



ATAR course examination, 2023

RELIGION AND LIFE

SOURCE BOOKLET

Question 1 Sources**Source 1A**

In 1995 Pope¹ John Paul II proclaimed that punishment 'ought not go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity ... such cases are very rare, if not practically non-existent'.

He began advocating to abolish the death penalty universally, explaining that modern society 'has the means of protecting itself, without definitively denying criminals the chance to reform'.

In 2018, Pope Francis rewrote Paragraph 2267 of the Catechism², the second time that this paragraph had been revised. Continuing the arguments of his predecessors, it now states: 'the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person'.

Furthermore, in 2020 he reiterated clear opposition to the death penalty, pointing out the potential for judicial error and the misuse of capital punishment as a tool of persecution or revenge.

¹ Pope: Leader of the Catholic Church.

² Catechism: A summary or series of statements outlining the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Source 1B

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Source 1C

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¹ Qur'an: the Islamic holy book.

² Abolitionist: a person who favours the abolition of a practice or institution, especially capital punishment.

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Question 2 Source**Source 2****Quakers Australia: Handbook of Practice and Procedure in Australia.**

Quakers¹ reach decisions collectively by seeking to reach a spiritually-formed decision, or to discern the will of God, in the 'Meeting for Worship for Business'. The Meeting is embedded in silent contemplation. Participants listen respectfully, and allow time between spoken contributions.

We describe this corporate spiritual decision-making as being 'in unity'. We do not vote nor accept the principle of majority rule.

Our procedure is to begin the Meeting with a period of worshipful silence, to let go of our worldly preoccupations and to become spiritually attuned to the agenda before us.

Practices within the Society that foster effective decision-making amount to what is called 'Quaker process'. These practices include the following:

- Normally people speak only once on any given topic. This encourages Friends² to listen carefully to each other and to avoid argument or debate.
- It is common to hear another person expressing the view that one is preparing to speak. Quaker practice is not to repeat that view, but to indicate agreement with minimal words.
- All voices are heard with empathy to give mutual support in seeking the right outcome, waiting patiently for spiritual discernment of the correct way forward.
- Decisions are not reached by voting. The Clerk³ seeks to gain the sense of the Meeting, and to interpret this into suitable wording that becomes the minute (a summarising written statement at the end of a period of discernment, accepted by all present at the Meeting).
- The aim is to reach unity, rather than unanimity, consensus or majority.

There are times when no clear sense of the Meeting can be discerned by the Clerk. If this is the case, there are a number of ways forward, which include:

- Calling for a period of silent worship, after which discernment is resumed.
- Adjourning the matter to a later session, to allow time for further reflection.

Meetings for Worship for Business close with a short period of silent worship.

¹ Quakers: members of a Christian denomination formally known as the Religious Society of Friends.

² Friends: a term used by Quakers when referring to members of the community.

³ Clerk: a person chosen by the Friends to administer the good order of the Meeting.

Question 3 Sources

Source 3A

The religious affiliation of the two Houses of Congress (House of Representatives and Senate) in the United States (US) in January 2023 and the religious affiliation of the US population in 2021.

Religion	2023 Religious affiliation in Congress		2021 Religious affiliation in US adults %
	House of Representatives %	Senate %	
Protestant	56.9	56	40
Catholic	28.1	26	21
Mormon	1.4	3	2
Jewish	5.5	9	2
Buddhist	0.2	1	1
Muslim	0.7	0	1
Hindu	0.5	0	1
Unaffiliated	0	1	29

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Source 3B

Diverse religious leaders are on the front lines of defending United States (US) democracy and working with elected leaders to build a more just and equitable world. This year, they are championing major progressive change, including the American Rescue Plan that will cut child poverty in half and the American Jobs Plan that will fund violence prevention programs and support the creation of well-paying jobs that will bolster the US economy and climate.

Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg

‘As a Jew, I am commanded by the Torah¹ to fight for a just society—one with systems and structures that protect and empower everyone, especially those who are most marginalized and vulnerable. My tradition teaches that we serve God when we care for one another.’

The Reverend (Rev) Michael-Ray Mathews

The Rev. Michael-Ray Mathews is the president of the board of the directors of the Alliance of Baptists.

‘I am committed to conjuring new visions for a multiracial and multifaith movement for justice and healing. People of moral courage must dare to imagine a world where human dignity replaces human hierarchy, where economic and ecological abundance replaces scarcity and exploitation, and where belonging replaces hyperindividualism. It is time to put deadly narratives and unjust structures to rest. It is time to rebuild the very soul of our society and world.’

Farhana Khera

Farhana Khera is the president and executive director of Muslim Advocates.

‘Like many American Muslims, my faith has always informed my values and my persistent desire for justice. I’m using everything I’ve learned to ensure that American Muslims, and all people, can live their lives free from hate.’

Sunita Viswanath

Sunita Viswanath co-founded and sits on the board of both Hindus for Human Rights and Sadhana, a coalition of progressive Hindus.

‘My faith teaches me to strive to be radically inclusive and egalitarian, seeing the world as one, seeing the divine in the face of everyone I encounter.’

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Source 1A** Paragraphs 1–2 adapted from: John Paul II. (1995). *Evangelium Vitae* [The Gospel of Life] (n. 27, n. 56). Retrieved April, 2023, from https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html
- Paragraphs 3–4 adapted from: Pope Francis. (2018). *New Revision of Number 2267 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the Death Penalty – Rescriptum “ex Audentia SS.mi”*, 02.08.2018. Retrieved April, 2023, from <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/08/02/180802a.html>
- Source 1B** Paragraphs 1–3 adapted from: BBC. (2009). *Judaism and Capital Punishment*. Retrieved April, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/judaism/jewishethics/capital.shtml>
- Source 1C** Paragraphs 1–3 adapted from: BBC. (2009). *Islam and Capital Punishment*. Retrieved April, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/islamethics/capitalpunishment.shtml>
- Footnote 2 from: Oxford Dictionaries. (2002). Abolitionist. In *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the U.S. Military*. Retrieved April, 2023, from <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780199891580.001.0001/acref-9780199891580-e-37?rskey=XJuGJF&result=1>
- Source 2** Adapted from: The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Inc. (2011). *Handbook of Practice and Procedure in Australia* (6th ed.). Australia Yearly Meeting, pp. 19–20. Retrieved May, 2023, from https://www.quakersaustralia.info/sites/aym-members/files/pages/files/Handbook_web.pdf
- Source 3A** Data adapted from: Pew Research Center. (2020). *Both Chambers of Congress Have Protestant Majorities*. Retrieved May, 2023, from https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/pf_01-04-21_faith-on-the-hill-3/
- Paragraphs 2–3 adapted from: Supreme Court of the United States. (2023, May 8). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved May, 2023, from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Supreme_Court_of_the_United_States&oldid=1153839737
- Source 3B** This material [article] was published by the Center for American Progress. Graves-Fitzsimmons, G., & Siddiqi, M. (2021, May 21). *21 Faith Leaders to Watch in 2021*. Retrieved May, 2023, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/21-faith-leaders-watch-2021/>
- Footnote 1 from: Dictionary.com, LLC. (n.d.). *Torah* [Definition]. Retrieved April, 2023, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/torah>

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