# **Module One – The search for meaning:**

**Why do people search for meaning:**

* Many people find answers in religion and choose to follow a particular religious way of life.
* Meaning provides a purpose for our lives and it furnishes values or standards by which to judge or actions.

**Characteristics of genuine religious experiences:**

* Ordinary experiences can change a person and prompt them to ask important questions about the purpose of their life and its meaning.
* The three categories of life experience are:
  + The created world
  + Others
  + The mystery of who they are

**Life experiences/events lead to existential questions:**

* The questions which are formed through these experiences can lead to a person to find meaning and purpose in their life
* There are four main life events in which questions are formed:
  + Birth
  + Adolescence
  + Marriage
  + Death

**Birth:**

* For parents and others close to them, the birth of a child is a special mystery experience welcoming new life
* Questions formed can include, “are we ready to welcome a new life into this family?”

**Adolescence:**

* The stage of growing and maturing into adulthood
* Questions formed can include, “why am I changing?”

**Marriage:**

* Marriage is the commitment between two people as partners in a personal relationship.
* Questions formed include, “why do we commit ourselves to marriage?”
* The catholic response to this include:
  + committing ourselves to marriage is one of the most important life events in life. For Catholics, committing ourselves to marriage is established by God. They believe that the binding relationship of marriage is a powerful symbol of the relationship between Christ and the Church,
  + “and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh” MK 10:8-12
  + “whoever the divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”
  + These passages mean if we don’t commit ourselves fully to marriage we are breaking one of the ten commandments and can never have a proper relationship with God.

**Death:**

* Death is the ending of your life
* Questions formed for this life event include, “is there a heaven or hell that exists?”
* The Catholic response to this includes:
  + As Catholics, we believe that when a person dies, the soul separates from the body and stands there before God for judgement.
  + If the soul is free from all sin and the hurt is caused by sin, it goes straight to heaven.
  + If the soul had died having venial sin, it would go to a place called purgatory. There, it will have the soul healed from sin and then are welcomed into heaven
  + If in other words, has mortal sin, the soul cannot be healed, goes straight to hell.

# **Module Two – religion and religiosity:**

**The concept of “Religion’:**

* A gathering of people who share common beliefs about their experiences of God or Gods
* As a result of religions, they share common understandings about basic human questions (purpose of life).
* All religions have characteristics, such as beliefs and practises or rituals, or traditions

**Examples of world religions:**

* Buddhism
* Christian
* Judaism
* Hinduism
* Islam

**Being religious:**

* The person suspects each other to develop their ability to listen to, be in touch with and respond to questions of the human heart; to provide opportunities for people to experience God.

**Indicators of being religious:**

* Praying
* Think about Good
* Join groups to find spiritual experiences
* Ponder on the creation of the universe

**Responses to Religion:**

* There can be many reasons why people ignore the existence of God, do not choose to belong to a religion or observe a religious way of life. There are different perspectives in which people express their response to religion.

**Secularism:**

* Promotes societal ideas or values over religious ways of thought, It promotes freedom from religious rule and teachings, freedom from government imposition of religion upon the people and gives no state privileges or subsidies to religions.

**Atheism:**

* Where people do not believe there is a God or live as though there is no God

**Agnosticism:**

* Where people are uncertain about the existence of God or people’s ability to know if a God exists.

**Humanism:**

* Based on an understanding that the world itself and human beings reveal all.
* Human reason is the foundation for every situation and action in the world

**Main Characteristics of religion:**

**Religious belief:**

* A conviction about an idea central to a religion that expresses a religious truths
* Religious beliefs offer particular insights and understandings about life
* For example, believing in God or other Gods

**Religious teaching:**

* An official statement of a religious belief
* Religious teachings guide and inform how people repond to religious belief,
* For example, CST is a body of Catholic Church teachings that call people to put into practice.

