

World religions report

[Religion](#), [Christianity](#)



World Religions Report Russell Spinks HUM/130/Religion November 11, 2012

World Religion Report Over the past few months I have had the pleasure of learning about many different religions and cultures. The two religions that I am going to compare within this paper are the Roman Catholic Religion and the Hinduism religion. The reason that I choose the Roman Catholic Religion is because I have always been curious as to why the Catholic Church has certain traditions and holidays that other religions do not have. The Catholic theology was dated back to the early 30's in the Common Era. I had the pleasure of speaking with a close friend of the family who has been practicing the Catholic Religion her whole life (35 years), along with the principal of a Catholic School who has also been in the Catholic Religion his whole life (72 years). I will also show that although Catholicism and Hinduism have some common similarities such as the repeated sacrifice, rituals, prayer to multiple saints/gods, the priests, their Cathedral/Temple, images and icons, all works-based salvation, the lack of knowledge of sacred writings, and the death of perspective followers such as those in the purgatory or reincarnation, and specifically touch on certain similarities that these two religions have. The first individual that I spoke with was Jennifer Bushnell who attends St. Peter's Catholic Church in Covington, Louisiana. I interviewed Mrs. Bushnell at my house on October 31, 2012. The synopsis of this interview was that the Catholic Religion has an extreme amount of days in which are classified in this religion as Holy Days. Mrs. Bushnell was not exactly sure of how many holy days there were but the major Holy Days that she spoke of were Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday - which to my understanding is the day they commemorate the last supper, Palm Sunday,

Easter Sunday, and Christmas. All these specific days were mentioned throughout the interview. Throughout speaking to her I also learned that the Catholic Religion has a day of confession that all Catholics must attend once a week. She stated “ the Church sends out a calendar of the times that the Church has confession. Typically on Saturday’s because then you are attending Church on Sunday, so by attending confession on Saturday you are free of sin for Sunday Mass in which you can receive Eucharist”. (Personal communication, October 31, 2012). After speaking with Mrs. Bushnell, and from what I have read about the Catholic Religion, it seems that most Catholics are brought up and raised in the religion; which in return gives them the basis of faith growing up and then those Catholics become what is considered baptized or confirmation in the Catholic Religion and the basis of their faith. (Jennifer Bushnell, personal communication, October 31, 2012). I also interviewed Brother Ray Bro who is the principal of a local Catholic High School, St. Paul’s High School, in Covington, La. This interview was performed at St. Paul’s High School inside Brother Ray’s office. I learned a tremendous amount from this interview because of the knowledge and experience he had in the Catholic Religion. It was discussed of specific Holiday’s and traditions that the Catholic Religion has throughout the year. According to Brother Ray, Easter, which is the most important feast of the year, is what Catholics essentially base their faith on because Easter is the resurrection of the Lord. The second most important Holiday is Christmas as being it was the birth of Jesus Christ. I learned specifically about certain feasts throughout the year and every year on November 1 is the feast of All Saints and every year on November 2 is the feast of All Souls, which is when

the Catholics remember the deceased persons of the Catholic Religion. Brother Ray also spoke of a few more feasts throughout the year but the most important to Catholics are talked about. All these feasts are considered to Catholics as Holy Days of Obligation. To Catholics, that means on these Days of Obligation they must attend Mass. I also learned that those of the Catholic Religion's faith actually define who they are as people and how they intend on raising their family. Throughout the interviews I recalled that Catholicism and Hinduism have some similarities that seem to be compared to each other. (Ray Bro, personal communication, November 1, 2012) At every Catholic Mass, Jesus Christ is "sacrificed". During the Catholic Masses the elements are literally thought to be that of Jesus Christ's body and blood. When Hindus go to the temple, which is their Church, they perform the same sort of sacrifice, basically presenting an offering to the gods. Another similarity is some of the rituals between both religions. For instance, Catholic Mass is a ritual and within the Mass many Catholics carry what is known as a Rosary which is a type of long chain with a cross on one end, where as at the Hindu Temple they have a ritual in which they perform the ringing of a bell to wake the gods and chant different mantras. One big similarity is that both Catholics and Hindus must go through a priest to get to God; there is no direct link to any God. Also within the Catholic Religion it teaches upon death, people do not go directly to heaven or hell, for Catholics, purgatory (between Heaven and Hell) awaits. Now on the same aspect in Hinduism, death leads them to another cycle of reincarnation. These are all forms of similarities with the Catholic and Hindu religions. In the ways that they are similar they can also be different. ("Patheos Library". 2008-2012). Hindus

