

# Religion the sacred and rituals theology religion essay



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This paper will discuss the challenges of both the Islamic and Catholic religion in terms of defining the rituals, how members practice their religion and the overall terms of their devotion.

Comparing is not an easy task as Islam and Catholicism are complete ends of the spectrum. For both religions claiming to be peace loving people, who share some of the same religious texts, and have many common beliefs they often cannot get along. Neither religion will tolerate or begin to accept the other religions if strictly and literally practiced by either Islam or Catholicism.

Religion is a personal choice and as much as it is a choice, it should be respected by other religions as well. It does not matter what your beliefs are, if you are truly devoted to your faith, you will understand the need for religious tolerance. Religious tolerance is something that is borne out of a complete devotion to your faith. You will honor and accept your religion as something personal; however, in the same regard, you will accept the teachings, practices and traditions of other religions as well

In some ways, Islam and Catholicism parallel each other. Although the rituals, prayers and history are different, they basically mirror each other in the basic aspects. The word Islam means “ submission” or surrender in Arabic. To be submissive, means to be submissive to the will of Allah. Catholics hold a Trinitarianism belief that God is three persons in one, the Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit. Muslims, or followers of Islam, maintain that Allah is one God and has no equal and no partner. (Dolphin, undated).

Islamic doctrine is based on four separate principles or sources: the Qur’an, ijthihad (individual thought), the Sunnah (traditions) and ijma or community

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consensus. The Qur'an is to the Muslims, the Word of God, as the Bible is to Catholics. Unlike the Bible, the Qur'an was believed to be delivered from Allah, to the Angel Gabriel. The Qur'an is divided into 114 surahs or chapters. Each of the early readings revealed in Mecca, are ethical and spiritual. The early readings also include the Day of Judgment. The surahs in later chapters, teach social, political and moral teaching for the communities. (Dolphin, undated). Muslims are uncertain as to whether they will go to heaven or not. However, like the Catholic religion, there are certain steps that must be taken to ensure eternal life.

The 5 Pillars of the Islam faith are: Confession of Faith (Shahada), Salat (prayer), Sawm (fasting during the month of Ramadan), Zakat (contributing tithings) and Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca. Muslims recite the Shahada or, Confession of Faith: " La ilaha illa'Llah; wa Muhammadun rasulu'Llah." "

There is no God but Allah; and Muhammad is Allah's prophet."

The Qur'an has six main teachings and like the Catholic faith, each must be adhered to in order to receive a final reward. The first teaching is that you must believe in Allah. To believe in Allah is to believe in the teachings of the Qur'an and no other. The word of Allah comes directly from the Qur'an and there is no room for interpretation by man. Muslims believe the message delivered to the Angel Gabriel is unadulterated and therefore implicit. The second teaching is belief in the Angels who are the messengers of Allah. Although Muslims do not submit to Allah, they submit to the teachings of Allah. Allah is not to be questioned. To question Allah or his existence is to deny the existence of his will. The third teaching is belief in the Books, you must believe in the Messengers, you must believe in the Day of Judgment. <https://assignbuster.com/religion-the-sacred-and-rituals-theology-religion-essay/>

Although there is judgment at the time of death, the final judgment comes at the end of time. The final belief is that Muslims have to believe implicitly in fate. The Qur'an teaches that God has determined both good and evil.

By acknowledging the teachings of the Qur'an, one acknowledges there is no other religion. To consider worship in another religion is to blaspheme Allah. The Qur'an does not recognize Jesus as the Son of God. Muslims do not acknowledge Jesus' death or Resurrection. Fundamental Islam teaches that Jesus was nothing more than a mere prophet and denies the existence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as a Trinity. Allah and his will are the final word. In essence, Allah is the Master (abd) and Muslims are his slaves (abd). To submit totally to the Master is to have complete faith in Allah. (Robinson, 2012)

The Catholic faith can be just as confusing and just as intricate as the Islamic faith. The Catholic Church is full of rituals and traditions that are questioned by many. The Catholic Church recognizes that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered and died on the Cross for our sins. To many, the existence of a virgin birth is inconceivable. Catholics recognize God as Our Father. However, that does not mean that God and the Virgin Mary conceived Jesus. The Catholic religion teaches that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and became man. The conception of Jesus was Immaculate and therefore, The Virgin Mary is recognized as our Mother. (The Holy See, 2012).

