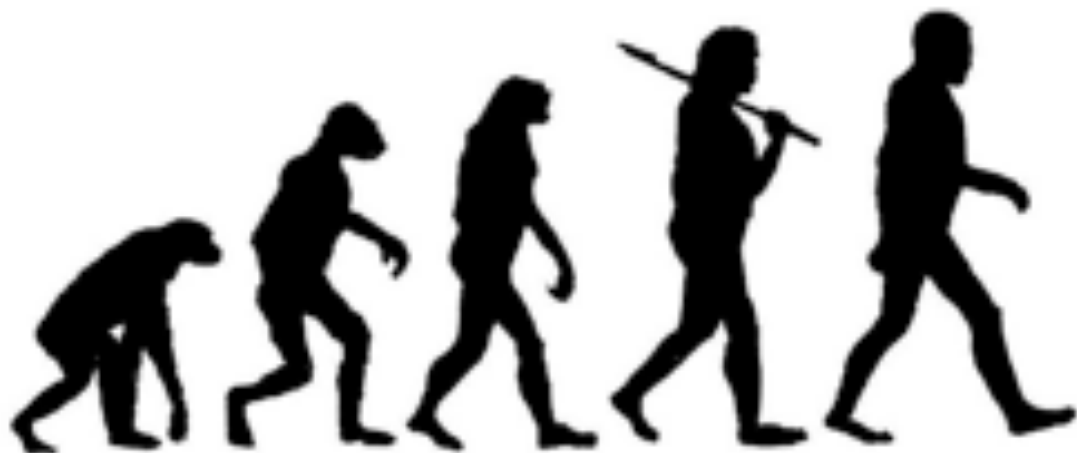


Eduqas GCSE Route B

1.1 Origins & Meaning

1. Creation of Universe & Big Bang
2. Creation of life & Evolution
3. What is the Bible?
4. Image of God
5. Abortion
6. Humanism & Peter Singer
7. Genesis: God & Man
8. Genesis: Stewardship of Creation
9. Catholic Social Teaching
10. Michelangelo's Creation of Adam
11. Symbolism & the Tree of Life
12. Interfaith Dialogue



Scientific beliefs about the Origin of the Universe

Big Bang

The Big Bang says that the entire universe is the **result of a small fluctuation of quantum energy** which exploded with a huge amount of energy and heat. This created **space and time** & caused the first elements to form - Hydrogen and Helium. As the temperature cooled, other heavier elements formed to make solid matter, and under gravity, were brought together to form stars and planets .

The theory was suggested by **Georges Lemaitre**. He was a Catholic priest and a physicist. He looked at Einstein's equations and saw that the universe was actually expanding, -so it must have begun from a single point, he called a "**cosmic egg**". His view was mocked - his idea sounded too similar to the Genesis story - God creating the world in a single act of power "Let there be light!".

Big Bang now proved by science

- **Red Shift** - physicists can measure how stars are still expanding away from each other, which means that originally, all matter must have originated from the same point. **ALL matter** has come from this one event
- there is no other source in the universe from which matter was created.
- **CBR Cosmic Background Radiation** - physicists have detected the shock waves from the Big Bang, proving that it happened

Multiverse

Stephen Hawkings: believes that so far, the Big Bang is the best scientific th. However, Hawkings thinks it was **not** created from nothing, but was created by gravity: "**Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing.**" He is an atheist. He thinks gravity made new universes split off like soap bubbles from previous universes (multiverse theory), which have always existed. **Critics** ask Hawkins - where did the Law of Gravity come from? They also think that the multiverse idea is pure science fiction - it could never be proved, and so it is not science, but also a belief.



Big Bang Theory (Lemaitre)

- proven, but can't be further explained. .

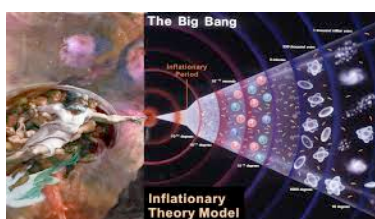
Multiverse theory (Hawkins)

Not proven.

Catholic beliefs about Creation fit the BIG BANG theory best because

- Genesis & the Big Bang both say that the universe **had a beginning**, it is not eternal (like multiverse theory suggests) - It began **at a specific point in space-time**.

- both say creation all came **from one point** - there are no other sources from which the universe was created (unlike the Multiverse theory which suggests that multiverses and gravity can keep making universes at different times and locations)



GK Chesterton says that just like trees and other things in the world are orderly, developing according to a plan, so the world has a plan for developing. And because it has been created from a beginning, it is like a book, with a beginning, middle, and an end. Like a book, the world must be developing like a story, with a purpose and a meaning.

