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93603A



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OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Scholarship 2025 Religious Studies

Time allowed: Three hours

ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Answer ONE question from Question Booklet 93603Q, and write your answer in this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–20 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in the margins (///). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

PLANNING

QUESTION:

What kind is the nature of the dispute about the demands of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Religious Tradition?

demeanor / relationship / Status

contension / hypocrisy

requirements / accountability

critical action, reform, acknowledgment, adaptability

Evaluate the tradition's responses to such demands, particularly in terms of its own principles and measures of accountability.

doctrine & established texts

The "dispute" in question is the establishment and enforcement of DEI principles in Religious Tradition

ESSAY BREAKDOWN

- 1) Introduction → Subparagraph 1.5) What is DEI?
- 2) Diversity acted in Catholicism
- 3) Diversity contradicted in Catholicism
- 4) Equity acted in Catholicism
- 5) Equity contradicted in Catholicism
- 6) Inclusion acted in Catholicism
- 7) Inclusion contradicted in Catholicism
- 8) Synthesis of this analysis to derive an answer to the question. ↪

1) The nature is that DEI is a measure of fidelity for religion to its own Gospel in the ever-changing standards of modern society

2) The responses of Religion to DEI is an increased integration of DEI which seeks to amend historic failings

9) Other Religious Traditions

T.L.

Select (✓) ONE essay question to answer.

☒ Question One

☐ Question Two

"Christianity invented diversity, and then spent centuries betraying it" — this paradox captures the full relationship between the Catholic tradition and the very values it claims to champion. Tom Holland argues in *Dominion* that the moral grammar of Western Society — dignity for the weak, the levelling of social hierarchies, and justice for the poor — are all unthinkable without Christianity. Yet, as Frantz Fanon contends: in the colonial world, the Church became "the white people's church, the foreigner's church" — complicit in oppression rather than liberation. Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza makes the same point from within: although Paul declared there "is neither Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female" (Galatians 3:28), the Catholic Church has systematically excluded women from leadership, betraying their own founding vision. To interrogate the nature of Catholic tradition with diversity, equity, and inclusion then, is not to ask whether it has succeeded or failed in meeting its ^{instead} demands, but to ^{principles} ~~create~~ recognise its constitutive paradox: that the very ^{the same} ~~values~~ it gave to the world are also ^{by} which its historic failures and modern responses are judged.

At its centre, Catholicism's most poignant claim is also its simplest: humanity is created *imago Dei*, in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

In this axiom lies a revolution: that dignity is bestowed universally. If every soul mirrors the divine, then the differences of each human must be sacramental rather than absent, a manifestation of God's intention that diversity, the practice of variety, is benign. And here, lies the seeds for what later discussion would call: diversity, equity, and inclusion. An anthropology where diversity is not ~~threat~~ but sacrament, equity not concession but justice, and inclusion not optional but essential.

In principle, ^{the} Catholic tradition is the very image of diversity: "a great multitude from every tongue, tribe, and nation gathered in worship" (Rev 7:9).

Today, over one billion Catholics worldwide embody a tapestry of languages, traditions, and cultures.

Pope Francis affirms this as richness: ^{stating} "diversity is a richness that must never become reason for exclusion or discrimination." ~~Through inculturation,~~ ^{Meanwhile, through inculturation,}

Vatican II urged the church to make the Gospel incarnate with culture, while embracing the cultural gifts of the people it encounters. In Aotearoa New Zealand, Catholic schools ~~kw~~ and parishes have increasingly incorporated te reo and tikanga Māori into liturgy, while the New Zealand Catholic Bishop's conference has formally recognised Te Tiriti o Waitangi as ²integral to the Catholic mission. N.P.

Yet, Fanon's critique in *The Wretched of the Earth* remains potent. The Church, in the colonies is "the white people's church [...] she does not call the native to God's way, but the ways of the white man".² The Doctrine of Discovery authorised European conquest, but simultaneously, bound Catholicism with colonialism. In Aotearoa, missionary activities carried not only the Gospel, but European cultural norms: dismantling Māori spiritual systems and social structures. This ^{product} ~~products~~ starkly contradicts the Vatican's urge to make the Gospel incarnate "while" "embracing the people's gifts". And ^{therefore,} diversity, in this sense, is purely framed through the lens of European universality. To call for universal diversity and sharing of the ~~cultural~~ Gospel is thereby proclaimed as a catalyst for global belonging, but ^{is} ~~has~~ really ~~become~~ a mask for ~~global~~ cultural homogenisation. ^{This epitomises the nature} ~~Thus, the nature~~ of diversity in Catholic tradition. ^{repeated} ~~is repeated to a degree~~ ^{The} ~~fostered~~ ^{abstaining from being} ~~operations of spreading the Gospel, whilst~~ ^{accomplish} ~~accomplish~~ of colonisation is a difficult task, and has subsequently ~~caused dispute over Catholicism's true allowance of diversity in cultural terms.~~

