



*Rewarding Learning*

**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
2025**

---

## **Religious Studies**

Paper 2a

The Christian Church with a Focus  
on the Catholic Church

**[GRE21]**

**FRIDAY 30 MAY, AFTERNOON**

---

**MARK  
SCHEME**

## **General Marking Instructions**

### ***Introduction***

Mark schemes are intended to ensure that the GCSE examinations are marked consistently and fairly. The mark schemes provide markers with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. They also set out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

### ***Assessment objectives***

Below are the assessment objectives for Religious Studies.

#### **Candidates must:**

- AO1** demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority; and
- AO2** analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

### ***Quality of candidates' responses***

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 16-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCSE examinations.

### ***Flexibility in marking***

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

### ***Positive marking***

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 16-year-old GCSE candidate.

### ***Awarding zero marks***

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

### ***Types of mark schemes***

Mark schemes for tasks or questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication.

Other questions which require only short answers are marked on a point for point basis with marks awarded for each valid piece of information provided.

### **Levels of response**

Tasks and questions requiring candidates to respond in extended writing are marked in terms of levels of response. In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit' bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

AO1 (5 mark responses):

**Level 1:** The candidate presents something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge and understanding.

**Level 2:** The candidate presents a clear knowledge and understanding with some development.

**Level 3:** The candidate presents a detailed answer showing very good development.

AO2 (5 mark responses):

**Level 1:** The candidate presents opinion supported by one simple reason.

**Level 2:** The candidate presents opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.

**Level 3:** The candidate presents a well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.

### **Quality of written communication**

Quality of written communication is assessed in the extended writing questions worth 10 marks in Section B of each examination paper. These questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.

Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.

Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.

Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.

Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance which is provided on the next page:

AO2 (10 mark responses):

**Level 1 (Basic):** The candidate presents some information in a simple form. **Basic arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.

**Level 2 (Limited):** The candidate presents one or two relevant points. **Limited arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights, some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.

**Level 3 (Good):** A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. **Good reasoned arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing and some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.

**Level 4 (Very good):** Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. **Well-formed and reasoned arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights, accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.

**Level 5 (Excellent):** The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. **Very well-formed and reasoned arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights, highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.

## Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Candidates must answer **all** questions in this section.

### 1 The birth of the Christian Church

(a) (i) **Who compared the church to a human body?**

- St Paul  
(AO1)

[1]

(ii) **Name *two* gifts of the Holy Spirit.**

Answers may include:

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Miraculous powers
- Prophecy
- Ability to distinguish between spirits
- Ability to speak in different kinds of tongues
- Ability to interpret tongues

Accept valid alternatives  
(AO1)

[2]

(iii) **Give *two* characteristics of the Early Church.**

Answers may include:

- Preaching
- Teaching
- Prayer
- Miracles
- Hymn singing
- Sharing

Accept valid alternatives  
(AO1)

[2]

**(b) Explain why the events of Pentecost were so important for the apostles.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**Target: Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Pentecost for the apostles.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- This day marks the birth of the Christian Church and the beginning of its mission to the rest of the world.
- Jesus fulfilled his promise of the Holy Spirit.
- The Apostles received the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- It confirmed their belief in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- 3000 people were baptised on this day.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

- (c) **“Saying the Apostles’ Creed is central to Catholic worship.”**  
**Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**Target: Evaluation of the significance of the Apostles’ Creed.**

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Marks</b>
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	The candidate presents some relevant information.	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	4–5

Answers may include:

- By reciting the Creed at Mass, Catholics are regularly reaffirming the key beliefs of their faith.
- Regular recitation of the Creed also allows for a better understanding of one’s beliefs, e.g. the teaching of the Trinity and the importance of God the Creator, Jesus the Saviour and the Holy Spirit.
- Saying the Creed together helps unify all believers and maintains an important tradition within the Catholic Church.

On the other hand:

- The Creed is said regularly during worship, but some people may recite the words from memory without focusing on their meaning. Saying the Creed may have become monotonous for some Catholics.
- The Eucharist is central to Catholic worship. It is important to regularly remember the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of humanity and receive the Body of Christ as spiritual nourishment.
- Reading the Word of God is central to Catholic worship. Through reading the Scriptures, God speaks to his followers and guides them.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

**2 The role of the church in contemporary society**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**(a) (i) What is community cohesion?**

Answers may include:

Community cohesion describes the ability of a community to be inclusive

Accept valid alternatives

(AO1)

[1]

**(ii) Name *one* organisation that works for community cohesion.**

Answers may include:

- St Vincent de Paul
- Corrymeela
- Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum

Accept valid alternatives

(AO1)