Catholic Beliefs about the Origin of the Universe

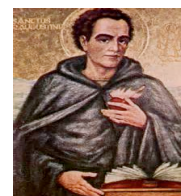
God made everything that exists
God created everything out of nothing (ex nihilo)
Everything that God made, was good

Book of Genesis

- ex nihilo
- act of power & decision
- made it good

Nicene Creed

- made all things, visible and invisible



St Augustine

- ex nihilo
- omnipotent
- omnibenevolent
- transcendent

QUOTES

The Book of Genesis says:

- God made the world **out of nothing** "*In the beginning, the earth was a formless void...*"
- God made the universe by an **act of decision** "*let there be...*" and he made it to **be good** "God saw that it was good"
- He gave everything **freedom** to be itself, and develop freely by itself "*let them teem.. let them multiply and fill the earth...*"

St Augustine says:

- God created **out of nothing** "*in the Beginning, ...you created this thing out of nothing.*"
- God **did not make it of out of his own substance**. "*you did not make them of your own substance*". God is outside of the universe, transcendent. No scientist will ever "find" God as part of the physical universe.
- God did this because He is **omnipotent** "*There is nothing that you cannot do*". He created it by a pure act of power.
- He created it out of His **omnibenevolence** (his own goodness) "*You are good and all that you make must be good,*"

The Creed says:

God made "**all things**, visible and invisible" (spiritual things as well as physical things)

Creation ex nihilo: Christian teaching from the Bible is that God is the **ultimate reason** why there is a universe - and that He made it **from nothing** (ex nihilo) by his own free decision and by an act of power.

Jewish Views

Jews believe that God is the sole creator, and the source of all life. Like most Christians, they believe that Gen1 and Gen2 are **two different creation stories**, showing us how ultimately, God is the creator, creation is good, and human beings are the most important part of his creation.

Orthodox Jews (like fundamentalist Christians) take the stories literally, as factually true, but **Liberal or Reform Jews** (like most other Christians/ Catholics), believe they are myths/ poems, and shouldn't be seen as historical facts. They may believe in the Big Bang and evolution.



Evolution & Religious Beliefs

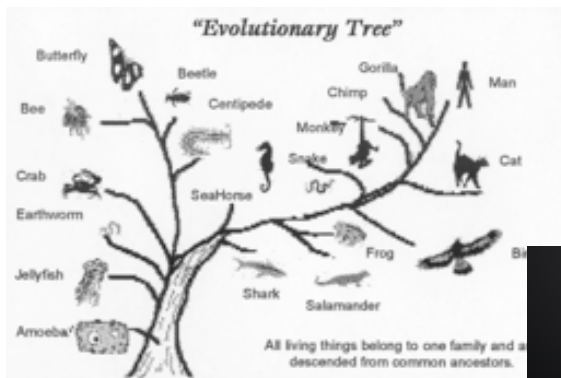
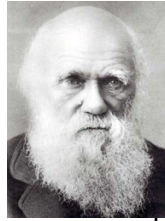
Evolution was discovered by **Charles Darwin** in 19th century. He first suggested that the huge variety of creatures that we see today have developed by a slow process of changes from a common ancestor.

Evolution: a natural process by which successive & newer generations of creatures are better adapted to their environment because of better genetic changes, chosen by natural selection.

- **the fittest survive, and reproduce**, the weakest die out, and don't pass on their genes.

Nature puts pressure on living things to survive, and so selects the best genetic combinations that will be passed on (**Natural Selection**)

- Humans evolved from 4 previous species of humans and human-like apes. We can prove this by looking at skulls of previous human species, and seeing their increasing similarity with our own. All living creatures have evolved from a common genetic ancestor, and ultimately, from a single piece of DNA, billions of years ago. This is called **Common Descent**.



Richard Dawkins is an **atheist** and a scientist living today. He studied animal behaviour (ethnology) before becoming a writer on evolution. "**The Selfish Gene**" and "**The God Delusion**" are two of his most famous books. In them he argues that:

1. n God does not exist, and God had nothing to do with the creation of humans or animals. We are the result of the **purely natural** process of evolution, over millions of years. Nobody "planned us" to exist. If evolution had happened differently, we humans might not have existed.

2. because **we are just the accidental result** of natural selection, there is no purpose to our life, only to pass on our genes to the next generation. We are only "**gene carriers**" for our "selfish" genes, that just want to be passed on in the race of life to survive.

Is evolution compatible with Catholic beliefs about creation?

Catholics are not fundamentalists/ literalists. They do not think that the *Genesis* story should be taken literally. It is a Story of Origin (aetiological story), not science (= making a category mistake). *Genesis* is a myth, that teaches us that God is the ultimate creator, that we are made in God's image, and that we have **souls that have been directly created by God** by an act of "**Special Creation**".

