

1.3 Sources of Wisdom and Authority

The Bible	Interpretations of the Bible	Magisterium	Second Vatican Council (Vatican II)	Church as the Body of Christ	Four marks of the Church	Mary as a model of the Church	Personal and ethical decision making	Canonical	Apostolic Succession	Apostolic Tradition	Infallible
The Christian scriptures containing the Old and New Testaments	Different Christian views on if the Bible is the inspired or literal word of God	Authority from the Holy Spirit which gives the Pope and bishops the authority to teach	Ecumenical council held between 1962 and 1965	Belief that every Christian is united as one body	The belief in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church (as stated in the Nicene Creed)	The belief that Mary reflects the values, teaching and beliefs of the Catholic faith	Sources that Christians use to make ethical decisions e.g. conscience, scripture	Parts of the Bible approved by the Catholic Church	The line of bishops going back to the Apostles	The oral Gospel passed on by the Apostles to the Church	Unable to be wrong

The Bible		Interpretations of the Bible		Magisterium		Second Vatican Council (Vatican II)	
Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Bible’ means books • Old Testament (Tenakh) is the Jewish holy book • Old and New Testaments are Christian • Old Testament contains – law of Moses / history of the Jewish people / writings including poetry e.g. Psalms / prophets the messengers of God • New – Gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke and John about the life of Jesus / acts of the Apostles the history of the early Christian Church / letters to encourage and instruct the early Christians / Revelations prophecy about the end of the world 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible records Jesus’ teachings and shows Christians how to live • It shows Jesus’ life, death and resurrection • It contains the Decalogue (Ten Commandments) • It reveals what God is like • In the early days of Christianity there was no agreement about which books should be in the Bible • Protestant churches have 39 books in the Old Testament • Catholics and Orthodox Christians have 47 books in the Old Testament • There are 27 books in the New Testament 	Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholics believe the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit so it comes from God and gives the truth • Catholics rely on the Church to correctly interpret the Bible (e.g. magisterium / Catechism) • Fundamentalist view: the literal word of God so every word is true • Conservative view: God’s inspired words but not his actual words. God guided them but they used their own ideas. • Liberal view: words about God rather than his words. What matters are the great truths about God 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholics believe the Bible is a source of guidance and teaching because it...: • ...is inspired by the Holy Spirit so it has authority from God • ...reveals God’s nature • ...contains God’s laws on how to behave e.g. the Decalogue • ...contains the teachings of Jesus which has authority of God. 	Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Apostles were given their teachings by Jesus, which is handed down in the Apostolic Tradition. • Jesus gave authority to St Peter which was passed on through all the popes by the Apostolic Succession • The magisterium is when the Pope and bishops interpret the Bible for modern day Catholics • Ordinary magisterium: when bishops teach what has always been taught • Conciliar magisterium: when there is a council to decide something (e.g. Vatican II) • Pontifical magisterium: when the Pope decides a new teaching using his power of papal infallibility 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apostolic tradition is important as it gives the Church the authority of Jesus which guarantees it being correct • Apostolic succession is important as it means the Pope has the same authority Jesus gave Peter • There is no higher authority for Catholics than the magisterium • It gives Catholics answers to issues which did not exist in Jesus’ time e.g. genetic engineering • The Pope’s job is to lead the worldwide Church, organise the magisterium to make sure it is up to date and to give guidance to Catholics about current issues 	Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pope John XXIII called Vatican II to bring the Church up to date. • Vatican II produced four documents: • Sacred Council changed worship (e.g. Mass in local languages, the laity could be involved in readings and prayers) • Light of Humanity changed the nature of the Church (e.g. Every Christian serves Christ in the world, not just priests) • Joy and Hope addressed the world (e.g. prioritised peace, encouraged dialog with atheists and other religions) • Word of God was about the Bible (e.g. it should be read in local languages) 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council also declared that Catholics should work with other Christians for unity and that protestants were known as separated brethren (brothers) • Many saw Vatican II as a sign the Church listened to the people and opened up to the modern world • Some thought it went too far and some changes should not have been made (e.g. Mass should still be said in Latin) • Some said it didn’t go far enough (e.g. they should allow married priests, change views on contraception and allow divorced / remarried people to have communion)
Church as the Body of Christ		Four marks of the Church		Mary as a model of the Church		Personal and ethical decision making	
Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church as the Body of Christ means that all Christians continue Christ’s work on Earth • All Christians are united with each other and Christ through baptism • All Catholics receive the Body of Christ in the Mass which joins them with other Christians around the world • Just as parts of the human body depend on each other, so too do Christians with no one being more important than anyone else. 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church is described as one body in the Gospels and Catechism • The Church carries on Christ’s work on Earth • It shows the importance of communion in Mass • It shows how Christians can perform different tasks but they are all important. • But different Christians believe authority comes from different places e.g. Catholics – Pope, Orthodox – group of bishops, Protestant – Bible • Ecumenical movement: unites all Christians as one 	Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Nicene Creed, Christians say ‘I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church’ • One Church: based on one lord, Jesus Christ / has one baptism / one Spirit • Holy Church: God made it so it is holy / sacraments show God’s grace • Catholic Church: catholic means universal, it’s message is for everyone • Apostolic Church: it was started by the apostles / their authority has been passed down by the Apostolic Succession to the current Pope 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox churches all believe in the Church is holy, is universal and is based on the Bible. • Catholics and Orthodox base their faith on the Creed and the Catechism. • Protestants base their faith on the Creed and the Bible. 	Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary is a model of the Church because: she gave Christ to the world as his mother / by her assumption into heaven she shows the Church will bring faithful Christians to heaven • She models discipleship because: she obeyed God / she conceived without sin / she loved and supported her son • She models faith because: she believed the Angel Gabriel’s message • She models charity because: she gave her life to bear God’s son 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary had an immaculate conception – meaning Jesus was without original sin and his father was God • If she didn’t obey God, Jesus would not have been born so there would be no salvation • She is the ‘mother of God’ making her the most important human being ever to have lived • At the end of her life, she was taken up to heaven so did not suffer death • In Heaven, she can pray for people on Earth so gives Catholics more chance of God’s help 	Meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make a decision, Catholics use: • Example of Jesus: Jesus gave Christians many teachings, including the commandment to ‘love one another’ • Natural law: God made the natural world and put his law into it. By studying nature, we can learn how we should act e.g. marriage between man and woman • Conscience: this is the voice of God, but it can be mistaken • The Church: following the magisterium’s teachings 	Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholics often use more than one source of authority when making a decision because: • The example of Jesus doesn’t always address modern issues • Some Catholics might think the Church teaching is wrong when they examine their conscience (e.g. on contraception) • Others might overrule their conscience based on the teachings of the Church

