

BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP SPIRITUALITY IN DEVELOPING THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Florensius Sutami

STAKat Negeri Pontianak, Indonesia

Email: sutamime1972@gmail.com

Fransiskus Gregorius Nyaming

The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

Email: Frang17grego@gmail.com

Subandri Simbolon

Radboud University, Netherland

Email: subandri.simbolon@mail.ugm.ac.id

Angga Satya Bhakti

STAKat Negeri Pontianak, Indonesia

Email: anggасatya25@gmail.com

Yusi Kurniati

STAKat Negeri Pontianak, Indonesia

Email: yusikurnia170@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Catechists preach the Bible through the practice of catechesis. The proclamation is carried out in a methodical and organic manner. Catechist actors, in particular, focus on evangelizing the general public, both clergy and laity. In the real-world development of the Christian faith, laypeople who become catechists have a complicated responsibility. Because they are directly involved in the lives of the people, they are at the forefront of the ministry work. They are also, in another sense, among people who share God's word with others. The lay catechists' experiences in life have become so ingrained in people's lives. The realities of today are extremely diverse. Even though they live in a time of globalization and modernity, there are still a lot of areas in which civilization has not been particularly developed. Border areas are in many cases being ignored, like places that are sometimes still harder to get to than the development of government centers, like roads that are hard to get to. Catechists face difficulties in providing services due to the scattered location of their service stations. To continue serving under the most difficult circumstances, the catechists need a spiritual spirit to support their efforts in developing religious education in this global world.

Keywords: *Leadership Spirituality; Catechesism; Catholic Education*

INTRODUCTION

The primary disciples of Jesus Christ are referred to as the Apostles. Jesus Christ himself had followers. The message that the disciples spread is the testimony of Jesus Christ himself. Mark 16:9–15, the apostolic spirit is the will of Jesus Christ that He communicated to His disciples. Preach the Gospel to every creature in the world. It can be seen from the passage from Mark that the Lord Jesus really wanted His disciples to be able to share the gospel with all living things. Therefore, it is not surprising that Catholics now exist throughout Indonesia.

Educational spirituality plays an important role to Catechists'. One of Indonesia's provinces with a large number of Catholics is West Kalimantan. Some of them can be found in the Beduai subdistrict, which is near the Indonesia-Malaysia border. Naturally, this cannot be separated from the catechists' role. A far cry from the center of government is the border region. The infrastructure and economic situation along Indonesia's and Malaysia's border are still severely lacking. The border community is a society that must endure this deprivation in order to survive. Catechists faced a challenge in and of themselves with these limitations and deficiencies, particularly when it comes to preserving the faith of the parishioners. On the one hand, they were also having issues with infrastructure and the economy. They must, on the other hand, proclaim Jesus' testimony. Naturally, every catechist who conducts services in this Malaysian-Indonesian border must be enthusiastic about this. The catechists were able to endure limitations thanks to this spiritual spirit. Their excitement was something that should be investigated to be a motivation for catechists any place they are.

The Indonesian West Kalimantan borderland, which is located far from the central government, presents a number of difficult life issues in educational spirituality. Normally, catechists faced different challenges than catechists in more advanced regions as church ministers working in the field of evangelization in border areas. The formulation of the study's problems: How does the catechists' preaching experience of faith relate to the situation in the border regions? How do the border catechists live out their service-oriented spirituality? What obstacles confront the border regions' catechetical workers? How do the Catechists deal with the difficulties that come with preaching in border regions? How do catechists deal with these obstacles?