Catholics accept that evolution is an excellent theory that explains how we get all the various creatures we see today

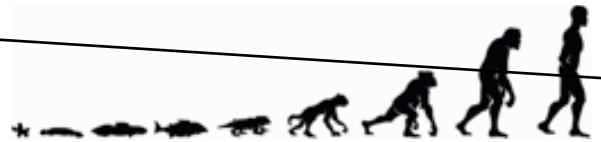
Pope John Paul II: "As my predecessor Pius XII wrote, there is no conflict between evolution and the doctrine of faith"

Pope Francis said: "God is not a magician with a magic wand able to do everything. He let things develop according to the internal laws He gave them."

BUT Catholics do not believe that evolution/ natural selection can produce something spiritual out of nature alone.

Pope Pius XII: "Biology cannot explain what free will, goodness and self-awareness actually are."

John Paul II: "God created man's soul by an act of special creation".



Fundamentalist Christians (Creationists) & Orthodox Jews -

Reject the theory of evolution, because they believe the *Genesis* stories literally, and *Genesis* says that God made all the creatures on the same day, in the form that they are in today, on day 6. They believe that God made human beings out of dust, not out of apes!

- They also believe that **the earth is only a few thousand years old, as this is the number of generations from Adam mentioned in the Bible** (and not 4.6 billion as scientists say), and that fossils are not real, but only "planted" by God.

Catholic Reply to Richard Dawkins

- **how can a gene be "selfish" and "want" to survive?** Mindless matter cannot have desires, only living things can.

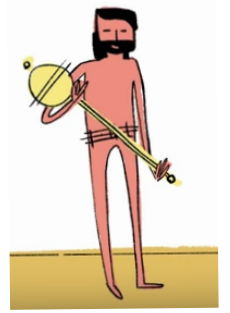
- **St Aquinas** said "divine providence does not exclude chance". Life by evolution may look "accidental", but it can still be following God's plan to create humans

- Dawkins says we are not spiritual, and God does not exist. But how can a scientist make claims about this? **Spiritual things are not provable or disprovable by science.**

- how come there are genes at all? **The odds of life happening by accident is like tornado assembling a jumbo jet from a scrapyard.**



Imago Dei, Sanctity of Life



imago dei is latin for "image of God"

Only humans have the special dignity of being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:1)

We are similar to God because:

- we have authority to be co-creators with God: we can "rule" over the earth responsibly,
- we have a God-like understanding, freedom and love . Other animals just behave automatically, by nature. They do not know what they are, and they cannot choose how to behave.
- we share in God's spirit, so we are holy and spiritual, like God.

WHY THIS MATTERS:

All humans must be treated with special dignity, from the moment they are created, until the moment they die (conception to the grave).

- people must never be used, killed, or exploited as slaves, prostitutes, for body parts etc.

Sanctity of Life: The belief that humans have a special dignity and holiness, because they are made "in the image of God".

1 Corinthians 3: 16 – 17
"Your body is temple of the Holy Spirit" – we are holy and in the image of God, because the HS has been given to us, and lives within us.

Gen 1:
"in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." God created all humans in a unique manner, similar to himself. Human life is God-given and sacred.



Exodus 20: 13
"You shall not murder." – this shows that all life is precious and only God can give and take life.

St.Catherine of Siena
Gazing at the mirror of God's goodness:

- the mirror shows who we really come from and are like = God is our **source and origin**
- the mirror shows us our **special dignity**, because it shows us our **similarity to God**
- but in comparison to God's goodness, we see our **imperfections more clearly**
- sp gazing into this mirror gives us our **conscience** - in the mirror of God's goodness, we see what we should have been



GK Chesterton:
 a coin is stamped with the image of the queen - this makes gives it its value as a coin. Similarly, we are "stamped" with the image of God - this gives us our special dignity



Charles Taylor
 Just like a sponge is porous and soaks up water, so the image of God in us makes us "porous" to God, so we can soak up and be filled with the Holy Spirit



ABORTION = the loss of a pregnancy.

Procured abortion = intentionally removing and destroying the fetus from the mother's womb

Miscarriage = naturally occurring loss of a pregnancy.



UK Law

- two doctors must agree that the pregnancy is causing a risk to the mother's physical or psychological health
- must be carried out before 24 weeks
- but no time limit if the baby is severely disabled or mother's life at risk

Pro-Life : support unborn child's right to life
Pro-Choice: support mother's right to choose

Catholic View

= Pro-life. Abortion is a great moral evil and a mortal sin.

1. Sanctity of life: human life has a unique dignity because humans are made in the image of God, therefore it is wrong to kill them. (Genesis 1) Even a disabled baby's life is a gift from God and every life is special and unique.
2. Human life begins at conception, therefore aborting an unborn child is also killing a human being. It is a "person" from the moment when God has given it a soul.
3. 5th Commandment "Do not kill"
4. God is the Creator and giver of life - all human life belongs to Him, and only He has the right to take it away
5. Bible evidence: Mary & Elizabeth's meeting. Jeremiah "before I formed you in the womb, I knew you".
6. Church teaching: has never changed, that abortion is a mortal sin, because it is the killing of an innocent and vulnerable human being.