# **Module Three – Religious Belief:**

**Belief:** a religious belief in Catholicism is **Revelation**:

**Key features of Revelation:**

**Natural:**

* The knowledge about God discovered through the natural world (the physical universe)
* Natural revelation is ongoing. It is available to all and is experienced through the gifts of creation and intellect and can provide profound encounters with God.
* Natural revelation reveals things like human reflection which reflects the truth, beauty and love that is God. This also reveals that the creation was created by God and that we can see the vastness and power in creation and recognise that something is more high/powerful for it.
* Natural Revelation has an understanding through the Catechism and in the Bible:
  + “For this reason, I will say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you drink..” (Matthew 6:25)

**Divine:**

* Divine Revelation is God’s definitive self-communication, through which he makes known the mystery of his Divine plan of salvation
* How God is revealed through the Bible.
* This reveals that Had has a plan for salvation, which was revealed that it is a gift of freedom from our sins that Jesus made possible by taking punishment for our sins on the cross (New Testament)
* It has proceeded through human history beginning with Adam and Eve
* It is communicated through Scripture and tradition for us to understand.
  + For example, Psalm 119:130 “the entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”
  + I Corinthians 1:21 “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the messaged preached to save those who believe.”
* From the Old Testament, we can learn how God intentionally revealed himself and his plan for salvation through the covenants he made with his chosen people and the prophets she sent to them.
* In the New Testament, God reveals himself through Jesus Christ which is through Christ’s words and actions, in particular, his death, resurrection and ascension reveal to us the fullness of God’s love.

**Jesus as the fullness of Revelation:**

* God’s revelation is Jesus Christ, the true Son of God and the True son of mad. This was the best way God could reveal himself than becoming a human being
* This enabled people to know God and relate to him personally as they listened to what He said and observed what he did.
* Jesus revealed that God is loving and forgiving, he loved us and sacrificed Himself for us on the cross
* He is the Messiah who proclaimed and restored the Kingdom of God. This meant that every human being was able to be freed from the limitation.

# **Module Four – Religious Structures and Processes (Christian Denominations:**

**Denominations:** From the word, ‘dominate’, meaning ‘to give a name’ Is a particular religious group that has slightly different beliefs from other groups within the same faith.

**Schism:** Refers to the split between strongly opposed sections, caused by differences in opinions or beliefs.

**Major divisions or denominations within a world religion:**

* Catholicism is the largest Christian Denomination with more that 1.2 billion adherents worldwide.

**Reason for Divisions to exist:**

* During its history, Christianity gradually divided into a number of denominations.
* This was caused because:
  + Different disputes about Christian beliefs
  + Different traditions and practices
  + Issues of leadership and authority
  + Questioning of what rules were important and how teachings were applied and interpreted
  + Cultural and historical differences between different communities.

**The Great Schism:**

* The main schism that happened within Christianity was called, “The Great Schism” or “The Eastern Schism”

**Historical context:**

* The Great Schism happened in 1054 and was the breakup of the Christian Church into two sections, The Western and Eastern Sections. These two turned into the Eastern Orthodox Church and The Roman Church.
* The schism didn’t start from one quarrel, but in fact, was a result of a very gradual process. There were a series of temporary small schisms that loosened the bond of these two sections.
* The Eastern section of Christianity included four countries:
  + Constantinople
  + Antioch
  + Jerusalem
  + Alexandria
* Roman Catholics country included:
  + Rome

**Reasons for the Great Schism:**

* Political:
  + The church in the east was led by Michael Cerularius (Patriarch of Constantinople) and the church in the west was led by Pope Leo IX
  + On 16th July 1054, Cerularius was excommunicated by Pope Leo IX in the Christian church located in Rome. This left tensions between the two sections.
* Communication:
  + Spoke Greek in the Eastern Councils and spoke Latin in the Western Councils
  + This made it hard to understand which made misunderstandings between the two councils.
* Theological:
  + The Filioque clause controversy was the difference between the two churches on the doctrine of the Trinity:
    - whether the Holy Spirit “proceeds” from the Father alone (orthodox)
    - or from the Father AND the Son (Catholic).
  + This line was added to the Latin creed which was a cause of the tension.

