Your notes

GCSE Religious Studies: revision notes

Christianity: practices

Contents

1. Worship and prayer
2. The sacraments
3. Pilgrimage and festivals
4. The Church in the world
5. The Study of Christianity: practices (Eduqas)
6. Key terms
7. Quick questions
8. What to do next

Worship and prayer

- **Liturgical worship** follows a set order with set prayers, such as the Catholic Mass or an Anglican Holy Communion service. Non-**liturgical worship** is more flexible, as in many evangelical churches. Informal worship includes charismatic worship and Quaker meetings, which are largely silent.
- Prayer can use set words, such as the Lord's Prayer, which Jesus taught his disciples, or be informal and personal.

The sacraments

- A **sacrament** is an outward sign of an inward grace. Catholic and Orthodox Christians recognise seven; most Protestants recognise two: **baptism** and Holy Communion.
- Infant **baptism** welcomes a baby into the Church and, for many Christians, cleanses original sin. Believers' **baptism**, by full immersion, is for people old enough to choose, as in Baptist churches.
- Holy Communion (the **Eucharist** or Mass) remembers the Last Supper. Catholics believe the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ (**transubstantiation**); many Protestants see it as a symbolic act of remembrance.

Pilgrimage and festivals

- A **pilgrimage** is a journey to a holy place, such as Lourdes (where Mary is believed to have appeared to Bernadette in 1858, and many pray for healing), Iona (a place of peace and prayer linked with St Columba), Jerusalem or Walsingham.

- Christmas celebrates the incarnation, Jesus' birth. Easter celebrates the resurrection, after **Lent** and Holy Week (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday).

The Church in the world

- Local churches run food banks, street pastors and youth groups. Mission and **evangelism** spread the Christian message, following the Great Commission (Matthew 28).
- The worldwide Church works for **reconciliation** (such as the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland), supports persecuted Christians, and helps the poor through charities such as Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tearfund.

The Study of Christianity: practices (Eduqas)

- Worship can be liturgical (set words and order, as at a Catholic Mass), informal (as in Evangelical churches, with modern songs, spontaneous prayer and Bible teaching) or individual (alone at home). The Society of Friends (Quakers) meet in silence until someone feels moved to speak. Jesus said that where two or three gather in his name, he is with them (Matthew 18:20).
- **Baptism** and the **Eucharist**: Catholics and Orthodox Christians count seven **sacraments**; most Protestants count two. Catholics believe the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation); many Protestants see the Eucharist as a memorial. Some churches baptise only believers old enough to choose (John 3:3-6).
- **Pilgrimage**: Walsingham in Norfolk has a shrine to Mary visited since the Middle Ages. Taizé in France is an ecumenical community, founded by Brother Roger in 1940, where thousands of young people go to pray, sing simple chants and reflect.
- In the 2011 census, 59% of people in England and Wales said they were Christian; in 2021 it was 46%, the first time under half, while 37% said they had no religion. Christianity is still the largest religion, and many UK laws, festivals and traditions come from it.
- The worldwide Church: mission and **evangelism** to spread the faith; Tearfund puts Christian beliefs into action in poor communities; Christians have been persecuted from Roman times to today; the World Council of Churches (founded 1948) and the **Ecumenical Movement** work for unity and **reconciliation** between churches.

Key terms

Liturgical worship	Worship that follows a set order and set prayers.
Sacrament	An outward sign of an inward grace, such as baptism.
Baptism	The sacrament that welcomes a person into the Church.
Eucharist	Holy Communion, which remembers the Last Supper.

Your notes

Transubstantiation	The Catholic belief that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ.
Pilgrimage	A religious journey to a holy place.
Evangelism	Spreading the Christian message.
Lent	The 40 days before Easter, a time of prayer and self-discipline.
Reconciliation	Restoring broken relationships.
Ecumenical Movement	Christians of different churches working together for unity. (Eduqas)
Taizé	An ecumenical Christian community in France that young people visit on pilgrimage. (Eduqas)

Your notes

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is liturgical worship?
2. How many sacraments do most Protestants recognise?
3. How many sacraments do Catholics recognise?
4. What is believers' baptism?
5. What is transubstantiation?
6. What does Holy Communion remember?
7. Which prayer did Jesus teach his disciples?
8. Why do many Christians make a pilgrimage to Lourdes?

Answers

1. Worship that follows a set order and set prayers
2. Two
3. Seven
4. Baptism by full immersion for people old enough to choose
5. The Catholic belief that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ
6. The Last Supper
7. The Lord's Prayer
8. To pray for healing where Mary is believed to have appeared

What to do next

Practise 15 questions on this topic

Try 6 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

Free revision for GCSE and KS3 at lycolearn.co.uk. Some notes are for one exam board only, and say so in brackets.