenes from the Bible
    - allow Catholics to relate to the life of Christ
    - remind Catholics to follow Jesus' example
  - traditionally used during Lent, now at anytime

**“All the signs in the liturgical celebrations are related to Christ”**

**“They truly signify Christ, who is glorified in them”**

– CCC 1161

4.4 The meaning and significance of paintings, fresco and drawings within Catholicism with reference to two specific pieces and Catechism of the Catholic Church 2502-2503

- *Creation of Adam* by Michelangelo: (fresco)
  - **location:** Sistine Chapel, Vatican City
  - **date:** 1510 – 1512
  - **meaning:**



- God created humans with talent and potential
- life is dependent upon God, as Adam is waiting to touch God's finger
- God is ancient, due to his white hair and beard
- God is transcendent, due to being carried by angels
- God is omniscient, due to the brain shape in his background

- **divergent understandings:**

- God gave Adam life by breathing into his nostrils, not by touching his finger
- God and Adam are the same size; God should be larger
- God's eternal nature should not be shown as an old man

- *Return of the Prodigal Son* by Rembrandt: (painting)

- **location:** Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia
- **date:** 1667

- **meaning:**

- God is forgiving, like the father
- God is omnipotent, due to his red cloak (majesty)
- humans make mistakes, like the younger son, leading to spiritual poverty
- humans must repent to God
- humans must be more forgiving, unlike the older son



- **divergent understandings:**

- the elder son was in the fields, not inside the house as shown
- no other people were present in the Biblical passage

**“Genuine sacred art draws man to adoration, to prayer, and to the love of God”**  
– CCC 2502

**“[Bishops should] remove from the liturgy and from places of worship everything which is not in conformity with the truth of faith”** – CCC 2503

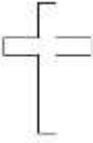







- Divergent uses of paintings, fresco and drawings:
  - focal point of **private prayer**
  - **meditation**
  - **reminder** of Biblical events
  - depicts Bible stories for the **illiterate**

## Section 3

### 4.5 The meaning and significance of sculpture and statues with reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 2501

- Meaning and significance:
  - God has occasionally directed the construction of statues
    - “**And you shall make two cherubim of gold**”  
– *Exodus 25*
  - a use of God’s gift of talent
    - “**art is a form of practical wisdom, uniting knowledge and skill**” – *CCC 2501*
  - aid to prayer
- Expressions of belief:
  - reflect **scripture**, e.g. Stations of the Cross
  - reflect **religious messages**, e.g. Ten Commandments (obey these)
  - reflect **beliefs about God**, e.g. *Christ the Redeemer* (saviour)
- Divergent uses of statues and sculptures:
  - most Churches have a statue of Mary within
  - some Churches make a crib at Christmas
  - some people have statues in their home as a reminder of His presence
  - private prayer, at home, school and churches

4.6 The purpose and use of symbolism and imagery in religious art

Symbol	Image	Symbolism/Imagery	Uses	Divergent uses
<b>Cross</b>		- Jesus died on a cross	- main symbol of Christianity - on rosaries - focus of prayer - worn by bishops	- sometimes worn as jewellery - found in some homes
<b>Crucifix</b>		- Jesus died on a cross - reminder of sacrifice	- on or near altar - basis of many statues	- sometimes worn as jewellery
<b>Fish</b>		- "Ichthys" (Greek) stands for Jesus Christ God Son Saviour	- originally a secret signal of Christianity - bumper stickers	- in some business logos - still used in some areas where Christianity is illegal
<b>ChiRho</b>		- first two letters of "Christ" in Greek	- used by Romans when they adopted Christianity - on vestments - on Paschal Candle	- sometimes on altar
<b>Dove</b>		- presence of Holy Spirit - linked to peace	- in sacred artwork - in drama plays	- sometimes on Tabernacle
<b>"Christian iconography traditionally uses a dove to suggest the Spirit" – CCC 701</b>				
<b>Eagle</b>		- symbolises Jesus' divine nature	- Protestant lecterns incorporate an eagle	- symbol of the evangelist John
<b>Alpha et Omega</b>		- shows Jesus' eternal nature (first to last)	- on Paschal Candle	- sometimes on interior church walls
<b>Symbols of the Four Evangelists</b>		- Matthew: Angel - Mark: Lion - Luke: Ox - John: Eagle	- stained glass windows - lectern - around altar	- in baptistries of Italian Cathedrals

## Section 3

### 4.7 The meaning and significance of drama

- **Mystery plays:**
  - medieval dramas about Bible stories
  - produced by travelling actors
  - in local language, not Latin
  - contain spiritual message
  
- **Passion plays:**
  - plays focused on the Passion of Jesus
  - produced by Christians worldwide
  - in local language, not Latin
  - real-life situations bring about empathy
  
- All mystery plays and passion plays were banned in the Church of England as part of the Reformation in 1534.
  
- How drama expresses belief:
  - preaches Bible in a **more understandable way**
  - could be felt as a **form of worship**
  - **focus of prayer** and devotion
  - **unites Christians ecumenically**, presenting the same Bible stories

**“Through words and actions, this drama engages the heart.  
It unfolds throughout the whole history of salvation.” – CCC 2567**
  
- Divergent uses of drama:
  - Mass is a drama that re-enacts the Last Supper
  - the washing of the feet (Maundy Thursday) is a drama in which the priest washes twelve men’s feet
  - the Veneration of the Cross (Good Friday) is a drama in which people kiss the feet of Jesus
  - simpler plays (assemblies) in religious schools can be seen as drama

4.8 The nature and use of traditional and contemporary styles of music in worship

Type of music	Nature	Use
<b>Hymns</b>	traditional religious songs of praise	- Mass: procession, offertory, communion, recession - before and after Mass for consolidation - in religious schools, to aid a Christian ethos
<b>Plainchant</b>	unaccompanied singing	- readings - Responsorial Psalm - Eucharistic prayer
<b>Psalms</b>	sacred songs from the Bible	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> reading (Responsorial Psalm) - private prayer
<b>Worship songs</b>	contemporary short hymns	- especially in Protestant Churches - Masses targeted at youth (evangelisation) - alongside modern musical accompaniment, e.g. guitars

- How music expresses belief:
  - **evangelises** in a lively way
  - **meaningful** way to understand Bible teachings
  - **unites** Christians, therefore loving one another whilst loving God

**“[Address] one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.” – CCC 2461**

- Divergent uses of religious music:
  - church (Mass):
    - procession
    - Gloria
    - Offertory
    - Preface / Eucharistic Prayer
    - Communion
  - schools:
    - assemblies
    - internal services











# **RELIGIOUS STUDIES A**

## **PAPER 1 – CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY**

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1 BELIEFS AND TEACHINGS

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2 PRACTICES

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3 SOURCES OF WISDOM AND AUTHORITY

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4 FORMS OF EXPRESSION AND WAYS OF LIFE

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