[1]

**(iii) Suggest *one* way the church can contribute to the local community.**

Answers may include:

- Food banks
- Collections at Christmas/during Lent
- Visiting the sick/lonely
- Community events, e.g. youth groups

Accept valid alternatives

(AO1)

[1]

**(iv) Give *two* reasons why fewer people are practising their faith.**

Answers may include:

- Society has become more secular
- There are too many distractions
- Some people disagree with the church's stance on moral issues

Accept valid alternatives

(AO1)

[2]

**(b) Do you think the Catholic Church does enough to promote community cohesion?**

**Give reasons for your answer.**

**Target: Analysis of the role of the Catholic Church in promoting community cohesion.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	The candidate presents some relevant information.	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Catholic Church contributes to community cohesion by making parish communities more inclusive. For example, some churches hold Mass in different languages and host events to celebrate different cultures within the parish.
- Church based organisations such as St Vincent de Paul Society help members of the community who are vulnerable and lonely.
- The Catholic Church is doing all it can to promote community cohesion. There is only so much that it can do in an increasingly secular society where the church has less influence on how people choose to live their lives.

On the other hand:

- The Catholic Church needs to do more to promote community cohesion because there are so many problems that still need to be addressed in local communities, e.g. poverty and discrimination.
- Church teaching on issues such as same sex relationships and the role of women in the Church may make some members of the community feel excluded. Therefore, more still needs to be done by the Church to promote community cohesion.
- Christians in Northern Ireland are divided on many issues. If Catholics want to promote community cohesion, then they and other faith communities need to show that they are united and have greater respect for each other.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

(c) “Church sermons should be used to teach about social and moral issues.”

Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

**Target: Evaluation of whether priests should use their sermons to comment on social and moral issues.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The candidate presents some relevant information.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Catholic Church has a responsibility to set a moral example in the world for its followers with many looking to priest’s sermons, the Bible and Church doctrine for moral guidance to address contemporary issues.
- Priests should use sermons to address the moral issues people face today, e.g. abortion, poverty, war etc.
- Within a secular society it can be challenging for Catholics to understand fully how they should express their faith without regular spiritual nourishment and priest’s sermons are often used as an opportunity for believers to develop their moral compass to help guide them.
- Sermons and teaching with a focus on social and moral issues help give clear instruction for Church members and these can be passed from generation to generation in the home.

On the other hand:

- Many would argue that the Church is a place for worship and prayer and it isn’t a priest’s role to preach about matters of personal choice.
- In the example of abortion, sermons may be inappropriate if young children are present.
- In the issue of euthanasia the Catholic Church maintains its absolutist stance. Some members may ask if this is the most compassionate and loving viewpoint.
- Church teaching on sexual ethics, e.g. pre-marital sex, contraception, homosexuality may be uncomfortable for some members of the congregation. They may feel that the priest is condemning them during his sermon.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels  
(AO2)

[5]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

15

### 3 Church festivals

(a) Describe some of the ways in which Catholics prepare for Easter during Lent.

**Target: Knowledge of the ways Catholics prepare for Easter during Lent.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- Catholics may pray more, fast and give alms.
- Catholics spend time in prayer by attending church services or studying the Bible. They may also attend special prayer meetings during Lent. They take time to reflect on how they are living as Christians.
- Catholics make sacrifices during Lent by fasting or abstaining from certain luxuries. This helps them to remember how Jesus fasted in the desert for forty days and nights.
- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are special days of fasting and abstinence, e.g. people receive ashes on Ash Wednesday to symbolise repentance. People use the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday.
- During Lent Catholics may give alms to the poor or care for those who are marginalised. Many get involved in charitable organisations such as Trócaire or St Vincent de Paul.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

**(b) Explain why the Catholic Church celebrates Easter.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**Target: Knowledge and understanding of why Easter is important for Catholics.**

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Marks</b>
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One relevant and accurate point.</li></ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two relevant and accurate points.</li><li>• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li><li>• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li></ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li><li>• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li></ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- Catholics consider Easter the most important Christian festival because it celebrates Jesus' resurrection, which they believe shows his power over death and brings them the promise of eternal life.
- Jesus' resurrection from the dead is seen by Catholics as proof of his divinity, and the celebration of Easter is therefore a moment when they can renew their faith in God and their commitment to his work.
- Easter is a celebration that affirms the truth of the most important Christian teachings, echoing the words of St Paul who said that if Christ is not risen then the Christian faith is futile.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) “It is important for Catholics to celebrate the Ascension of Jesus.”  
Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Target: Evaluation of the importance of Jesus’ Ascension.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	The candidate presents some relevant information.	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	4–5

Answers may include:

- Jesus’ Ascension is important because it shows that Jesus is alive and in glory with His Father in heaven. It shows Catholics that Jesus wasn’t resurrected to die again but that he would live forever in heaven.
- Many Catholics believe that the Ascension reminds them that all people can gain access to heaven through faith in Jesus.
- The Ascension should be celebrated because it signalled the end of Jesus’ earthly mission. He completed God’s work on earth and returned to God in heaven.