Shifting to equity, the principle itself extends beyond equality: demanding that systems themselves be reformed so all may flourish. Scripture insists that "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34), while James condemns favouritism towards the wealthy (James 2:1-7). Catholic Social Teaching echoes this from *Rerum Novarum* (1891) to *Fratelli Tutti* (2020), emphasising solidarity, the rights of workers, and

preferential options for the poor. In Aotearoa, Caritas ^{actively} advocates for the living wage, migrant support, and refugee resettlement, while parishes around the world fund foodbanks, shelters, and hospitals as embodiments of equity in action.

~~But~~ in practice, equity

~~However~~ Yet ~~Moreover~~, Elsa Tamez interprets James as indicting Christian communities for causing economic injustice. Clerical privilege, wealth ^{disparities} ~~disparities~~ between dioceses, and the protection of institutional power, all undercut ~~equity~~ equity. In Aotearoa, the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care uncovered significant neglect in Catholic-run orphanages and schools, where the voices of the vulnerable were suppressed to protect reputations. Such failures directly clash with Jesus' warning, that "if somebody causes one of the little ones to stumble, it would be ^{best} ~~better~~ for them to have a millstone hung around their neck" (Matthew 18:6). This

dichotomy of advocation for equity against the ^{suppression of the young} ~~self~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~young~~ ~~suppression~~ within a Catholic settings intensifies the ~~double~~ ~~statement~~ that it is ~~correct~~ ~~to~~ ~~identify~~ a dispute between Catholicism and the principles of DEI. ^{Equity is often} ~~Inclusion is pre-~~ as doctrine, but contested in practice — with ^{response often driven} ~~often response~~ ~~only~~ ^{only} after scandal.

N.P.

Moving to inclusion,

~~moving forward~~

The Catholic tradition defines itself as inclusive —

indeed, catholicus ^{means} ~~translates into~~ "according to the whole".

Paul's vision of a ~~universal~~ body without division (Gal 3:28)

grounds the Church's rhetoric that it is indeed universal.

Pope Francis rearticulates this ^{in Fratelli Tutti,} calling "us to be neighbours without exception". In Aotearoa New Zealand, Catholic

~~sec~~ schools often lead inclusion initiatives, targeted particularly for foreign, LGBTQ+, and indigenous students.

This ~~the~~ intensified pastoral care regimen has enabled

twenty-first-century inclusion to be more greatly considered.

Meanwhile,

¹ integration of tikanga Māori into classrooms but also

setting including the Britomart station rebrand to

Wāitemata all speak to an adapting embrace

of inclusion.

Women remain barred from ordination, (Ordinatio sacerdotalis 1994), restricting their participation ^{in sacramental} leadership.

But as always, inclusion is contested in practice. ¹ in sacramental leadership.

And in

~~the~~ 2025, the Catechism still considered homosexual

acts as "intrinsically disordered" (CCC 2357), while

the Vatican ^{claimed} ~~still claims~~ "it cannot bless sin",

excluding LGBTQ+ Catholics from recognising their relationships. James Alison, Catholic theologian, critiques

this as not merely inadequate, but destructive —

^{insisting} ~~upholding~~ that the Catholic language itself perpetuates exclusion. ^{Likewise,} ~~significantly,~~ interfaith relations share similar tensions:

Nostro ~~Abra~~ Aetate (1965) affirmed dialogue, Lumen

Gentium (1964) still claims that the Church

possesses the "fullness of truth". This dismissal of every other religion and its doctrine ^{as not fully true is} ~~is~~

an inherently ^{act} ~~exclusive~~ exclusive, leaving pluralism conditional.

Thus, ~~inclusion~~ in Catholic tradition, inclusion is proclaimed universally, yet practiced selectively - visionary, but always hedged by conditions.

