Knowledge organiser: GCSE Catholic Christianity Unit 2- Incarnation

Sub topics

- The meaning of Jesus as God incarnate
- The annunciation to Mary
- The annunciation to Joseph
- The prologue to John's Gospel- Jesus as the word of God
- Jesus as fully human and fully God (Titles of Jesus)
- Jesus as a source of moral authority
- Jesus' moral teaching on living a Christian life
- The teachings of St Irenaeus and the incarnation
- Different understandings of the incarnation
- Christian symbols
- How the incarnation affects Catholic attitudes towards Christian art?
- Statues of the person of Jesus
- Grace and the sacramental nature of reality
- The effects of the sacraments
  Modern debates surrounding abortion
  Imago dei and abortion

Key words

Incarnation: God taking on the human condition through Jesus
Grace: God's free gift of unconditional love for the believer
Virgin birth: The belief that Jesus was fully human but did not have a human father
Eternal: Without beginning or end
Co-exist: Live together in harmony
Hypostatic union: The combination of natures as fully human and fully divine in the single person of Jesus Christ
Tradition: That which has been handed down or passed on; things which have value because they stand the test of time
Heresy: A belief that goes against the accepted teaching of the Church
Apostolic exhortation: A letter or document from the Pope encouraging Catholics in their Religion
Sacrament: An outward sign of inward grace; rites and rituals through which the believer receives a special gift of grace
Abortion: The removal of a foetus from the womb to end a pregnancy, usually before the foetus is 24 weeks old.

Assessed tasks

1. **Written assessment**
2. **12-mark essay question**

Students may be set additional assessed tasks by their class teacher which will help the class teacher to assess their progress and inform their planning.

Opportunities for independent learning/Stretch and challenge

Read further about the Christian doctrine of the incarnation:
https://www.britannica.com/topic/Incarnation-Jesus-Christ

Can you question the virgin birth and still be Christian? Article
https://religionnews.com/2014/12/23/can-question-virgin-birth-still-christian/

A commentary on the prologue to John's Gospel
http://request.org.uk/jesus/johns-prologue-analysis/

How can Jesus be fully God and fully man?
https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/how-can-jesus-be-god-and-man

Examine the whole of the Sermon on the Mount- Matthew 5-7 and consider how practical Jesus' commands are for Christians today.

Look up references from the writings of prominent Catholic writers Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria and explain what they teach about Jesus as the meeting point between God and humans

Complete exam questions for this unit on shared area

Scripture and the incarnation

- The annunciation to Mary and the appearance of the Angel Gabriel as recorded in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew allow Christians to understand the importance and significance of the person of Jesus s the Incarnation and Son of God.
- The prologue to John's Gospel helps us to understand the divinity of the person of Jesus as the 'word made flesh'.
- Catholic believe that Jesus was fully human and fully God. These 2 natures combine to form the single person of Jesus Christ. This is the belief in the hypostatic union and can be supported by scripture.
- Jesus as the Son of God guides Christians through the scriptures on how to live a good Christian life. His teachings help Christians to understand the love and will of God for his people

Catholic tradition and Incarnation

- Tradition in the CATHOLIC Church Literally means a "handing on," referring to the passing down of God's revealed word.
- During the 2000 year heritage of the Church there have been prominent teachers whose work have been accepted by Catholics, who believe that the Holy Spirit has inspired these thinkers.
- St Irenaeus, a key figure in Catholic tradition taught that Jesus was the meeting point between God and humanity. Through Jesus we can come to understand the glory of God.

Art and Incarnation

-Three Christian symbols that help us to understand the person of Jesus as the Incarnation are
- I**chtus**- Emphasises Jesus as the Son of God and saviour.
Alpha and Omega- Jesus is involved in everything from beginning to end
Chi-rho- Jesus is the Messiah- the anointed one

- There are many statues that help Christians understand the different aspects person of Jesus including Christ the redeemer and the sacred heart.
- The incarnation has influenced Catholic attitudes to Religious art- when God took on the human condition through Jesus, it provided a unique opportunity to portray God in art as we experienced him in a physical form.

Sacraments and sacramental imagination

- A sacrament is defined in the Catechism as 'an outward sign of Inward grace.'
- The sacrament rites (example baptism ceremony) are 'outward signs' of 'inward grace' (God's love)
- Through the sacraments we become a child of God and are guided by God's love and spirit towards a deeper relationship with him.

How do sacraments link to the incarnation?

Catholics believe that the whole of creation can be considered to be 'sacramental' (holy). Through the incarnation God became man and was present among humans within creation. His life, death and resurrection transformed the whole of creation.

Imago dei and abortion

Abortion is the removal of a foetus from the womb to end a pregnancy, usually before the foetus is 24 weeks old.

The Incarnation Influences Catholic attitudes to abortion. This is because the belief that God became human through Jesus further enhances the holiness of the human condition. All human life is considered sacred from the very moment of conception.