

Key Concepts

Creation ex nihilo	The belief that God created the universe 'from nothing'.	Imago Dei	The belief that humans were created in the image of God.
Omnipotent	The belief that God is all powerful.	Stewardship	The belief that humans should protect and preserve the environment and hand more on to the next generation.
Transcendent	The belief that God exists above and beyond space and time.	Revelation	The way in which God makes himself known to the world e.g. the Bible.
Evolution	The gradual change and development of species over time. Associated with Charles Darwin.	Inspiration	The belief that the writers of the Bible were guided by the Holy Spirit to write what is good and true.

Catholic Social Teaching, Interfaith Dialogue & Catholic Charities

Catholic Social Teaching is a set of principles about building a just and fair society. It is linked to the concept of the Imago Dei. Catholic Social teaching led to Catholic beliefs about interfaith dialogue which means treating people of other faiths with respect. Catholic Charities try to reflect Catholic beliefs that humans were created in the image and likeness of God, and that each human life is sacred. This is linked to Jesus' teaching that we must 'love our neighbour, as we love ourselves.'

Sources of Authority

"All men possess a rational soul and are created in God's likeness" (Gaudium et spes)

"Every type of discrimination...is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent" (Gaudium et spes)

"Her dignity is that of her creation, seeing that she is the image of God" (St Catherine of Siena)

"So God created mankind in his own image" (Genesis 1:27)

Catholic Social Teaching

At the heart of Catholic social teaching is **human dignity**. Catholics believe that humans were created in the image and likeness of God, and that each human life is sacred. **Peace and reconciliation** are at the heart of the gospel. Catholic social teaching condemns the arms trade and supports those who refuse to take up arms on grounds of conscience. Catholic social teaching also means caring for the **common good** and inspires interfaith dialogue and Catholic charities.

Interfaith Dialogue

Catholics believe they have a duty to put across the Gospel message. They believe non-Christian religions have some truth, but only Christianity has the whole truth. Other religions should be **respected**. All people are created in the **image of God**. The Popes have spoken out about the importance of **respect and tolerance** between different faiths. For example, Pope Benedict said. The Vatican II Council stressed the importance of **dialogue** with Jews and Muslims.

CAFOD: Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

It was started by the Catholic bishops of England and Wales in 1962 and tries to help those in need. It promotes **long-term development** so that less-developed countries can support themselves. CAFOD also has a **disaster fund** to help natural disasters and refugees. **Emergency aid** might mean sending food, medicines and shelters to victims of a disaster, or sending blankets and food to war refugees. About 5 per cent of CAFOD's budget is spent on **educating** the people and churches of England and Wales about the need for development and the ways in which Catholics can help less-developed countries. CAFOD works for **social justice** challenging unfairness and tries to bring an end to poverty.

SVP: St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society is an **organisation of Catholics** who try to help those in need in the UK. Their activities include helping the lonely or bereaved and the housebound. **Visits** to individuals and families, to the sick at home or in hospitals and hospices, to residential homes and to offenders' institutions. Visiting **housebound** elderly people to prevent them from feeling isolated. **Organising** children's camps for children from poor or troubled homes, and holiday schemes to provide a break for family carers, to give poor families a holiday or a break. **Fundraising** in schools with groups such as the mini-Vinnies.

Exam Practice

b) Describe two ways in which the work of CAFOD reflects Catholic teaching about human dignity. (5)