The purpose of this study was to explore the issues in the educational spirituality of Catholic Church services in the Indonesian and Malaysian borderland. As a worldwide church, the spirit of synergy as co-reporters must remain coordinated, which is why this research is so important. Naturally,

the catechists come from a variety of backgrounds, particularly when it comes to their motivations for preaching. The goal of the research was to determine how this motivation can inspire people to preach. Catechists' consistency as preachers and willingness to endure the repercussions can be influenced by their growing commitment. The researcher learned more about the actual situation and the difficulties catechists face in border regions. The difficulties catechists faced in overcoming obstacles in border regions should be investigated and discussed with fellow catechists wherever they are. The church's status as a worldwide church will be bolstered by this. A type of visitation from researchers to catechists was another goal of this study. The researchers were from the Pontianak State Catholic College (STAKat), which trains future journalists and makes it possible for them to work in the Indonesian and Malaysian border regions. As a member of the universal church, STAKat Negeri Pontianak wishes to pay attention to catechists in border regions by being present among them to listen to their concerns and assist them in locating solutions.

This research provides a true picture of the news situation in border regions. The testimonies of catechists are an encouragement to catechists everywhere. This testimony is certainly an experience. There is value in seeing catechists continue to struggle under limited circumstances. The enthusiasm and actions of catechists who persevere in their work of service can touch and inspire the hearts of catechists everywhere. In other words, this survey can be a means of sharing the evidence of fulfilling one's duties as a catechist. This study can also inspire members of the Church and further promote a spirit of mutual respect and affirmation as part of the universal Catholic Church. The difficulties faced by catechists may also be noted in other Catholic churches in other dioceses. The 4,444 parishes with members can provide spiritual and temporal motivation for catechists in border areas. For Pontianak STAKAt, this study will help gain insight into the enthusiasm of catechists. Pontianak State Law Among other things, it is also very useful in educating aspiring catechists based on data about the real problems that catechists face. Pontianak STAKAt is able to study existing problems and train individual catechists to be strong and responsible in carrying out their duties and service tasks.

This study was classified as qualitative r, also known as interpretive research. It was a methodology borrowed from scientific disciplines such as sociology and anthropology and adapted to educational settings. Qualitative researchers utilized inductive reasoning methods and strongly believe in the existence of multiple perspectives. Qualitative research was characterized by its focus on exploring research problems that have limited knowledge or understanding,

aiming for a comprehensive understanding of the central phenomenon. In this type of research, data was collected through general questions that allow participants to provide answers. In the case of this research, it was conducted as field research to investigate the spirituality of catechists in border areas. The findings were presented and described in the form of text or words, obtained through interviews and observations conducted directly in the field. The study is conducted in stages and over a specific period of time. The researcher aimed to present the obtained data in a descriptive manner, making it easier to comprehend based on the field observations. Additionally, the research also included the presentation of data through photographs taken by the researchers.

The research process commences by identifying the research subject. In this case, the research subject chosen was catechists in the border region between Indonesia and Malaysia. Once 20 research subjects were selected, the researcher proceeded with conducting observations and reviewing relevant literature on catechist spirituality to support the research. The subsequent step involves data collection. Through this process, both primary and secondary data were obtained. Primary data was gathered through interviews with informants or sources, while secondary data was obtained from previously conducted research documents. The collected data is then analyzed to address the problem formulation that was formulated earlier, leading to the final conclusion.

THE SPIRITUALITY AS A GUIDE

The word spirituality comes from the Latin root word 'spiritus'. In Indonesian the word spirit means 'spirit', 'power', 'spirit'. Spirituality is an aspect of a person's self that is able to provide power, energy and motivation. Spirituality is a force that moves or awakens a person, such as spirit, breath, passion for life, and the enthusiasm to stay and continue living. A dignified and humane human existence is influenced by the spirituality of his life. With spirituality a person dares to enter into silent experiences and deepen the existence of his life. Like Socrates' statement, "A life that is not worth reflecting on is not worth living", spirituality brings humans into reflection on their lives. Human life runs in time and space, various events and experiences certainly become the dynamics of life. Daeli in the journal *Melintas* (2018:97) stated that spirituality encourages people to explore and find something essential by daring to doubt artificial tendencies that are decorative, but poor in content. Spirituality directs humans to be steadfast in entering the depths of human experience in seeking and defending high values. Spirituality can be closely related to a

person's actions. Spirituality makes a person able to feel, reflect on, and absorb the presence of God/power in life events. So spirituality greatly influences a person's thought patterns, feeling patterns and action patterns. Spirituality can become very visible when someone is able to continue to struggle in their work of service even though they are faced with many challenges.