EXCEPTION: Principle of Double Effect

If an action has two effects, one good effect and one bad effect, it is permissible to do the action as long as the bad effect is **unavoidable and unintended**.

eg if the mother has cancer and the treatment that will save her life, will also kill her unborn baby, it is still ok to treat her & cause the baby's death, because of PDE.

"From the time of conception, the new life is neither that of the father, nor of the mother..it would never become human if it were not human already". Catholic Declaration on Abortion, 1973

OTHER CHRISTIANS eg Anglicans

agree with the Catholic view that abortion should be avoided as a sin, but allow it under some unique conditions:

- if mother's life is at risk (as in PDE)
- if baby is likely to be very severely disabled and unable to survive for long
- if the mother has been raped

ABORTION

- baby is disabled, or her health is at risk from the pregnancy

- economic reasons: can't afford to bring up a child

- lifestyle issues eg woman already has enough children, or pregnancy would interfere with her career (most abortions are for lifestyle reasons)

- doesn't have support eg from father or her family

- rape (1% cases)

Reasons why women have abortions

Debates about Abortion - are based on 3 main issues:

1. Preserving life - some believe human life has a unique value and must always be protected, and that human life begins at the moment of conception. Others say it only begins eg when heart beats, or brain feels pain, or it first moves in the womb.

2. Quality of life - some believe that this is what matters most, and if the mother or child's life is likely to be full of suffering, or at risk of death, it is right to abort.

3. Rights of mother vs. child - some say the woman has rights over her own body, and the baby inside of it, because it is in her body (pro-life). Others say the baby is a unique individual, who is not the mother (or the father) and has a right to live, which society should protect (pro-choice)



Humanist Views

- do not believe in sanctity of life: human life is special but not so much that it always has to be protected
- want to help all people have quality of life - so support abortion if this means a happier and fuller life for the mother
- do not think that the foetus is a person yet, so don't have to consider its happiness.
- make decisions based on reason - will consider long term and short terms effects carefully before making a decision
- would legalise abortion (to avoid backstreet abortions) but promote adoption as the better solution

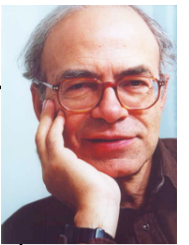
Peter Singer: believes animals have equal rights to humans, and that some humans, like babies and elderly with dementia, are non-human persons. OK to kill them, if this brings greater happiness for others.

Jewish Views

- God is the sole giver and creator of life, humans are in the image of God, and only God can take it away.
- God has "known" us even before birth (Jeremiah)
- 5th Commandment forbids taking life, and this includes the unborn. "anyone who destroys a life is considered as if he had destroyed the whole world".

Most Jews do not believe a foetus is a person until it is born, but will only allow abortion in serious cases eg mother's life is at risk.

Peter Singer's SPECIESISM - a humanist critique of Sanctity of Life



Peter Singer - an Australian philosopher

- believes that **animals have rights**, because they can feel pain and pleasure. They also have desires and want things for themselves eg food, shelter, a mate, space to explore, offspring, social life. It is wrong to privilege humans above animals, if those animals have higher **mental capacity** eg given a choice between saving a newborn or disabled baby and a dog or an ape, save the dog/ape - as it has more mental capacity and therefore more awareness to feel pleasure or pain.

- we should **maximise happiness** whenever possible: we should always act in such a way that most happiness is created. (the ape can find more happiness doing more things than either the disabled baby/ old person with dementia).

- **as a humanist**: he believes in **Quality of Life**, not Sanctity of Life (because he does not believe in God). Humansists want all people to flourish and be happy. They are **socially committed** and take action, making decisions rationally , using logic and science.



SPECIESism

Singer argues that it is wrong to put human beings above other animals, or to think of humans as somehow unique (he rejects Sanctity of Life/ humans as images of God).

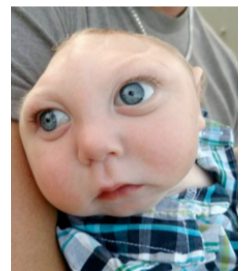
Anthropocentrism (putting humans at the centre) is discriminatory - speciesist.

A non-person human

Singer uses the idea of a non-person human to describe a human being who cannot **think, feel, hope and choose**.

Non-human persons include:

- newborn babies
- elderly people with dementia
- unborn foetus



Catholic Responses to Singer

- how can you compare a human's happiness with an animals? Our experience is different.

- being a person is more than just having mental abilities. We are spiritual (image of God). We also have a unique way of relating and experiencing the world, uniquely valuable.

- if all animals have rights, is all killing of animals wrong? eg wasp's nests, culling badgers, animals for meat & clothing. Singer doesn't say this.

why does Singer think mental capacity is the most important aspect? Being more intelligent does not necessarily mean being happier.