Therefore, to ^{say} ~~argue~~ that there is a "dispute" between Catholicism and the principles of DEI ^{statement.} is a relatively vindicated Analysis of these cases unveils a consistent level of hypocrisy between the doctrine and ~~practice~~ proclamations of Catholicism, and its practice. Thereby, this dichotomy would ^{context} infer that there is ~~latent dispute~~ between the tradition and principle, ^{however,} yet this conclusion fails to acknowledge the underlying product of this relationship:

To ask if Catholicism has met the demands of diversity, equity, and inclusion is less to question whether it has succeeded or failed, but more to recognise ~~its~~ its restless struggle. Its failures - exclusion of women, complicity in colonisation, and suppression of abuse victims - are all real and egregious. Yet, it is these failures themselves that lay the seeds for response and reform.

Throughout this essay, I have sprinkled elements of the Church's response. Its past association with colonial domination has sparked moments of inculturation (i.e. ~~the~~ Wāitemata Station). Its ^{prior} ~~past~~ exclusion ^{of women,} has birthed new ^{simultaneously} feminine and liberation theologues, while [↑] forcing the inclusion of LGBTQ+ Catholics to ~~become more poignant~~ become a more poignant

topic within the Vatican. ^{And} The Church's previous affiliation ~~with~~ [←] ~~affiliations~~ with abuse crises has forced new safeguarding reforms, truth-telling, and more accessible pastoral care. ~~But~~ In New Zealand, former failures in Māori engagement now drive partnerships shaped by Te Tiriti, while past neglect of the marginalized ~~now~~ motivates schools to build inclusive policies for diverse students. The contradictions of ~~the~~ Catholic tradition are therefore not complete failures; but a testimony to the faith's vitality: ever-adapting ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ joining the Gospel's doctrine with the modern standards framed by diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In reference to accountability, the Catholic tradition does not claim to be impervious, but instead, acknowledges its shortcomings and takes ^{action to respond.} ~~actions for a response.~~

If the Church believed ~~that~~ that the doctrine and writings of the Gospel ~~are~~ two thousand years ago should still be an applicable standard today, they would be ^{in severe ignorance of} ~~severely neglecting~~ the modern demands of society. The ^{fact that} ~~virtue~~ of assemblies including the Council of Trent, Second Vatican Council, and ~~the~~ papal encyclicals exist speaks to the faith's [→] willingness to make adaptations where necessary, highlighting its recognition that their founding doctrines cannot 'literally' be enforced today.

While Catholicism is the ^{world's majority faith,} ~~majority faith in the~~ ~~world,~~ it's important to establish that the Eastern Orthodox Churches share similar struggles with gender equity and sexuality. Judaism and Islam

likewise affirm human dignity - "mankind was created in His image" (Genesis 1:27, Quran 95:4) - but each religion still debates ~~over~~ the nature of diversity, equity, and inclusion with their respective doctrines. What sets Catholicism apart is the and sheer magnitude of its reach and global scale ~~of its reach and the magnitude of its visibility~~ - meaning its failures are both harder ^{also} to ignore, but its responses more impactful.

The nature of diversity, equity, and inclusion within Religious tradition ^{therefore one of both} is ~~a~~ ^{dispute and} contradiction. However, ^{to dismiss these religions} ~~the consistent failures of~~ ^{in of itself,} ~~these religions~~ for their historic failures is ^{a failure,} ~~a failure in of itself,~~ as the crux of religious transformation is its ability to reshape under both the direction of its doctrine and the standards of modern society. Catholicism's credibility lies not in pretending it has achieved diversity, equity, and inclusion, but in its willingness to respond under continual conversion.

As Pope Francis reminds: "Let us not remain barricaded ^{certainly} in our ~~uncertainties~~, let us listen to one another".

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not modern intrusions, but a standard which measures ^{the fidelity of religion} ~~fidelity~~ to its own Gospel - a measure which the Church must continue to strive, fail, and strive again to meet.

FINISH

Outstanding Scholarship

Subject: Religious Studies

Standard: 93603

Total score: 21

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
1	7	The candidate articulated the assumptions behind various viewpoints and explained why they came to different conclusions, with a few minor inconsistencies.
2	7	The candidate displayed a synthesis of highly developed knowledge and skills with independent reflections and extrapolation, very ably showing relationships and connections between religious ideas and the dispute about how to respond to the challenge of modern ideas relating to DIE in religious traditions, although a couple of points were lacking in sophistication.
3	7	The candidate presented an argument with convincing logical development, precision, and clarity, while demonstrating originality.