On the other hand:

- While Catholics acknowledge the importance of all religious festivals, some Catholics will argue that the Ascension is a minor celebration and that other festivals are more important, e.g. Easter.
- Some Catholics believe that Good Friday is the most important Christian celebration because Jesus’ death was an act of atonement that took away sins of the world and restored the relationship of people with God.
- Some Catholics might argue that Christmas is the most important celebration because it celebrates the Incarnation, and if Jesus had not come down in human form, salvation could never have occurred.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

#### 4 Church government

(a) Describe the leadership structure in the Catholic Church.

**Target: Knowledge of the hierarchy of authority in the Catholic Church.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Pope is the leader of the Catholic Church and is considered by Catholics to be God’s representative on Earth.
- Cardinals are senior bishops appointed by the Pope. Each Cardinal is responsible for an area within the Church and the Council of Cardinals advise the Pope on a range of important issues.
- An Archbishop is the highest rank of Bishop and is responsible for an Archdiocese. An Archbishop oversees the bishops and priests in a particular region within a country.
- Bishops are the successors of Jesus’ apostles and are responsible for a diocese within each Archdiocese. A Bishop will appoint priests to the different parishes and takes responsibility for Church matters in the diocese.
- Priests have responsibility within a parish to proclaim the word of God, to celebrate the sacraments with their community and serve their community as pastoral guides.
- Deacons assist priests and bishops in the ministry of the liturgy, preaching and caring for the sick.
- Lay people also play a role in the leadership structure in the Catholic Church.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

**(b) Do you think women should play a greater role in the Catholic Church? Give reasons for your answer.**

**AVAILABLE MARKS**

**Target: Analysis of the role of women in the Church.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The candidate presents some relevant information.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- In society it is both morally wrong and illegal to discriminate against someone based on their gender. Women should be allowed to have an equal role to that of men in the Catholic Church.
- Jesus had many followers who were women, e.g. women witnessed the resurrection. Jesus treated everyone as equals and the Church today must do the same.
- Other Christians denominations have allowed women to have leadership roles, e.g. ministers and bishops. The Catholic Church should follow their example and ordain women to the priesthood.
- There is a significant shortage of male priests. Allowing women to be ordained as priests may help address this issue.

On the other hand:

- Women already play a significant role in the Catholic Church. Many women read scriptures at Mass and distribute communion as eucharistic ministers. Some women serve God through joining religious orders.
- It is a tradition in the Catholic Church that priests are male to reflect Jesus who was male. Priests are Christ's representatives on earth and must always be men.
- Despite treating men and women equally on many occasions, Jesus only chose twelve men as his apostles. Male priests are ordained by male bishops who form an unbroken line of succession back to the twelve apostles.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

(c) “The Catholic Church could do more to encourage people to become priests.”

Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

Target: Evaluation of key leadership roles in the Catholic Church.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The candidate presents some relevant information.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- If the Catholic Church allows priests to marry, then more men might be encouraged to become priests and fewer men might leave the priesthood.
- The Catholic Church could do more to encourage people to become priests by allowing women to be ordained as priests.
- The Catholic Church needs to do more to encourage people to become priests as there are so few priests today. If more people are not encouraged to join the priesthood, there will be a severe shortage and fewer people available to serve their parish, e.g. the Church is preparing to have baptisms, marriages and funerals without priests.

On the other hand:

- The Catholic Church cannot break or change traditions that have been followed for hundreds of years by allowing priests to marry or by allowing female priests.
- The Church is already doing all they can to encourage people, e.g. the Church has a ‘Vocations Sunday’ which is a day of prayer for vocations to the priesthood. The Church has also recently launched a priest recruitment drive via social media.
- In reality, the Church can do little to encourage more people to become priests in a society that has become increasingly secular and less concerned about religion in general.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

**Section B**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

Candidates must answer **two** questions from this section.