Mary is not worshiped on the same level as Our Father. Mary is revered as the Mother of Jesus and although Catholics do not specifically pray to Mary, they ask for her intercession through Jesus Christ, her Son. The Hail Mary is

the prayer most often associated with reverence for the Virgin Mother. The word "Hail" is used not as a title to acknowledge Mary as being on the same level with Jesus or the Father. It is merely used as a greeting. The word, "Hail" was used in biblical times much as we use the greeting, "Hello" today.

Catholics also recite the Rosary, which is another form of ritualistic prayer. The Rosary is not mentioned in the Bible, it is not a mandatory teaching or tradition. It is a man-made prayer which when said properly, allows Catholics to reflect and meditate on the teachings and life of Jesus Christ. From the Annunciation by Mary's cousin Elizabeth that she was going to be the Mother of the Most Holy One to the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Rosary is used as a teaching tool.

The Catholic Church was founded over 2000 years ago on the Pentecost. This was the day the Holy Spirit appeared to the Apostles. As Muslims recite the Shahada, Catholics recite the Apostles Creed: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen." The Apostle's Creed once again, is a historical account of the life of Jesus. It is the basic belief that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, became man and ultimately died for our sins.

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One interesting concept that differs between the Catholic, and Islamic faith is tolerance for killing. It specifically states in the Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt not kill." The Ten Commandments were given to Moses on Mount Sinai and are the framework of a Christian life. The Ten Commandments are basic rules for every Christian and/or Catholic to pattern their lives after. There is no room for interpretation of the Ten Commandments. Although the Commandments are depicted in a particular order, there does not seem to be a Commandment which, when broken, is more severe than the others.

Islam has tolerance for killing non-combatants. The Qur'an calls for the elimination of all and any non-Muslim invaders. If the result is death of the invader(s), the Qur'an considers it to be collateral damage. In order to keep the Muslim faith pure, it is considered perfectly acceptable to extinguish the lives of any person who does not accept the Qur'an and the Muslim way of life as their own.

The teaching of some radical Imams additionally allows for the killing of Israelis who could as adults join the Israeli army, once again based on the belief that the Qur'an allows for the elimination of anyone who may interfere with the teachings of Islam. Teachings from the Qur'an that incite the radical Muslims result in the acceptance of suicide bombings, suicide missions such as the September 11th attacks on the United States and every other form of terrorism that radical Muslims have engaged in over the years.

In the Catholic religion, there is zero tolerance for the murder of anyone opposed to the teachings and beliefs of the Church. At this juncture, the Catholic religion deems abortion as murder and will excommunicate any

woman who, for whatever reason, opts to terminate a pregnancy. There is no exception for a pregnancy that is a result of rape, incest or any other act that results in the fertilization of the egg by the sperm. In the Catholic view, human life begins at conception. In this sense, it could be viewed as a radical opposition to the choice of a woman to choose whether or not to carry a fetus to term even in the mother is incapable of performing her duties as a nurturer. One example of this type of pregnancy would be for a severely mentally disabled woman to become impregnated. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, it does not matter that the quality of life for the child may be severely diminished. It is not a concern if the life of the mother is endangered either. Like the Ten Commandments, there is no room for interpretation. Human life begins at conception.

For Muslims and Catholics to coexist, there has to be some form of religious tolerance. Although the basic teachings are similar, when the beliefs and traditions are altered from their original state, that leaves room for views that become tainted by man to conform to his personal, political and self-righteous beliefs.