- more happiness for one person, doesn't mean more happiness for everybody. So you shouldn't make decisions based on thinking that you can.

- Singer says we should judge the value of others in a rational and logical way. But he himself valued his dying mother with dementia and cared for her.

It is ok to kill non-persons, if their death helps others to be happier - as they do not have the abilities of a full person, and therefore they do not have rights.

Jesus the Humanist?

- died so all people could come to God, their sins forgiven - this is possible, because we have a **common humanity**

- he cared for all, **without discriminating**

- he wanted **everyone to flourish** in this life, and have the best possible life "I have come that you might have life, and life to the full"

- he **took action** to help the sick and poor, by healing and teaching. He gathered disciples to continue his work

- **socially committed**.

- acted for **human freedom** "if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed"

BUT HE DID EVERYTHING THROUGH FAITH IN GOD !





The Bible: Origins, Structure, Interpretation

What is the Bible?

OT: story of God's relationship with the Jews (46 different books)

a Holy book because authors inspired by God

Oral Tradition: the Bible stories were first passed down by word of mouth. Then IWOC - an inspired author wrote them down, they were often used and finally included in the Canon

NT: 4 gospels about Jesus, Book of Acts, Letters of Apostles, Book of Revelation (27 different books)
- written when eyewitnesses of Jesus beginning to die out

Christian Bible
= Hebrew Scriptures+NT
(the Bible is a collection of books)

Different literary forms:

- Stories of Origin eg Genesis (aetiological stories),
- History eg Kings,
- Law eg Exodus,
- Prophecy eg Jeremiah,
- Wisdom eg Proverbs,
- Gospels eg Matthew,
- Letters eg of Paul,
- Apocalyptic eg Revelation



The CANON of the Bible = the official list of books that are part of the Bible and make up the Bible. Decided by Pope Damasus in 4th..

INSPIRATION - when the Holy Spirit guides a person to follow God's spirit and understand the things of God

REVELATION - God makes himself known eg. through the Jesus, or the words of the Bible, and shows us a way to live, which we would otherwise never know.



Reading the Bible: CATHOLICS

- the plain and simple meaning is not necessarily the correct meaning. We should **look for the spiritual meaning: the THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS** about God and us eg Eve was not really made from a rib, but it is true that woman is intimately connected with man.

- you first have to understand the **CONTEXT** it is written in eg who for, why, when eg at the time of Paul, women were expected to cover their heads, but this is a cultural tradition, not a law of God

- then you can distinguish between **different LITERARY FORMS** in the Bible - eg. laws are meant to be taken literally, but cultural traditions and stories of Origin are not.

- the Bible is inspired and 100% **correct ONLY when it talks about God** and the things of God. It is not necessarily inspired or correct about scientific, astronomical, historical or other facts - this is because the writers were writing during a time when science was not well developed and many things were not well understood.

Liberal vs. Conservative Christians

- a **LIBERAL** Christian (eg an Anglican) would tend to emphasise the symbolic meaning, and be skeptical about any literal truths in the bible. **CONSERVATIVES** (eg Catholics) think most bible stories are generally factually correct, but perhaps not in all details, and that you do have to recognise that it has different literary forms, which aren't meant to be taken literally (eg poetry of Genesis).

A FUNDAMENTALIST (or literal) Reading the Bible:

- Fundamentalists take the plain and simple meaning of the Bible as the true one

- does not realise that there are **different literary forms** in the Bible that should be understood differently eg Stories of Origin should not be read as History or Science.

- taking a literary form like the poetry of the Genesis stories to be literally true, is making a **CATEGORY MISTAKE** (mistaking one literary form for another - poetry as science)

- Fundamentalists believe the Bible is **100% correct and inspired in ALL the facts that it**

The Jewish "Bible" is the TANAKH. It contains
- the **Torah** (5 books of Moses) + **Prophetic books** + **Wisdom books**. Conservative Jews believe the Torah was given directly by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, and must be taken literally. Liberal Jews believe that the laws in the Torah can be adapted to modern life.



"All scripture is inspired by God" (2Tim.3:16)



The Genesis Stories

Stories of Origin, or Aetiological stories

The Genesis stories were written about 450BC. There are 2 Creation stories:
Gen1 - is a poem, telling the story of creation in 6 days, with God resting on the 7th day to make it holy.

Gen 2: is a myth, focussing on the creation of Adam and Eve.

A myth is a symbolic story telling us important truths about God, creation and humans. **Myths are not meant to be true factually or historically**, but they are true at a deeper level.

Genesis shows us what GOD is like: Omnipotent Creator of

Transcendent – because God created the world from outside of space/ time, different from creation itself "*the earth was formless, and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters*"

Eternal – because God created time, so God is beyond time: "*in the beginning, God created...the first day*".

Anthropomorphic – In Gen2, God is portrayed as if he was a human being, walking, talking, bringing animals and the woman to the man.

