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Examiners' Report  
June 2011

GCSE Religious Studies 5RS10 01

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# Introduction

## **UNIT 5RS10 Roman Catholic Christianity**

This is the second year the new specification for Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies has been assessed.

This specification introduced a few new topics and the weighting of the assessment objectives has changed from the legacy specification. The specification continues to be a very popular course as teachers and schools recognise the benefits of an examinable course that both interests and educates young people.

Unit 10 covers Roman Catholic Christianity. It is often taught alongside Unit 3 - Religion and Life based on a study of Roman Catholic Christianity. Together they meet the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory of the Bishops Conference of England and Wales. It also fulfils all the requirements for Key Stage 4 statutory Religious Education.

The Paper included a balance of questions designed to let all candidates demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, whilst allowing for necessary differentiation. It was particularly encouraging to see how many candidates were able to support their points of view with coherent reasons and could use references to the Bible to develop their answers.

### Question 1 (a)

Most candidates performed well on this question, usually by offering the exact glossary definition as found in the Specification. Very few scored the partial mark.

### Question 1 (b) (c) (d)

Overall these questions were well answered. In the part (c) question some candidates failed to spot that the question asked about how a religious community expresses its love of God (rather than of others). However, examiners were instructed to award marks where the candidate explained how loving others was a sign of love of God, for example by referring to the parable of the sheep and goats.

This is an example of a good attempt to respond to the (b) question. It also helps to highlight a good approach to the (c) question.

(b) As a Christian I believe Jesus did die to save people as we are informed in the bible that Jesus let himself be crucified in order to save us from sin. Secondly without Jesus dying for us we wouldn't be able to be forgiven of our sin as everytime we do commit a sin through Jesus sacrificing himself we can be forgiven.

(c) The Carmelite nuns express their love to God by firstly dedicating their time to ~~pray and help others~~ <sup>God</sup>. Secondly by following in what Jesus taught

us on the Sermon on the mount to ~~love another~~ "love one another" they do this by praying for those less fortunate and by physically helping them. Thirdly by living by the rules a nun must

For example ~~edit~~ celibacy shows how much the love God that they are willing to give up something so special. Finally, they express love to God by following their vocations, which as a nun would be to help and preach to others ~~about~~ ~~God~~ the word of God.



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### Examiner Comments

In the (b) question the candidate has given two reasons. The first one isn't developed, but simply says that the Bible tells us that Jesus died to save people. The second answer does have a development - Jesus' death meant that sins could be forgiven, and this is possible because Jesus' death was a sacrifice, not an expected event.

(c) is an example of an answer in which the candidate clearly understood what the question was asking. Note, though, that the marks would still have been awarded even if an actual community had not been identified.



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### Examiner Tip

Remember that reference to a religious community in this Specification will always refer to a community of men or women professing the evangelical counsels, unless the question clearly indicates otherwise.

## Question 2 (a)

The Virgin Birth was well understood. Some gave general answers, writing about A rather than THE virgin birth ("when a baby is conceived without sex").

## Question 2 (b) (c) (d)

There were many good answers to the question about the importance of the Holy Spirit, with a number of candidates able to gain marks for developed answers. Whilst a few candidates failed to notice that the (c) question asked about showing love of God in the local area, once again examiners were instructed to reward answers that explained how love of God can be shown by love of others. In any case, many read this question correctly and gave some very good answers about worshipping God in church, witnessing to God at work and so forth.

2 (d) proved more of a challenge. Those who knew what 'contemplative' meant answered it very well. But a number of candidates did not understand the term, even though it is a key word in Section 4.

Those who knew the term contemplative were able to answer the (d) question quite well.

(d) (i) "A contemplative community cannot show love for others" I disagree with this statement. I believe that contemplative communities can show love for others, <sup>by also following Gods teachings</sup> through prayer for others, because they can pray for those in need, they devote their lives to the ~~pr~~ worship of God, and I think in doing so they show love for others, they give their lives up for others in prayer as Jesus did. Also in meditation they show <sup>love</sup>

(ii) Some people may disagree with my opinion because in contemplative communities they

do not give things away to those who suffer <sup>others</sup> so they may not think they are showing love, also they may believe that they cannot show love for others as they do not give to charity, also they do not organise events to raise money for those in need, and do therefore not show love to others.



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#### Examiner Comments

The most obvious reasons to suggest that a contemplative community cannot show love for others is that they are locked away, and are do not directly act to help others. This final argument could be quite easily developed. The counter arguments include the fact that they pray for others, even 'sacrificing' their lives to do so. This is an example of someone who had the right idea.



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#### Examiner Tip

Questions that ask about the relative value of the active and the contemplative life in (b) and (d) questions test A02.

### Question 3 (a)

A relatively small number of candidates knew what is meant by 'Orthodox Churches'. Most knew that they differed from the Roman Catholic Church, but were quite vague beyond that. Some thought they were linked to the Church of England in some way.