believe that God, soul, and cosmos are essential to one's life. They believe that there is one Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent, both Creator and Unmanifest Reality. Their beliefs also include that beings exist in unseen or unknown worlds and that temple worships and rituals create a communion with Gods. They believe that man and God are one. Karma is also one of their beliefs, which is the law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words, and deeds. They believe the soul reincarnates itself after death. Life evolves through many births until all karmas have been resolved and not a single soul will be deprived of this destiny, the universe undergoes endless cycles of creation. Their practices include that no religion, whether Hinduism or not, teaches the only way to salvation. They believe that all paths of life are of God's Light which deserving and understanding. (Fisher, 2005) (Schaefer, 2012). Hinduism is not the same as Christianity nor does Hinduism have the same beliefs but their relationship is becoming closer. Hindu's and Christians have shared communities for a long time, weaving a complex life together. They have begun opening up to daily encounters and the cultures have become more familiar with each other especially in Great Britain. In Great Britain there is a large scale of immigrant Hindu's and Christians, they have come to the compromise to share the community because they realized that the each religion can contribute to a positive resource for spiritual practice through prayer, reflection, and festive celebration. This contemporary relationship has been compromised without serious conflict between the two religions in Great Britain. However with these two religions being dominant in Great Britain it is hard to allow other religions to unfold and become part of

society. Since the range of beliefs and believers in each tradition are different, it is amazing that the relationship exists regardless of any disagreements that they may have with each other's beliefs, practices, or values. (Fisher, 2005) (Schaefer, 2012). Although Hinduism is a minority religion in the United States, the Hindu philosophy has become integrated into American society over the past 150 years. The beliefs of Hinduism have been a special interest to many American intellectuals especially during the 19th century which developed into the transpersonal psychology, spiritualism, and mysticism. Many Americans now practice the religion of Hinduism and Christianity actually owes much to Hinduism because of its mystical and ascetic tendencies of Hinduism. (Fisher, 2005) (Schaefer, 2012). Although I have learned a tremendous amount about many different religions and rituals I have received a better understanding of the Catholic Religion in the ways I had not known before through the interviews I performed and the readings that I have endured. Some of the things that I remembered about the Catholic Religion growing up were that throughout Mass they stood and kneeled a lot during the course of the Mass. Now, I know that they are just traditions and rituals in which they are praying and receiving prayer during their Mass. I have also learned about confessions, but as a Baptist we do not necessarily have this, in which Catholics conduct this every week so that they are free of sin before attending their weekly Sunday Mass. I know that with any religion it takes much sacrifice to be dedicated. As with the Catholic Religion, those who are of the Catholic Faith it has defined who they are as individuals on everything that they do in their daily life. The difficulties that are involved with the Catholic Religion are that

as many of us know, beliefs are very difficult for any human to grasp along with moral stances, but that is what the Catholic Faith is built upon. Another key thing that I learned about the Catholic Religion was that the roots of the religion go back to Judaism, and the official birth of the Catholic Church, in which started after the death of Jesus Christ in which the Holy Spirit came down on the Twelve Apostles and that is what is considered the birth of the Catholic Church. I also discovered that although Catholics are very strong religious people that are very dedicated to their religion, some, not all of their beliefs are based on some traditions in addition to the scripture of the Holy Bible. So overall my reflections of the Catholic Religion, is although very complex, is comparable to each and every religion. Catholics are just as each and every other religious faith, their beliefs are that they have a very strong foundation of who they are as people, attend Church and Mass as they are scripted too, and have prayer daily also in Church. In conclusion, the Catholic Religion and the people that is of the Catholic Faith, which is dated back to the early 30's era, which is also known as the Common Era. The Catholic Faith has many similarities to other religions specifically that of Judaism and Hinduism. Some of these similarities are the repeated sacrifice, rituals, prayer to multiple saints/gods, the priests, their Cathedral/Temple, images and icons, all works-based salvation, the lack of knowledge of sacred writings, and the death of perspective followers such as those in the purgatory or reincarnation aspects of the two religions that I compared. After speaking with several individuals who are of the Catholic Faith, it allowed me to gain a better understanding of different traditions and rituals that I had heard about but never understood. Many individuals think that the Catholic

Based Faith is very complex and therefore do not want to become Catholic. After speaking with several of these individuals, I learned that although it is very complex, it is still a very special religion in which is deserving of the reputation it has received. I do not think that the Catholic Religion is as complex as many people have made it out to be. So with saying this, I believe that all religions are in one way, shape or form tied together. As long as we as individuals understand the roots of your specific faith, then conduct yourself as your faith allows you to.

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