**Characteristics of Roman Catholicism:**

* Beliefs:
  + The Ten Commandments
  + There is life after death – heaven and hell
* Practices:
  + 7 sacraments:
    - Baptism
    - Reconciliation
    - Eucharist
    - Confirmation
    - Marriage
    - Anointing of the sick
    - Holy Orders
* Culture:
  + Speaks Latin for services
* Interpretation of the Bible:
  + They learn and understand God and God’s nature better
* Leadership:
  + Pope, who is elected by the college of Cardinals and hold office for life

**Characteristics of Eastern Orthodoxy:**

* Beliefs
  + God revealed Himself to Jesus Christ and a belief in the incarnation of Christ, His crucifixion and resurrection
* Practices:
  + Sacred mysteries
  + The seven mysteries/ sacraments
* Culture:
  + Speak Greek
* Interpretation of the Bible:
  + ‘God’s world’ revealed for the Salvation of humanity and that God inspired the writings of the Bible
* Leadership:
  + The Patriarch of each region.

**Response of the Catholic Church to the Schism:**

* The Catholic Church has responded to divisions with the teaching of Ecumenism.
* Ecumenism is the uniting of the Christian churches. It is the principle or aim of promoting unity among the world’s Christian churches
* “I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word.”
  + Relates to the concept of ecumenism as Jesus prays that believers may be “perfected in unity”, which implies a process of growth
* Unitatis-Redintegratio:
  + Term ‘ecumenical movement’ indicated the initiatives and activities planned and undertaken, according to the various needs of the church and as opportunities offer, to promote Christian unity
  + Church renewal is of notable ecumenical importance – preaching the word of the Lord, and new forms of religious life. Church’s social teachings are all future progress of ecumenism
  + The common heritage is recognised; the others are recognised as churched and church communities; it is even admitted that the church can lean something from them.
  + Unitatis Redinegrato established the second Vatican Council’s position on the church’s relation to other Christians.
* Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches:
  + The Catholic church has been fully committed to the ecumenical council journey.
  + A permanent Vatican department – the pontifical council for the Promotion of Christian Unity – led by a Cardinal, who is responsible for co-ordinating the dialogues between the catholic church and other Christian denominations
  + “The Catholic church embraces with hope the commitment to ecumenism as a duty of the Christian conscience enlightened by faith and guided by love.” (8 of the Vatican II degree on Ecumenism)

# **Module Five –Influence of Religion (Important Person):**

**Exam-styled questions:**

**Identify one important person, event or issue in the history of a Religion:**

* One important person in the history of a religion in Australia is Mary Mackillop.

**Outline the main features of an important person:**

* Born in 1842 to Catholic Scottish immigrants
* Father Woods gave her the opportunity to serve God through St Joseph’s school
* She was Mother Superior of the sisters of St Joseph of Sacred Heart, which was a religious order of nuns in Australia.
* Excommunicated (officially excluded from participation in the sacraments and services of the Christian Church) in 1871 for insubordination
* This was removed in 1872
* She was the first Australian Saint and was beatified on 19th January 1995 in a mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II and canonised by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010.

**Impacts this person had on a religion/catholic church:**

* Opened Catholic schools for poor children
* Created social institutions in Australia (Rural, South)
* Travelled overseas throughout Australasia, establishing schools, covenants and charitable insubordinations.