### Question 3 (b) (c) (d)

Once again, some candidates either did not make the distinction between Church and church, or were unable to answer the question from the perspective of the Church as an institution or community. This was most evident in the question about the Church as the Communion of Saints. Some candidates wrote about going to Mass and receiving communion and examiners were instructed to reward such an answer with a Level. The question about the Church teaching the Christian faith allowed for a measure of differentiation. Some found it challenging, whilst others were able to write about the Church in its role as teacher - including reference to the Magisterium, Apostolic Succession and so forth.

A number of candidates understood the (b) question about the Church as teacher. Those that did often provided some very good answers.

(b) [~~the church~~]

One reason why the Christian should be only taught by the Church is because the church is influentially structured by the magisterium - which is the highest authority in e.g. the Pope. Also, the Church is a high authority because it beholds sacraments such as, baptism, reconciliation, salvation, confession and confirmation - which are basically, the gate ways to heaven in which these sacraments can only be practised by the Church. Baptism washing away original sin - sin free equals heaven, confession enabling a person to receive forgiveness through a priest via God for sins committed after ~~the~~ baptism.

Also, the Church practices the one and only belief - e.g. the Apostolic succession and tradition which has been interpreted by the magisterium (official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church).





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### Examiner Comments

There is quite a lot of irrelevance, but also clear reference to how the Church's understanding of the Magisterium and Apostolic Succession means that it is the proper teacher of the Catholic faith. Whilst the reference to the sacraments do not develop the first point, the brief mention of the Pope as carrying the highest authority was deemed sufficient to consider the first point as developed.



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### Examiner Tip

A key question that candidates should be able to answer - why does the Church consider itself to be the teacher of Catholic faith and morals and why might some people argue otherwise?

### Question 4 (a)

Again this question about the Magisterium was answered quite well by those who had learnt the glossary definition. This goes to highlight the value of learning these definitions.

### Question 4 (b) (c) (d)

There were many strong answers to the questions about the role of the Parish Priest and the question about celibacy. It is clear that Centres are teaching this topic very effectively, and that candidates are quite engaged by it. Those who could distinguish the Immaculate Conception from the Virgin Birth were able to produce some good answers. The topic in the Specification is 'The role and importance of the Virgin Mary for Roman Catholics'. This cannot be restricted to the Virgin Birth, but must also include other key Roman Catholic beliefs about Mary, especially those that have been defined by the Church.

The celibacy debate continues to engage many candidates. This is an example of a full answer, an example among many.

(d) (i) I agree that only a man who is not married should be a Priest because having a family is a distraction which makes the Priest unable to full concentrate on worshipping God also Jesus was not married and since Priests are ~~cont~~ continuing the work of Jesus they should not be married too, Furthermore ~~so~~ not being married is a symbol of a Priests faith and how far he is willing to go to spread the word of God so not being married is a sacrifice for God.

(iii) some people might disagree with me because ~~the~~ St Peter was a married man and he wasn't distracted by marriage also Jesus was not married because he was God in human form and can't ~~have a~~

God in human form and can't have a  
~~relationship~~ ~~to~~ be married to his  
children also Jesus mission was to save  
man kind so it is different to what  
an ordinary man has to do. Lastly some  
might say priests should be allowed to  
marry as without being married they  
cannot understand marriage ~~about being~~  
so therefore priests ~~are~~  
~~not~~ marriage. can't give advice to couples.



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**Examiner Comments**

There are some standard reasons given here, but it was also good to see some lateral thinking. The fact that Jesus wasn't married is a standard argument in favour of celibacy but this response also points out that Jesus might be considered rather too special to be used as a model for ordinary human beings.



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**Examiner Tip**

Remember that candidates need to give their own point of view with reasons, and then an alternative perspective. Many find it 'safer' to give three reasons on both sides to ensure full marks.

### Question 5 (a)

Most candidates seemed to know what is meant by the 'Liturgy of the Word'.

### Question 5 (b) (c) (d)

The questions about Confirmation and Lent will be quite familiar in one form or another, and were well answered overall. I would only point out that the question about Lent did not ask if it is the most important season, and so the answers of 'no, because Christmas is more important' did not work.

Some beliefs about the Eucharist are held by a number of traditions. This is an example of a response which was able to gain good marks even though it did not relate any specific Orthodox or Protestant beliefs.

(c) In holy communion the bread of the eucharist is a remembrance of the last supper when Jesus broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said do this in memory of me.

Communion is a respect that Jesus died to save us and there is worship.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Two reasons given here, both would be applicable to a number of Christian traditions, including the Catholic tradition - that it is a remembrance of the Last Supper and that it is celebrated in memory of Jesus' death.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Creating a diagram of common Christian beliefs about the Eucharist (eg between Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions) and then those that are specific to each tradition could prove a useful aide memoire.

## Question 6 (a)

Another example (what is meant by a sacrament) of a definition learnt by heart. Many candidates were at least able to give examples.

## Question 6 (b) (c) (d)

This was a well answered question. The specific question about whether Catholic churches should have statues was also well answered, calling, on some less prepared thinking. This question prompted the most 'no' answers, with candidates referring to the risk of idolatry and quoting the commandment about 'graven images'.

Answers could also refer to the crucifix or stations of the cross, and some did.