Humans are unique creatures and different from other creatures. Humans have the ability to reason and interpret events. In their lives, humans grow up with various things that can color every experience of their lives. Human life is not just based on life instincts like animals. For example, when you are hungry you have to eat, when you are thirsty you have to drink. On the other hand, humans are able to understand what they eat for? How does he get food? When to eat and when to stop eating? Max Weber, a German sociologist, explained that humans are "meaning makers" (cf. Bowie, 2000:34). Meaning makes humans have a meaningful, efficient and dignified life. Humans are able to understand the purpose of their life, take lessons from everything they receive, and how they must survive all the challenges that exist.

Spirituality becomes the power for humans to do all these things. Spirituality can become a priority for humans. Spirituality is part of human existence to become an authentic person (cf. Bunjamin, 2008: 178). Even though humans are in different loci and times as well as the cultures that influence their lives, there are elements that humans have in common, namely the ability to grow, the ability to relate and act, the ability to reproduce (cf. Mondin, 1985:37). Humans, as "an intelligent being" are also "a spiritual being". Spirituality is an ontological principle that shows the essence and existence of humans which is different from other creatures. Spirituality as a "spirit" that moves, in a certain sense spirituality is the power of humans. Spirituality does not make people give up easily. Spirituality is able to bring humans to know themselves, each other, nature of creation, and The Supreme Being. By understanding the purpose of life, spirituality as part of human life acts as a principle of life. Humans will continue to act with confidence in their lives as a manifestation of their dignified existence. In this case, the values of a religion are able to act as the spirituality of human life.

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

In a Christian perspective, the meaning of spiritus based on etymological understanding develops to a broader meaning and is more focused on the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. So it can be said that spirituality means a way, style, power and enthusiasm to build and realize oneself in one's ideals completely and comprehensively in God, the source of salvation. Or an awareness of the

people to live in God and the willingness of believers to be formed by the Spirit of God. Spirit of God is a source of inspiration in the maturation of spiritual life for every believing human being (Meran, 2017: 74). The Spirit of God in the Holy Bible already exists in every human person. According to the book of Genesis, in the process of creation, humans became noble creatures, because God Himself breathed His Spirit into humans (cf. Genesis 2:7). Humans are special creatures in whom there is divine power and must always be protected (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20).

Markus Meran elaborates on the five key aspects of Christian spirituality: the presence of Jesus Christ is manifested in His body, the Church, and its members. Christ has bestowed His Spirit upon the Church, enabling believers to encounter and unite with the Father. The Father, in turn, grants the Church the charisms of the Spirit to proclaim the gospel and contribute to God's work of salvation. The Spirit of Christ guides and shapes the individual personalities of Church members, allowing them to experience the richness of spiritual life. This experience strengthens their faith, hope, and love for God, empowering them to serve others. Through the Holy Spirit, subjective inner experiences are translated into tangible actions. Believers respond to life events by striving to fulfill the Father's will. The work of the Holy Spirit infuses Divine love, fostering unity among all members of the Church with Christ as their head. This deepens the spirit of "*comunio*" through continuous communication of faith, resulting in a vibrant and authentic spiritual life. Ultimately, the spirituality of Christian life originates from the joyful news of Jesus Christ. The Church is called to embody ideals, attitudes, and behaviors that bear prophetic witness to humanity. This dynamic process involves both self-evangelization and evangelization of others.