**5 Church buildings and furniture**

**(a) Describe some of the different styles of church architecture.**

**Target: Knowledge of different styles of church architecture.**

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Marks</b>
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- Church buildings are constructed in one of three shapes: rectangular/ barn style, cruciform or circular. Some have other unique features such as hall and tower or gothic style.
- Churches that are barn style are used by denominations that focus on the importance of the Word of God.
- Churches that are cruciform meaning they are cross shaped tend to highlight the importance of the death of Christ. They are divided into three main parts; the nave, the transepts and the chancel.
- Churches that are circular are often new or modern churches. This style of Church represents community and fellowship. It also highlights that every member of the Church is of equal importance. The circle also represents Christ’s never-ending love for his people.
- Churches which are hall and tower are similar to barn style churches. Historically church buildings were seen to be a place of refuge from attacks. Some church buildings may also be like a fortress. The tower is symbolic of taking refuge in God. High towers are often decorated with steeples or spires pointing towards the sky symbolising the Resurrection of Christ.
- Churches that are gothic in style are from the Middle Ages and Victorian times. It is associated with high ceilings and pointed arches, large towers, and spires. The design points to the mystery and holiness along with the majesty of God. Many cathedrals are gothic in style.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels  
(AO1)

[5]

**(b) Explain the significance of *three* key items of furniture in the Catholic Church.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**Target: Knowledge and understanding of the importance of items of church furniture in the Catholic Church.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- Reference should be made to any three key furnishings, e.g. lectern, font, altar or tabernacle.
- The Altar: Located at the front of the church in the sanctuary area. The priest celebrates communion here and consecrates the bread and wine here. It is visible for everyone in the church to see and it is usually raised up. It is made from either marble or wood.
- Tabernacle: The consecrated hosts are kept in the tabernacle and the sanctuary lamp will be lit when the consecrated hosts are present.
- Ambo: Also located in the sanctuary area beside the altar usually to the left. The Word of God is read from the ambo and the priest will also deliver his sermon from here.
- Baptismal Font: The font is found either to the side of the sanctuary area or at the back of the church at the main entrance. The Baptismal font is used to welcome new members to the church. This is mainly infants. Baptism is one of the sacraments of the church and the first Sacrament of Initiation.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

- (c) **“Praying at home is as important as worshipping in a church building.” Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer showing that you have considered different points of view.**

**Target: Analysis and evaluation of the importance of private and public worship.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported which may be by one or two simple reasons.	The candidate presents some information in a simple form. Basic arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.	1–2
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons with one developed.	The candidate presents one or two relevant points. Limited arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.	3–4
Level 3	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. Good reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.	5–6

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

Level 4	Evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced, i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.	7–8
Level 5	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. Very well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.	9–10

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- Praying at home is a more intimate experience. It also allows the believer to pray at any time on any given day of the week.
- Jesus told his followers to pray in secret. Jesus also went to lonely places to pray alone. Catholics should follow his example.
- Public worship can be distracting whereas praying at home is more focused. The believer can reflect or mediate for as long as necessary on their intention or thanksgiving.

On the other hand:

- Public worship in a church building creates a sense of community and enables the faith community to support each other spiritually.
- Worship in a church building is important because it gives Catholics the opportunity to receive the Eucharist. This brings people closer to God.
- Public worship in a church building follows Jesus' teaching: "Where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them."

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

20

## 6 Sacraments in the Catholic Church

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

### (a) Outline the ceremony of Confirmation in the Catholic Church.

**Target: Knowledge of the Sacrament of Confirmation.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- Confirmation is usually administered by the bishop of the diocese. The Confirmation ceremony takes place during the Mass between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- Presentation of Candidates – the name of the candidate for Confirmation is read out from the confirmation card and he or she stands up.
- Renewal of Baptism Promises – these take the form of question and answer and are the same as those asked at baptism. The candidate renews the promises for themselves, making a personal commitment to their faith.
- The Laying on of Hands – the bishop raises his hands over those to be confirmed saying: “Send down your Holy Spirit as helper and guide...” The Holy Spirit will come down upon them in power and strength.
- The Anointing with Chrism – the candidate kneels before the bishop. The new name of the candidate is read out from the confirmation card. The sponsor places their right hand on the shoulder of the candidate, the bishop anoints the candidate on the forehead with the chrism oil, making the sign of the cross. “Be sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.”
- Final blessing and dismissal – the mass continues with the Liturgy of the Eucharist. A special blessing before everyone is dismissed.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

**(b) Explain why the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is important for Catholics.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**Target: Knowledge and understanding of the meaning and importance of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Sacrament of Anointing the Sick involves the laying of hands on sick people for God’s healing has always been an important practice of the Catholic Church. It is a symbolic way of empowering people by passing on the Holy Spirit.
- The sacrament gives comfort and spiritual strength to those who are sick. It can give hope to the person who is unwell.
- It gives courage and peace to support the individual facing illness or who is anxious about death and enables them to see the healing of God.
- It is an important part of Church life because it continues the tradition of Jesus reaching out to those who were sick.
- For some, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is seen as a preparation for death, it allows them to make amends with God.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) “The Sacrament of Reconciliation is not taken seriously enough by most Catholics.”