Ineffable – God is ultimately mysterious and cannot be understood by us. Genesis 1, God simply speaks, and He creates, He is not a physical person nor part of creation.

everything– nothing existed, until God decided to create. God created **out of nothing**, by his word and power, and not from any pre-existing material. "*the earth was formless and empty...and God said "let there be..."*"

Omnibenevolent – God "*saw that it was good*" (Gen1); and God saw that man was lonely and made him a helper (Gen2)

Immanent – because God is present on earth to his creatures: eg he brings the animals to the man to name them, makes the woman by taking out one of his ribs, walks in the garden.

Fundamentalist Christians (& Orthodox Jews) take Genesis as literally true – but this is making a **category mistake** (Genesis is a story of origin & poetic/ mythical, not scientific in style)

Catholics & most other Christians, read Genesis as **symbolising** deeper theological truths about God and man, NOT as scientifically/ literally true.



Genesis shows us who HUMANS are:

Stewards of Creation: man has a responsibility from God to care for creation
Gen1 "Fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over every living creature"
Gen2 "God took the man and put him in the Garden to work it and take care of it"

Free will:

God gave man a command (not to eat), He gives man a command, and the freedom to obey it, or not. Man had a choice about whether or not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. .

Made of body and soul:

Gen2:" God made man out of dust, and breathed into him the breath of life." – this shows man is made both of material substance (dust) and has a spiritual element (breath of life from God)

Sanctity of Life

Man has the special dignity of being like God (free will, reason, love)

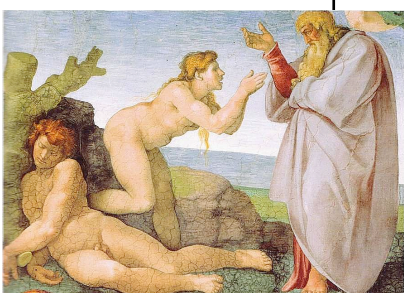
Gen1: "God made man in His own image"

Gen2: "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life"

Made for Relationship – God created man for a personal relationship with God – man is created in God's image, and God "breathes into him the breath of life". Humans were created to experience the love of God. They are also created for love: God makes woman and man to be for each other, so they are not lonely.

Having intelligence, reason

Gen2: "God put man in the garden to take care of it...God brought all the animals to man, so he could name them" Man has the ability to understand and manage the world, with God's authority.



Man as Steward of Creation

A steward: someone who has a care-taking role, making sure everything is well managed, well and safe, and prevents any destructive behaviour. (eg football or airline stewards)



Stewardship of Creation Problems:

- **pollution:** CO2 emissions causing global warming, rising sea levels, melting ice. Chemical spills, plastic littering in the seas
- **species extinction:** hunting, habitat destruction
- **overuse of resources:** more people using burning more fuel and using up more of the world's limited resources - deforestation, desertification

Quotes from the Bible about Stewardship

Love your neighbour as yourself

Do not steal (by consuming more than you have a right to)

Rule over all creatures. Fill the earth and subdue it.

God put man in the garden to work it and to take care of it

Seek justice, especially for the poor



Option for the Poor

The Church is very aware that it is **poor people who suffer the most** from climate change - - they rely on nature for food, and have done the least to cause global warming. Caring for C means caring for the poor who are most affected. We need to - "**hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor**" (Laudato Si).

Jews believe in the **Bible quotes** (see left), like Christians do. **Tikkun Olam** (healing the world): God has given us the responsibility of making the world a better place, and this includes not destroying it. (soldiers are told not to destroy fruit trees in war)
Festivals like **Shavuot** - Jews thank God for the gifts of creation in the harvest. Festival **Sukkot** they live in homemade shelters to remember their connection to the earth. In New Year, they plant trees (Tu Bishvat).



'Laudato Si'

Pope Francis wrote an encyclical about Stewardship of Creation. These are some of the things that he said:

- Creation **belongs to God**, and is a gift from God and a sign of His love for **all humanity**, including future generations. It doesn't belong to us, to do with as we please. We are **only care-takers** of it - we must care for it as **God would want us to**, as images of God that we are. Looking after God's handiwork is not an optional extra: it is the first command that God gave to man.

- **other species are not just "resources"** to be exploited for our benefit- they have value in themselves & should be protected for their own sake. The earth isn't a REsource: it is THE source - it provides everything we need for our life.

What must we do? The Pope says:

- we must tackle the human **causes of global warming**: share transport, recycle, avoid using plastic and paper, not waste food or water, use public transport, turn off lights.
- we must not blame population growth. We must **change our way of life**, and change our **economy**, so that most of the world's wealth does not go to a small number of people. We must respect the **universal destination of goods**.

- A small number of people **do not have the right to consume** as much as they do - the planet cannot support everybody to live in this way.