# **Module Five –Influence of Religion (Place of Religion):**

**Roles of religion in society:**

**Religious:**

* This is supporting people with a religious way of life.
* Its is important for religion to provide society with opportunities to develop an experience of God through prayer, communal celebration and a moral code of conduct
* Then (1800s):
  + In 1803, the first authorised Roman Catholic mass was celebrated by Cather James Dixon, in Sydney
  + In 1836, the first Bishop was created in Australia
* Now(1900s):
  + Catholicism becomes the biggest religious denomination
  + They expand the churches
  + Australian born priests started to be numbered then Irish Priest

**Social:**

* The provision of hospitals (St John of God, Bethesda Hospital), schools (La Salle College, Australian Islamic college, Carmel School) and Welfare services (Vinnies, Anglicare, salvos).
* Then (1800s):
  + Schools were created non-government, catholic schools to continue catholic education to kids
  + In the late 1800’s many orders of Nuns or ‘sisterhoods’ were operating five hospitals, orphanages, etc in NSW.
* Now (1900s):
  + Sacred Heart mission was established in 1982, to share a meal with the vulnerable
  + Christian churches running schools, some secular schools started as well.

**Political:**

* Religious leaders in Australia will actively participate in political debates
* They may be in order to promote or defend religious beliefs or practices, the rights of people who belong to the religion or the rights of others in society.
* Then (1800s):
  + 1810-1830 representatives from the major denominations were established in the colony
  + Secularism became famous
* Now (1900s):
  + Secular Prime Ministers coming in
  + James Scullin was the first Catholic Prime Minister.

**Cultural:**

* Religion can shape the culture of society through music, sport, art, drama or architecture
* These reflect upon or use elements drawn from religion.
* Then (1800s):
  + Anglican church was built in 1855 on the site of the first and second St Phillips.
* Now (1900s):
  + Religious influence in culture decreased.

**The significance of the influence of roles in Religion:**

**Religious:**

* Other religions are expanding (due to the influx of immigrants)
* Since 1966, Christianity has decreased in followers
* A significant amount of people above the age of 65 affiliate
* More than half of Australians follow Christianity
* Increase in the number of non-religious believers
* It is significant because it shows religion and its prevalence in Australian society and culture.

**Social:**

* Caritas Australia is a church operated donated charity that donates to people in need
* In 1962, there was a strike to fight for schools to have lead aid in the Catholic domain.
  + They wanted schools to start facing catholic values, beliefs, teachings or practices.
  + They wanted it to be taught and incorporated into the children’s learning each day and at the start of all school meetings, reminding us of our mission of Catholic schools
* This is a way of living our ethos with the community.

**Cultural:**

* Music in Australia or that has been seen in Australia has religious relating within the genre, country music and folk music. These are one of the only genres that talk about religion in people’s lives, to guide them in life.
* St Mary’s Cathedral in Perth was completed in 2010, even though it was started to be built in 1900s.
* Stained glass windows have been around from the 7th century. This is now a big thing with art in every church and chapels now days
* These all promote the Catholic church as it expresses religion through art.

**Political:**

* Australia is a secular country where religion is separated from Politics.
* Scott Morrison is a Pentecostal Christian.
* Religion has a decreasing role in politics since 1800s.

# **Module Six – Religious ritual:**

**Religious rituals:** Use symbolic actions, such as movement, gestures and words to express and promote what is important about faith

**Eucharist:** It is the sacrament that completes the process of initiation and that is when one can fully participate in the Eucharist by receiving communion. It is the re-enactment of the Last supper.

**Transubstantiation:** The change of the substance of bread and mine in the eucharist because of Christ’s real presence – his body and blood.

**What is the Eucharist:**

* Eucharist is the sacrament that completes the process of initiation. Eucharist is unique among the sacraments as it is at the heart of our faith. For Catholics, the Eucharist, or Mass, is the most powerful way we encounter the real presence of Jesus Christ.
* There are many graces during this ritual including wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and the fear of the lord.
* During the Eucharist, transubstantiation occurs, which is the change by which the substance of the bread and wine in the eucharist becomes Christ’s real presence – that is his body and blood.