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer showing that you have considered different points of view.

**Target: Analysis and evaluation of the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for Catholics.**

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported which may be by one or two simple reasons.	The candidate presents some information in a simple form. Basic arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.	1–2
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons with one developed.	The candidate presents one or two relevant points. Limited arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.	3–4
Level 3	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. Good reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.	5–6

Level 4	Evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced, i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.	7–8
Level 5	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. Very well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.	9–10

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- Some Catholics may feel the Sacrament is unnecessary as they don't want to tell the priest their personal sins. They believe it is between themselves and God and therefore don't take the sacrament as one that should be celebrated regularly.
- Others can be too embarrassed to admit they have done wrong and feel afraid to tell the priest their sins in case he judges them.
- Some may feel it is unnecessary as it does not change anything as God already knows as he is omniscient.
- Some feel there should be general absolution instead of individual confession.

On the other hand:

- Many take the Sacrament seriously and attending Confession allows the person to make atonement for their wrong doings and many attend once a month. They can then feel joyful afterwards as they have come back to God as it is a repeatable sacrament to support people who sin regularly and need God's forgiveness.
- Many believe it allows the person to make a fresh start and the person will receive God's forgiveness and feel renewed as it restores the relationship between the penitent and God.
- Many believe that the Sacrament has an important community aspect, e.g. people are reconciled with the Church and the wider community

through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.  
Accept valid alternatives  
Mark in levels  
(AO2)

[10]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

20

## 7 Worship in the Catholic Church

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

- (a) Describe the ways in which the rosary is used to help Catholics when praying.

**Target: Knowledge of the role of the rosary in private worship.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One relevant and accurate point.</li> </ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two relevant and accurate points.</li> <li>Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li> <li>A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li> </ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li> <li>Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li> </ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- The rosary is a traditional prayer used by Catholics to show devotion to Mary and to provide an opportunity for people to put God at the forefront of their lives.
- The rosary helps Catholics to reflect on important events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. The rosary gives people time to reflect on the Gospel mysteries, e.g. Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries.
- Set prayers are recited, including the 'Our Father' and 'Hail Mary'. Strings of prayer beads are used to help people count the repetitions of prayers.
- The rosary helps Catholics reflect on how to serve God by following the example of Mary.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

**(b) Explain why the Bible is important in Catholic worship.**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

**Target: Knowledge and understanding of why the Bible is important in Catholic worship.**

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Marks</b>
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One relevant and accurate point.</li></ul>	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two relevant and accurate points.</li><li>• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.</li><li>• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.</li></ul>	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.</li><li>• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.</li></ul>	4–5

Answers may include:

- Catholics read the Bible because it is the Word of God. By reading the Bible during private worship, Catholics believe that they can improve their relationship with God by understanding God better.
- Some prayers used by Catholics during private worship are taken from the Bible, e.g. the Our Father.
- The Bible is also used by Catholics during public worship. Bible readings are used during the Liturgy of the Word, including a reading from one of the Gospels.
- The priest will use his homily/sermon to explain the meaning and importance of the Bible reading.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

- (c) “Encouraging all Christians to worship together should be the main priority of the Catholic Church today.”  
Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer showing that you have considered different points of view.

**Target: Analysis and evaluation of public worship and how the Church contributes to community cohesion.**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported which may be by one or two simple reasons.	The candidate presents some information in a simple form. Basic arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.	1–2
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons with one developed.	The candidate presents one or two relevant points. Limited arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.	3–4
Level 3	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. Good reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.	5–6

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Level 4	Evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced, i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.	7–8
Level 5	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. Very well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.	9–10

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- Christians in Northern Ireland have been divided after years of sectarian conflict. Encouraging Christians to worship together would promote community cohesion and help create a stronger, more united society.
- Worshipping together means that churches will become better at communicating with each other and will respect each others' differences.
- The Early Church set a good example of Christian unity. Christians should strive to reflect the Early Church by having fewer divisions.

On the other hand:

- Church attendance is in rapid decline. Catholics need to encourage people from their own religious community to make a greater effort to attend worship, never mind trying to get different Christian traditions to worship together.
- The different Christian denominations have different beliefs and bringing them together could create more conflict and lead to further division.
- There are other more important things that should be the main priority for the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church faces many challenges on moral issues, such as attitudes to female priests, equal marriage and abortion and should prioritise tackling these important issues.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels  
(AO2)

[10]

20