Humanists believe in being "**Good without God**". They believe in science and technology can solve a lot of our problems. They believe in **Quality of Life**, and happiness for everyone. Some humanists, like Peter Singer, believe other species have equal rights to humans.

- all species should be equally protected. To put humans first is speciesism. Bees are arguably more important (make 66% of food)

- human overpopulation is the reason why the earth and other species are exploited. There should be birth-control programmes to stop this.

- the earth has great beauty and value in itself, even if God isn't the creator. Therefore we should respect it, as well as for our own survival.



Social Justice: Catholic Social Teaching



Out of 7 billion people in the world, 1.3 billion live in extreme poverty on less than £1 a day, with no clean water or electricity, going hungry, 90% of those most affected by natural disasters are the poor. **In the UK**, 1 out of 30 children are living in poverty.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

established that "all persons are born free and equal in dignity and rights".

The Church too has always believed this - because it believes that **all people are created in the image of God** (Sanctity of Life)

Social justice is when a society aims for a just and fair society where all people have equal access to basic rights and have their dignity respected.

Bible Quotes about showing Justice

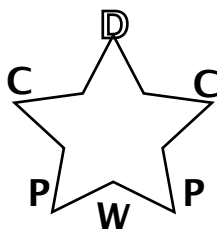
image, in His own image He created them". Gen1 (there everybody is equal)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right, for they shall be satisfied" (Beatitude)

"Love your neighbour as yourself"

Parable of the Good Samaritan: the Samaritan helped the man robbed, no matter who he was. Anybody who is in need, is our neighbour.

"What does God require of you, O man? **Only this: to act justly**, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8



The COMMON GOOD: The Church teaches that every individual has a **duty to contribute to the good of society**. They must individually act justly and seek justice for others, especially the poor. This makes society a peaceful and happy place for all to live in.

Gaudium et Spes is a 1960 Encyclical that speaks out about how to build a fairer society, where human rights are respected equally. It includes 6 of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

- **Peace:** peace does not only mean avoiding war, or not stockpiling weapons. It means to respect all people of any faith and culture. Peace can only exist where there is justice: where people have their basic rights met - working for justice is a way of loving others.
- **Work:** workers are not machines. Work must give people dignity, not exploit them for financial gain. People before profit.
- **Dignity** - the Church must not rest until there is dignity and equality for all, where everybody has access to basic rights, and every type of discrimination is eliminated.
- **Poor** - wealth must be distributed so that the poor are cared for (Preferential Option for the Poor). The world's goods belong to everyone, not just to a lucky few (**Universal Destination of Goods**).
- **Community** - every individual has the duty to contribute to the common good of society. We must all, individually, seek justice for others, especially the poor. Families are the foundation of society - divorce and casual sex destroy marriages.



Preferential Option for the Poor

The Church cares for the poor first of all, because they are the most vulnerable and least able to help themselves. The poor rely on God for help more than the rich do.

SVP - St. Vincent de Paul Society

offers all kinds to help restore dignity to people, through individual contact. They help **anyone** who asks (regardless of faith etc) eg: foodbanks and soup kitchens, teach skills, recycle furniture, help with bills and household tasks, offer friendship and support. Prisoners, elderly/ housebound, sick, mentally ill, poor.



CAFOD -Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (The Church's official aid agency)

SHORT TERM AID - emergency/ disaster relief eg blankets, food, water, medicines
LONG TERM AID - digging wells, providing education or healthcare, supplying seeds & tools

CAMPAIGN - eg to "Make Poverty History" or raise awareness of how climate change affects the poor

FUNDRAISE in schools and churches for their projects. Two Family Fast Days a year.

REMEMBER the Principles of CST

Common good

Care for creation (Pope Francis: the poor are most affected by climate)

Preferential option for poor

Peace

Dignity

meaningful work

Christian beliefs in Art: Michelangelo's Creation of Adam

Michelangelo - painter/ sculptor C16th, Italy
Sistine Chapel ceiling

It shows beliefs about man:

- Adam is made **in the image of God**: shown by the way his body is a concave reflection of God's body, line of arms, eye gaze
- Adam is sluggish, perhaps not fully alive, until God touches him with the spark of his own divine life & gives him a **soul**
- Adam makes little effort to connect with God, a symbol of our **Original Sin**?
- Adam is youthful, he is a **new creation** (contrast with God's eternal, ageless body/ face)
- Adam is **free**: he is not connected to God, unless he wants to reach out to God.
- Adam lies on the earth, almost hugging it. This shows his **material, earthly** nature. He is created "from dust".
- Adam is **created alone**. Our first relationship is with God.



It shows beliefs about God

- God is transcendent - floating in his own space, not part of the earth
- God is life-giving: the red cloth could symbolise the "womb" of God
- God is omniscient and wise: the red cloth is brain shaped - symbolising God's omniscience and wisdom?
- God is full of energy and power. Omnipotent. He has a powerful body.
- God is loving - He is reaching out to Adam, in concern for him.
- God is eternal and fatherly: shown by his flowing white hair, with angels in his protective embrace

The Tree of Life Mosaic

In the Church of San Clemente, Rome. It includes a number of symbols, that teach us about the meaning of Christ's death.

