

# Religious Studies Spec A

Answers and commentaries

**GCSE (8062)**

## **Paper 1: Catholic Christianity**

Marked answers from students from the June 2022 exams.  
Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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## Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the students.

### 4 mark question

#### Question 1.3

Explain two ways that beliefs stated in the Nicene Creed influence Catholics today.

[4 marks]

#### Mark scheme

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies.

##### **First way**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

##### **Second way**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

**To be a 'detailed explanation' the 'influence' of the belief/teaching/way must be included.**

**Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:**

- The Nicene Creed influences Catholics today as it is a statement of their faith / it is extremely important as it is part of their tradition that goes back to the Council of Nicaea in AD325 stressing that they should believe in one God / as it summarises what Catholics believe in it may influence them to go out and spread these beliefs to others in their everyday lives.
- It is said out loud at Mass on Sundays and holy days after the homily / it is a formal prayer giving structure / this may remind Catholics why they go to Mass / it influences them to try to live a Christ like life.
- The Nicene Creed shows that there is one God who exists in three persons / the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit / God the Father is the creator of all things / God is seen to be almighty and omnipotent / this may influence Catholics to care for the environment and

God's creation / encourage others to do the same / may influence them to campaign for environmental causes, etc.

- Jesus is God the Son who became fully human / suffered and died to save other humans from sin / rose from the dead and is seated in Heaven / this may influence Catholics to endure their own suffering and offer it up to God as Jesus did / encourage them to care for others as Jesus did / to achieve their place in Heaven.
- It also reminds Catholics that they will be judged on their actions and may influence positive behaviour / God the Holy Spirit gives life to all things / inspires people / gives strength and courage / Catholics may be inspired by the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be wise in their judgement / to have the understanding to enable them to make decisions in line with God's will, etc

## Student responses

### Response A

One way is that it helps to guide Catholics in how to live a better life.

Another is to help practice their faith.

Both points give an influence, but no explanation of the belief contained.

**2 marks**

### Response B

One way is that God is always with us. This influences Catholics as it affects their choices in life. Another way Catholics are influenced is by the fact that God is all powerful. This means that God can perform miracles if they have enough faith.

The first part identifies the belief in 'God is always with us' and then explains how it influences Catholics 'in their choices in life'. The second point states that the belief is 'God is all powerful' and the influence is 'have faith'.

**4 marks**

## 5 mark question

### Question 1.4

Explain two Christian beliefs about the importance of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

**[5 marks]**

### Mark scheme

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

#### **First reason**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

#### **Second reason**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

**Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:**

- The anointing of the sick is important as it is received when a person is seriously ill, facing an operation, demonstrating signs of weakness or old age
- Catholics believe they are being faithful to an ancient Christian practice when they celebrate this sacrament, etc.
- The sacramental rite is full of meaning / the power of the Holy Spirit is believed to fill the sick person / sin / the disciples shared in Jesus' ministry of healing when they cast out demons and anointed the sick with oil (CCC 1506) / this is important as it encourages Catholics to follow their example and care for the sick, etc.
- The sacrament is important as it includes the forgiveness of sin / it can help the sick person face the future with a clear conscience / sin can sometimes be a contributing factor of sickness therefore forgiveness may make the person feel better / it may bring physical as well as mental and spiritual healing / receiving the eucharist (viaticum CCC 1524) shows that Christ is present and supporting them in their sickness, etc.
- It is important as the anointing gives hope of a new life / restoration to full health in this human life / or promise of eternal happiness in Heaven with God, etc.

**Sources of authority may include the following:**

- 'Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.'  
James 5:14-15
- 'Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.'  
Roman Missal.

## Student responses

### Response A

One Christian belief is the anointing of the sick is a very holy loving sacrament and it shows that you should always help people less fortunate.

Another belief is that you should give money to charity as the old woman does because 'she is all loving'.

The mark given is for 'should always help people less fortunate'. There is no award for the pre point as it does not show the importance. No credit for the second point as it does not answer the question.

**1 mark**

### Response B

One belief about the sacrament of anointing of the sick is that it gives them strength. This is because the priest will say a prayer that will give the person the Holy Spirit before a surgery or when a person is ill.

Another belief about the sacrament of the anointing of the sick is that it prepares us for heaven. This is because the priest will cleanse us from our sins. As in the Bible Jesus is seen healing the sick and inviting them to heaven "you will be in Paradise with me".

Two detailed explanations and a clear reference to a source of authority.

**5 marks**

## 12 mark Question

### Question 2.5

'Informal (spontaneous) prayer is the best way to communicate with God.'  
Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Catholic teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

**[12 marks]**

### Mark scheme

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. <b>References to religion applied to the issue.</b>	10-12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. <b>Clear reference to religion.</b>	7-9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. <b>Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.</b>	4-6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1-3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

**Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:**

### **Arguments in support**

- Christians may prefer to use spontaneous prayer as they feel that it is more personal / the words in spontaneous prayer are personal to the individual / the prayer in their own words will have more meaning for them / will come from the heart / will bring them closer to God / they can state any personal concerns or worries that they may have / they can relax and reflect without the worry of having to remember certain words or phrases, etc.
- Some Christians also pray spontaneously in a community setting / e.g. Quakers do this regularly rather than using formal prayer / they may pray in their own words with others when they are moved to do so by the power of the Holy Spirit / although Jesus gave his disciples the Lord's Prayer he did not say that this was the only way to pray / when Jesus states that 'where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them', (Matthew 18:20) he does not say that those gathered should all say the same words simultaneously, etc.
- On many occasions Jesus went away on his own to pray e.g. "It was very early in the morning and still dark. Jesus got up and left the house. He went to a place where he could be alone. There he prayed' (Mark 1:35) / this demonstrates the importance of prayer to Jesus but it does not demonstrate the importance of a particular type of prayer / when Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane he prays spontaneously, 'My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.' (Matthew 26:42) / prayer is an essential part of Christianity but there is no particular 'best way' to pray to God, etc.

