

Theme 2 – Good & Evil

Intent

In the last module 'Origins and Meaning', we discovered how God created the universe and how this makes him Omnipotent (all powerful), Omnibenevolent (all loving) and Transcendent (outside of time and space).

This module follows on perfectly from this as in 'Good and Evil' we explore the question: **'If God created the world, and is omnipotent and omnibenevolent, why does evil and suffering occur?'** A good, all powerful God wouldn't make any other kind of world than a good one. But if this is true, why do bad things happen?

In this module, we will explore how Catholics, Christians, Jews and Atheists engage with this 'big question'. They respond to it in a number of ways, without claiming to have the complete answers. Our aim is to compare the validity of these arguments throughout the module.



Process

1. Catholic Perspectives on the Origin of Evil

We start the module by thinking about the question 'If God is all powerful and all loving, why do evil and suffering exist?'. We will focus on the **Catholic** answers to this question: moral & natural evil, Original Sin, and Privation. **Genesis 3** and **St Augustine** will be our sources of authority.

2. Other Perspectives on the Origin of Evil

Now we have explored the **Catholic** answers to this question, we now investigate the **Christian and Jewish views** on the nature and origin of evil. **John Hick** is our source of authority for this topic.

3. Beliefs on God's Goodness and the Goodness of Creation

Having questioned God's existence due to evil and suffering in the world, we now focus on **Catholic and Jewish** arguments for the goodness of God and creation, using **Genesis 1** as our source of authority.

4. Philosophical Challenges posed by God's Goodness and the existence of Evil and Suffering

The last topic explained the goodness of God through creation. This topic presents a challenge to belief in God's goodness if evil and suffering exist. We explore how **David Hume** and **John Mackie** show this challenge with their non-religious arguments.

5. The Meaning of Suffering: Christ's Suffering and Death

Having debated the origin of suffering in the previous topics, this topic focuses on suffering as a sign of love, commitment and blessing. Here, we use Jesus' death as a way of showing suffering to be beneficial. We use the '**Suffering Servant**' description in **Isaiah** and **Jewish scripture**.

6. Nature of Trinity in the Nicene Creed and Bible

By focusing on Jesus and his relationship with the Father in the last topic, we now focus on how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit make up the Trinity. This is with a particular focus on evidence for the Trinity in the **Bible and Nicene Creed**.

Process

7. Others Beliefs about the Trinity

We focused on the nature of the Trinity in the last topic. In this topic, we explore other beliefs about the Trinity, like **St Augustine's** theory about a Trinity based on love. We will also look at the **Jewish view** that the Trinity challenges the oneness of God.

8. Meaning and Significance of the Incarnation

Having focused on the Trinity, we now investigate the Son, Jesus, as fully human and fully man, using **John's Gospel** as evidence of the '**Word being made flesh**' and using **Philippians** as evidence of the equality between the Son and the Father.

9. Importance of the Incarnation in response to the Problem of Evil

In the last topic we studied the meaning of the Incarnation. Now we are going to explain how the incarnation can help Christians bear suffering without losing faith. We will use **Pope John Paul II's 'Salvifici Doloris'** to explain that suffering helps humans get closer to God.

10. The Example and Teaching of Jesus

We have focused on the Incarnation in the last two topics. Now we are going to explore the example and teaching of Jesus, showing how Jesus acted towards outcasts and investigating the **Sermon on the Mount**, which gave Christians teachings for moral behaviour known as the **Beatitudes**.

11. The Existence of Natural Law, Conscience and Virtues

Having studied the Beatitudes in the last topic, we are now going to focus on **natural law, conscience and virtues** as authorities for moral behaviour. The existence of these things also show God's goodness.

Process

12. Sculpture and Statues in Catholic Worship

This topic follows on from our work on the Incarnation and Jesus as Moral Authority. It explores the arguments for and against using statues of God in human form. We look at the **Catholic, Christian and Jewish views** and use **Michelangelo's Pieta** as an example of a statue.

13. Pilgrimage

This topic follows on from the Incarnation topics, outlining how we can respond positively to suffering. It explores how **pilgrimage** can be a response to the existence of suffering for **Catholics**, using **Lourdes** as a case study. The **Jewish views** on pilgrimage will also be explored.

12. The Rosary

In the last topic, we studied pilgrimage as a response positive response to suffering. In this topic, we will explore how the **Rosary** is used as a **Catholic** response to suffering by looking at the different mysteries of the Rosary.



Impact

This process will enable the understanding of:

- Different religious and non-religious attempts to provide answers to the problem of evil.
- Catholic ambivalence about suffering using the example of Jesus' suffering to show that it can be beneficial.
- The Catholic belief that God is a Trinity of persons and where this belief can be found in the scriptures.
- The meaning of Incarnation and the biblical origins of this belief, showing how this influences Catholic understandings of suffering.
- How the teaching and example of Jesus provide authority for Christian moral behaviour.
- How popular devotion demonstrated through pilgrimage and the praying of the rosary is a Catholic response to suffering.

Progress will be shown by:

- Formative assessment of past-exam question answers completed in class and at home, and improvements made from feedback.
- Formative assessment through the re-capping of previous modules and knowledge checks.
- Summative assessment through mid-module and end of module assessments based on past exams.