

**AM SYLLABUS (2011)**

**RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE**

**AM 28**

**SYLLABUS**

**Religious Knowledge AM 28  
Syllabus**

(Available in September)  
Paper I (2hrs) + Paper II(2hrs) + Paper III (2hrs)

**Aims**

Encourage students:

- To develop a greater interest in a more rigorous study of Religion and its role in human experience;
- have a more objective and coherent view of the Christian Religion as based on the relevant documentation of the Catholic Tradition,
- develop the ability to relate the Christian message to the basic personal experiences and social events of modern life;
- approach the study of Religion with an inquiring, critical and empathetic mind.

**Assesment Objectives**

Candidates are required:

1. To demonstrate an objective knowledge of the Catholic Church's understanding and presentation of the Christian message, including the right use of religious terminology, at least for the more basic concepts. References to the Bible, the Church's History and its main official documents are to be expected.
2. To discuss the relevance of the Christian message to the present historical and cultural context, both local and world wide with particular reference to the basic personal experiences.
3. To sustain good and founded arguments when discussing issues of a religious and moral nature.

**Marking scheme**

The examination of Religious Knowledge at Advanced level consists of three papers. Each paper carries three questions to be answered in two hours. Each question has an internal choice of either/or format.

Each question carries equal marks; and so all three papers have equal wieght.

Candidates are required to answer in essay-form. Consequently it is rather difficult to create a strict marking scheme. The following parameters, however, are kept in serious consideration when assessing these essays.

- a) Knowledge and understanding of the topics studied. This includes the right use of religious language and terminology, the objective presentation of the doctrine or facts involved, a good analysis of the issues studied, ability to refer to the main sources and documents of the Christian message, ability to discuss the relevance of religious topics to individual and social life.
- b) Ability to sustain a critical line of thought in putting forward arguments for or against a given issue: this includes the ability to evaluate various views, to sustain an argument anticipating and counteracting views to the contrary, to offer some personal insights.

Reproducing prepared model answers which do not address the question as it is asked will be heavily penalized.

The first parameter carries a weight of two thirds of the global mark, while for the second the weight is one third.

## **Subject Content**

### **PAPER I                      The God of Jesus Christ**

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#### **1. The Question of God**

- a) The human person and the knowledge of God.
- b) World Religions (with special reference to *Nostra Aetate*)
- c) God's Revelation in the History of Salvation, its transmission in the life of the Church.
- d) Sacred Scripture: its formation and authority, inspiration and interpretation.
- e) Faith: its nature and characteristics.
- f) God reveals his name: God as Father/Mother
- g) God as Trinity.

#### **2. Faith in God and in Jesus Christ**

- a) Creation of heaven and earth.
- b) Creation of man and woman: the human origin according to Genesis.
- c) The Fall and the reality of sin. Original sin.
- d) The existence of evil and God's Providence.
- e) Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, as the full expression of God's love.
- f) The Holy Spirit in the faith and life of the Church.

#### **3. The Gospel of Luke**

- a) Specific Themes
  - The origins of the Gospel and to whom it was addressed
  - The doctrinal message
  - Studies on the Infancy Narratives: origins, historical value, doctrinal importance.
- b) Specific Texts
  - Infancy Narratives (Ch 1,5 to 2,52)
  - Preparation for Christ's Ministry (Ch 3,1 to 4,13)
  - Parables and miracles throughout the whole Gospel
  - The passion, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven (Ch 22,1 to 24,53)

### **PAPER II                      The Church: its nature, worship and history**

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#### **1. The nature and structure of the Church**

- a) The Church in God's plan of Salvation with particular reference to the Biblical images of 'People of God', 'Body of Christ' and 'Temple of the Holy Spirit'.
- b) Its characteristics as professed in the Nicene Creed.
- c) Its structure: the hierarchy, the laity, consecrated life.
- d) Mary and the Saints in the life of the Church
- e) I believe in Life everlasting.

#### **2. Christian Worship**

- a) The Liturgy in the Life of the Church as the action of Christ himself through the power of the Holy Spirit
- b) The Liturgical celebration: signs and symbols, liturgical seasons, the Lord's Day, the Liturgical Year.
- c) Liturgy as expressed in different rites and cultures. Participation in the Liturgical celebration.
- d) The sacraments of Christian initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.
- e) The sacraments for building the Christian community: Holy Orders and Marriage

### **3. Significant events in the Life of the Church**

- a) First reflections on the Early Church: Biblical Reflections, Judaizers, the Second Coming, Scripture, the Natures of Jesus, Church Structure
- b) Expansion and its problems: the Pax Romana, the Persecutions, Early Writers, Church and Paganism
- c) The contributions of St.Benedict, St.Gregory the Great and St.Boniface to the life and mission of the Church
- d) Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire; the birth of a united Europe; Feudalism, Papacy, Cluniac Reform
- e) St.Francis and St.Dominic and the New Religious Orders. Their contribution to the revival of learning especially through St.Thomas Aquinas
- f) Luther and the Protestant Reformation: The Catholic Reform
- g) Towards Vatican II and beyond

## **PAPER III                      Human Dignity and Moral Life**

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### **1. Moral life and Dignity**

- a) The human vocation and the dignity of the human person.
- b) Freedom and responsibility. Duty and right to form and follow one's conscience. Religious freedom.
- c) The moral law. The Natural law, the Old Law, the New Law of Jesus.
- d) Sin and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

### **2. Particular Moral Decisions**

- a) Relationship with God through faith, hope and charity. Superstition, occult practices, Satanism.
- b) Dignity of human life. Ethical problems related to the beginning and end of life: abortion and euthanasia.
- c) Sexuality from the Christian perspective, love between married spouses, responsible parenthood, divorce.

### **3. Catholic Social Teaching**

- a) Responsible participation in the life of society. The common good. Respect for persons and the integrity of nature. Equality and differences among men. Human solidarity.
- b) Authorities in civil society. Rights and duties of citizens and of civil authorities. The political community and the Church. Safeguarding and promoting peace.
- c) Nature and development of the social teaching of the Church. Private property and the universal destination of goods. Economic activity and the social justice. Authentic human development. Justice and solidarity among nations. The option for the poor.

### **Set Texts**

1. **The Catechism of the Catholic Church** (relevant sections)
2. **The Gospel according to Luke**

### **Suggested Reading**

1. **Il-Bxara t-tajba skond San Luqa**, Ghaqda Biblika Maltija, Malta 1990
2. **Pilgrim Church** by William J. Bausch, Twenty-Third Publications, Bayard, Mystic, CT
3. **Wirt il-Kristjaneżimu** by Rev Aquilina Nikol, Media Centre Publications 1998
4. Encyclical letter by Pope John II, **Sollicitudo Rei Socialis** (Chapters 4 and 5)