### **Arguments in support of other views**

- Prayer is the raising of the heart and mind to God / many Christians like to pray using formal prayers as they are traditional / they have been passed down through the generations / an example of formal prayer is the Lord's Prayer (Our Father) which Jesus himself taught his disciples when they asked him to teach them how to pray / formal prayers have set words and therefore people do not have to worry about thinking of what to say / this may allow them to open up to God's presence, etc.
- Christians may also pray using formal prayer when they are praying with others e.g. during services or Mass / the use of formal prayers may bring Christians closer together as a community / they may use formal prayers together in a particular situation to support others or to bring comfort to themselves / formal prayers said together in a particular situation may be comforting because of their set pattern / formal prayers are also used in all the sacraments which are significant moments or stages in the lives of Christians / Jesus states that 'where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them', (Matthew 18:20), this may support the use of formal prayer in a community situation where people say the same words together, etc.



## Student responses

### Response A

A reason to agree with the statement that informal prayer is the best way to communicate with God is because by praying informally it is more meaningful and can be more personal, than a formal prayer. By praying informally your message to God is clearer and the meaning behind the prayer is from the heart and the person praying knows what they want to say, therefore there's a higher chance that their prayer will be accepted by God.

A reason to disagree with the statement that informal prayer is the best way to communicate with God is because by praying using formal prayer the prayer will most likely be better structured and better written than a prayer made up on the spot. An informal prayer could be rushed, whereas a formal prayer will be more respectful and the meaning of it will be better as these prayers may have worked before and therefore formal prayer is the better way to communicate with God.

In my opinion informal prayer is the best way to communicate with God, as it is more personal and the feeling that you're talking directly to God I felt in informal prayer and the meaning is stronger.

#### **This is a Level 3 response**

The candidate provides some creditable points about both informal and formal prayer but doesn't develop into 'well argued' evaluation. Points made are general and therefore not Level 4. A satisfactory conclusion.

**8 marks + 3 SPaG**

## Response B

In this essay I will show reasons for and against.

Some people will agree with this statement because when people use their own words, then they can fully ask in detail what they need and their intentions. People can feel closer to God because it can feel easier to explain and prove their prayers. Others will disagree because formal prayers are traditional and Holy as they were given by God. This shows how important formal prayers are and if humans don't say them, then they don't follow commandments. However others will argue that informal prayers are more personal as they are coming from the heart and show exactly what people want to say.

Some people will disagree with this statement because Jesus gave us a prayer to pray, the 'our Father'. This shows that God wants us to pray in a particular way. Others will disagree because if we pray formal prayers over and over then they lose their significance and people will be praying without the important intentions. However, some people will disagree because in the Bible it says, "teach us how to pray". This shows that formal prayers are more important because they were given to us when we didn't know how to pray. Jesus gave us the 'our Father' in order to thank God and ask Him for forgiveness.

In conclusion, I think that formal prayers are more important because if God gave them to us, then He wants us to pray them. This shows that God cares about us and wants us to do well and go to heaven. Informal prayers are bias and sometimes people can get carried away which makes them even less significant.

### This is a Level 4 response

The answer includes a variety of different reasons for both sides of the argument, with logical chains of reasoning, attempting to evaluate each point. Some of the points are underdeveloped, although the mention of 'our father' is communicated well. The conclusion puts this response into Level 4.

**10 marks + 3 SPaG**

## Response C

In my opinion, I agree with this statement. This is because I believe that informal prayer is a lot more personal and it creates a deeper connection with God as you are saying and making up your own words dedicated to you. It makes the prayer feel private and sometimes people may want this privacy when praying to God. Also, there may not be a set prayer that is related to what they are praying to and therefore saying a prayer from your own words is easier to relate to the reason you are praying.

Others may disagree with me and say that both informal and formal prayers are excellent ways to communicate with God and that they are both equal as whether you are saying a formal or informal prayer also depends on your circumstances and where you are. For example, if you are in church with other people and you are all praying together, it would be best to use a formal prayer such as “the Lord’s Prayer”. This is because here you can share this connection with God with other people and if you don’t have the words to say your own informal prayer than sticking to a formal one that everyone knows is best. However, if you are at home and there is a personal reason and issue that you are praying about then it is best to use an informal rather therefore showing that one prayer may not be better than the other, but both are in fact the same. It just depends on where you are and how you feel.

Religious people such as Catholic Christians, may disagree with the statement and believe that formal prayer is actually the best way to connect to God. This is because the formal prayers such as ‘the Lord’s Prayer’ or the ‘Hail Mary Prayer’ are the words of God from Jesus and saying these words would strengthen and deepen the connection Christians have with God when they pray as it came from God himself. It also may make Christians feel a sense of unity as all of them are saying the same prayer at the same time.

In conclusion, I agree with this statement and I believe that informal prayer is the best way to communicate with God as even if you may not be saying God’s words as you pray, you are saying your own which is a lot more personal which I think deepens the connection with God as you pray.

### **This is a Level 4 response**

Each point is developed and explained with clarity. The opposing view gives examples of ‘the Lord’s prayer’ and a balanced view that both may be of same value. It is a well-argued response, showing in-depth understanding of the question and the candidate refers back to the question at each point. A good conclusion.

**12 marks + 3 SPaG**

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