**Key features of the Eucharist:**

**Key feature 1 (The eucharist as thanksgiving):**

* The Eucharist comes from the Greek word, ‘Eucharistein’, which means giving thanks. The Eucharist as a thanksgiving means that when we celebrate the Eucharist, we thank God for the good gifts he has given us. Jesus offered thanks to God at the Last supper.
* “ “22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.”23 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.” (Mark14:22-23)
* Today when we celebrate the Eucharist, we continue to praise and thank God for the work of salvation. We thank Him for the gifts of life and the beauty of all creations.

**Key feature 2 (Eucharist as a sacred meal):**

* The eucharist as a sacred meal, a ritual meal that commemorates Jesus’ last supper. The teaching relates to the Passover as the Passover meal was the most sacred and joyous time for the Jews. It reminded them of God’s goodness and fidelity to His promise is rescuing them from Egypt.
* “So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is and true food, and My blood is true drink” (John 6:53-57)
* The purpose of this feature is because the meal symbolises and helps understand some of the rich meaning of Jesus’ actions. This signifies the unity of the heart, spirit and mind, the meals have a symbol of companionship. Jesus transformed the unleavened bread of the Passover meal to his body and did the same to the wine into his blood.

**Key feature 3 (Eucharist as the Holy Sacrifice):**

* The meaning of word, sacrifice comes from the Latin word that means ‘to make holy’ or ‘to do something holy’. Holiness refers to sharing God’s life. Only God can make us holy. There is a relationship with the Old Testament as well.
* The Holy Eucharist did not exist during the days of the Old Testament; however, God was gradually preparing to receive it. For example, the sacrament of Christ’s body and blood was Abel (the earliest shown in the bible). Another one is Moses, the first Israelite priest who read the Torah to the Israelite people at the foot of Mt. Sinaia and threw the blood of the sacrificed, saying…
* “Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you.” (Ex 24:28)

**Key feature 4 (Eucharist as mass):**

* Mass is the traditional word for the Eucharist. The term comes from the words of dismissal in the Latin mass, “God, you are sent.”
* The term ‘mass’ reminds us that our mission in life is to live Jesus’ Passover.
* When we sacrifice the others, we share and receive the Lord’s love – we can faithfully proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes again.

# **Module Five –Current issues for Religion (Climate Change):**

**Climate change:** Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, such as through variations in the solar cycle. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

**Nature:** The basic or inherent features, character or qualities of something.

**Responses to climate change:**

**Response one – Throwaway culture:**

* Throwaway Culture is a concern for Climate Change that Pope Francis addressed in the encyclical ‘Laudato Si’.
* Throwaway Culture is how the majority of humans are used to using an item once and once it is consumed just throwing it away, instead of reusing/recycling it.
* ‘Laudato Si’ outlines the churchs issue with Throwaway Culture , which can be seen with Pope Francis saying ‘humans beings frequently seem to see no other meaning in their natural environment than what serves for immediate use and consumption’, which helps inform humanity of their behaviour, which is then followed by the Church’s response to the issue which is Pope Francis stressing “the urgent need for a radical change in the conduct of humanity” and for people to reuse/recycle to help Earth be more sustainable.
* This shows how the Church used ‘Laudato Si’ to call people to recycle/reuse things more in order to stop Throwaway Culture and its affect on our world.

**Response two –**

* Poor being most affected is a concern for Climate change that Pope Francis addresses in the encyclical ‘Laudato Si’.
* Poor being most is how the actions that developed societies have on Climate Change causes the poor to be most affected, even though they contribute the least towards it.
* ‘Laudato Si’ outlines the Church’s issue with the poor being most affected, which can be seen with Pope Francis informing humanity that the poor ‘live in areas particularly affected by global warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystematic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry”.
* Pope Francis then calls people to ‘take into account the nature of each being and its mutual connection”.
* This shows how the Church used ‘Laudato Si’ to encourage people to consider others, particularly the poor, in our actions which will help stop the poor from being affected by developed society’s actions.