This is an example of one reason (of a more original kind) that has then been developed.

A photograph of a handwritten student answer on lined paper. The text reads: "(b) Yes, because the statues influence the Catholics and send a message either providing comfort, hope, and strength and understanding about Christianity".

(b) Yes, because the statues influence the Catholics and send a message either providing comfort, hope, and strength and understanding about Christianity



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The fact that statues have the ability to influence Catholics, or send them a message, is sufficient to gain the first mark. Examples of what that influence might be (comfort or hope) for instance, would then allow the second mark for development to be awarded. More conventional answers to this question spoke about statues as providing a focus for prayer.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Examples (including examples of something Jesus said or did, for instance) will usually be sufficient to gain the mark for development. In fact these represent the most common way in which the full range of marks is accessed.

## Question 7 (a)

The Evangelical Counsels were understood, though candidates choosing to name them had to name all three correctly to gain full marks.

## Question 7 (b) (c) (d)

It is good to see that candidates remember the teaching in the Sermon on the Mount about praying in public and that they were also well armed with reasons for an alternative point of view. Some Candidates were thrown by the term 'holy orders' even though it is a key term, some of them equating the term with the religious life.

This is an example of a full part (c) answer, with the candidate gaining marks for both simple and developed reasons.

(c) There is some Christians take Holy orders so they will be able to serve God, the way Jesus served God. Taking Holy orders would be completing their vocation therefore God shall

reward them in heaven. Holy orders is a status of a priest, deacon, Bishop or bishop this enables Christians Catholic men to spread the word of God, & eventually rewarding them with salvation. It enables Catholic men to show their love for God by committing their life to Christianity. They are obeying the two Golden rules as they are worshipping and serving God and they are showing their neighbour as they are showing them right and wrong. Holy orders.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The final reason is ideally developed - holy orders give a man an opportunity to commit himself to Christianity, AND this follows the twin rules of honouring God and loving neighbour.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In theory candidates can gain all the marks on a part (c) question with a single reason fully developed. This of course is quite rare - most prefer to offer 4 simple reasons.



## Question 8 (a)

The idea of the monastic life seemed to be quite well understood, and many candidates gained full marks using their own paraphrase of the glossary definition.

## Question 8 (b) (c) (d)

This question was answered quite well. Of course there were many ways in which this question could be correctly answered - referring to teachings about love of neighbour, the good samaritan, all people being made in the image of God. It was pleasing to see candidates referring also to teaching of the apostles. The other questions were also well answered.

This is an excellent example of a response which could draw on a wide range of scriptural texts to provide for a full answer.

(c) Christians think social and community cohesion is important as it helps people bringing them together and shows everyone is equal despite race and colour. Firstly, Christians think social and community cohesion is important because in the parable of the good samaritan it says good God treats all races equally, therefore, we should promote cohesion. Also, St Peter had a vision from God saying treat all races equally as he loves everyone. Therefore, we should listen to this. In addition, St Paul says everyone came from Adam, therefore, everyone must be equal. We should listen to St Paul. Lastly, in the catechism it says to treat everyone fairly and equally, this means we must work to promote social cohesion.



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**Examiner Comments**

This is not a long answer, but each text is appropriate and a simple explanation is offered for each. Answers that refer to NT teaching beyond the Gospel is very encouraging.



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**Examiner Tip**

Teachers can choose to interpret the meaning of 'social and community' cohesion widely. There is in fact a wealth of material on this topic - Jesus' commitment to peace, avoiding violence, mixing with outsiders and foreigners, service to others, not to mention centuries of Papal 'social' encyclicals for more able candidates.

## Paper Summary

Teachers and candidates should note these general points in order to improve candidates' achievement in future years:

- There is a choice of two questions per section, each of these has four sub questions, candidates can either attempt the sub-questions in the top question (odd numbers) or the sub-questions in the bottom question (even numbered). Candidates who choose questions from a mixture of the top and bottom questions will not receive marks for all their responses and as such are at a clear disadvantage.
- Candidates are asked to indicate which question they have answered by crossing in a square at the top of the paper. They should be reminded to do this as part of examination preparation.
- The amount of lines given on the examination paper is more than adequate for candidates to achieve maximum marks; there is no need for candidates to write more than this. If candidates write more than can be inserted into the allocated lineage then they are likely to be using up too much time on that particular question. Almost all the candidates who used extra paper had already achieved maximum marks on that question. Any candidate who needs extra space can use the space allocated to other questions as long as they clearly indicate on their paper that this is what they have done.
- A number of candidates did not complete the final section due to timing difficulties. Candidates should be encouraged to spend about twenty minutes per question leaving about ten minutes to check through their work at the end of the paper.

(a) questions ask for either a definition or examples.

Learn glossary definitions to gain full marks

(b) questions only need one opinion backed by two reasons, each of which must be developed if full marks are to be gained.

(c) questions are Explain why... or Explain how... questions, and are testing AO1

(d) questions are divided into two parts (d)(i) needs the candidate's opinion backed by reasons and (d)(ii) needs an alternative opinion backed by reasons. One of the reasons used in the whole of (d) must be religious.



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