

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

MAY/JUNE 2005 SESSION OF ASSESSMENTS

SHG1570 Personification of Evil

Tuesday 31 May 2005

15.30 – 16.30

You are kindly asked to answer all questions given in this test paper briefly and to the point.

1. The Ministry of Exorcism can only be understood in the context of the Church's Evangelising Ministry. Comment this assertion in the light of the apostolic mandate given by Jesus Christ: "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to creation...these are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils..." (Mt 16, 15-18).
2. The existence of evil spirits is based on progressive Biblical revelation. In which books of the Old Testament do we find an explicit mention of evil spirits. In which context are they mentioned?
3. Do you think that the evil spirits mentioned in different Gospel texts are just symbols created by the authors to try and explain the mystery of evil? How does the Church interpret these texts?
4. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, under the heading of 'Idolatry', presents these two paragraphs. Please comment upon these texts

2116 All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone.

2117 All practices of magic or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others - even if this were for the sake of restoring their health - are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone, or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons. Wearing charms is also reprehensible. Spiritism often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it. Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers or the exploitation of another's credulity.

5. Practicing the occult generally becomes addictive. What is proposed for rehabilitation in this area, considering that the aforementioned practices are principally spiritual in nature?