Cross: is dark, contrasting with the bright figure of Jesus - who defeats suffering

Cross is life giving - a tree is growing from its base, sending out vine shoots across the whole mosaic. A stream of water also arises from it, from which deer drink, unafraid of the snake nearby (symbolises Jesus' gift of the spirit, given to us to "drink")

The Vine: symbolises Jesus' life-giving message that has spread through all the earth - also represents the Church, through which Christ's life is spread.

Lamb of God: at bottom of the cross, symbolises Jesus as the sacrifice for our sins.

Doves & Sheep: the Apostles, who followed Jesus (=sheep), and brought peace and reconciliation to the world by their preaching (doves).

The 4 figures: evangelists, who wrote each of the 4 gospels, and spread the message of Jesus through all the earth.

Bethlehem and Jerusalem: the two towns that symbolise Jesus' earthly life - birth to death.

Hand of God: reaches out from heaven (transcendent) and giving Jesus the wreath of victory

Christograms

are symbols of Christ. As symbols, they communicate not just information, but something about the reality of who He is.



two greek letters - X and P - stand for the first two sounds of ChRist's name. Also the sign Constantine saw in the sky and had painted on his army shields. Won him the battle "in this sign, you will conquer"



The first and last letters in the Greek alphabet - alpha and omega. Symbolise the fact that God is the first and the last, eternal.



A pictorial symbol: fish in Greek is **ictus**. Each letter in this greek word stands for the first letter of each word in the phrase "**Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour**" (Iesous Christos Theou Huios Soter). This sign showed someone's belief in the Christ as their saviour.





Inter-faith Dialogue

Immigration is a constant aspect of any society. England has experienced waves of migrations for thousands of years.

- the Romans (invasion)
- Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Normans (invasions)
- Jews - fleeing persecution
- Citizens of the British Empire: Caribbean, India, Pakistan, West Africa
- Citizens of the EU: Poland, Romania

The UK is a culturally and religiously **pluralistic society**. It has many different cultures and religions. The UK encourages all people to practice their religion and culture freely.

Benefits of pluralism:

- **culturally enriching** for the UK, as different food, music, fashions are introduced
- makes the UK more tolerant and **globally aware**, as people come into contact with other races and cultures.
- immigrants are often highly motivated to make a success of their lives: they **work hard and contribute** to the economy and to society. **Improves business** opportunities with these countries.

But it can also lead to problems in society (see mindmap).

Interfaith dialogue is important because:

- **promotes mutual understanding and respect between faiths**
- **helps you to appreciate your own faith**
- **helps community cohesion: a society where people respect each other is a united and peaceful society**



local people may feel their way of life is being eroded by the newcomers. Councils don't allow Christian street decorations in some areas. Muslim may want to build tall mosques

Religious tensions in society: faith groups may disagree with the way others live and want their own system of law (Shariah Law) and education (Faith schools) and marriage (not for homosexuals).

Scapegoats: immigrants may be blamed for society's problems eg unemployment, cuts to benefits, housing etc

Problems in a pluralistic society

Extremism: different cultures or faiths may reject others and try and dominate them or even get rid of them by violence

Discrimination based on faith or on race eg job applications



The Church believes that it is very important to dialogue with people of other faiths, and to love them as brothers.

Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, including Judas, to give us an **example of how we should lovingly serve** others, no matter who.

Jesus taught us that the greatest person is the one who "is **servant to all**". This includes people of other faiths.

The encyclical "Nostra Aetate" ("In Our Times", Pope Paul VI, 1960) teaches that **God is the father of all**, and we must love each other with a brotherly love. It also emphasises that there cannot be **peace in the world**, unless people of faith learn to respect each other through dialogue and contact.

GCSE ROUTE B

GLOSSARY OF KEY CONCEPTS

Component 1.1

Creation ex nihilo	creation out of nothing. Before God created the universe, nothing existed. Only God can create out of nothing.
Evolution	the process of mutation and natural selection which leads to changes in species over time to suit particular environments.
Imago Dei	in the image of God. The belief that human beings are uniquely a reflection of God's personhood. Unlike the other animals, human beings are rational, free and moral.
Inspiration	"God breathed" The belief that the Spirit of God guides an individual to act or write what is good and true.
Omnipotence	the belief that God is all powerful.
Revelation	the word used to describe all of the ways in which God makes <i>himself</i> known to human beings. Christians believe that God does this finally and fully in the person of Jesus Christ.
Stewardship	the duty to care for creation responsibly, as stewards rather than consumers, and to protect it for future generations.
Transcendence	existing outside of space and time; God exists in a way that makes him nothing like anything else that exists, above and beyond creation.