In essence, Christian spirituality emanates from Jesus Christ Himself. His actions and words serve as the primary proclamation, while the Holy Spirit safeguards and empowers the Church. This aligns with the perspective of Douglas G. Bushman, S.T.L, who emphasizes Christ as the focal point of spirituality. Through Christ, believers attain a profound appreciation of the Triune God. In the present age, understanding of Christ is attained through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which is bestowed upon the Church. The Church upholds and proclaims this divine gift in its ongoing dynamics.

THE CATHECISM

Catechesis, derived from the Greek word *Katekein*, refers to the oral teaching of religious principles. It encompasses the instruction of the Christian faith, drawing from Scripture and church doctrine. The primary recipients of

catechesis are individuals who have not yet been baptized and those who seek to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith. Essentially, catechesis aims to proclaim the good news to those who are still developing their faith, with the hope that they will eventually be baptized or grow into mature followers of Christ. As stated in *Catechesi Tradendae*, Chapter 3, Article 20, the specific purpose of catechesis is to foster the growth of a budding faith, with the assistance of God, so that it may gradually expand and strengthen the Christian lives of believers, both young and old. Catechesis is an act of service that contributes to the development of faith. This growth is achieved through the imparting of fundamental knowledge about the richness of Christian life, which is derived from the teachings found in sacred texts, traditions, and the authority of the Church. For Christians, the Holy Scriptures, tradition, and magisterium serve as the means through which the Holy Spirit guides their conduct. These sources contain valuable life principles that can guide believers. Initially, these principles are acquired as knowledge, but the ultimate goal is for this knowledge to shape their way of life in accordance with Christian values. Catechesis specifically targets adults in the faith, presenting Christian teachings in an organic and systematic manner, with the intention of leading them towards a complete Christian life. The delivery of catechesis is carried out by individuals or groups who are dedicated to this task. According to the Book of Canon Law (KHK), the process of catechesis itself serves as a specific means of evangelization. The teachings of the Gospel hold utmost importance in this process.

In general, all baptized Christians have a unique calling to proclaim the word of God. This act of preaching is primarily carried out by special preachers who are clergy and non-clergy known as catechists. Catechists are individuals who dedicate themselves to the education of faith in Jesus, possessing expertise in the field of education and Catholic religious teaching. They play a crucial role in teaching Christian values to believers, nurturing their faith within the church and formal educational settings. The Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples (CEP) places great importance on catechists, recognizing them as the main pillars in spreading the Gospel. Catechists undergo formal religious education, studying subjects such as philosophy-theology, Catholic religious education and teaching, pastoral science, as well as non-formal education with a religious emphasis, such as in monasteries and seminaries.

Overall, catechists are entrusted by the church to educate and foster the faith of the people. While not all of them have received formal religious education, they receive specialized training through seminars and other means. This aligns with the teachings of Kan. 785, which states that catechists should be involved

in missionary work. They are lay Christian believers who are well-trained and exemplify a Christian way of life. Under the guidance of a missionary, they dedicate themselves to conveying the teachings of the Gospel and organizing liturgical activities and charitable works. Catechists should be established in schools or, if not available, work under the direction of missionaries. From a theological standpoint, catechists are encouraged to emulate the actions of.

In Indonesia, individuals who serve as catechists can include priests, nuns, Catholic religious teachers, and counselors. Their actions are considered acts of service, and they are not limited to the wages they receive. These catechists operate under the guidance of the central church as they proclaim the Word of God. The role of spirituality plays a significant part in the life of a catechist. Spirituality, which encompasses power and the spirit, ultimately determines the quality of a catechist. Spirituality assists catechists in understanding their own lives. Harjanto MSF's revelation serves as a vivid example. Drawing from Sandra Schneiders' insights, he perceives spirituality as a collection of ideas. Spirituality is not merely an abstract concept; it is an experiential encounter with God. It is a profound event that deeply impacts an individual's life.

These experiences shape and even transform a person's life. They required individuals to be aware of, appreciate, and pursue the values embedded within these experiences. These life experiences are not mere rituals; they are personal encounters that can also have a communal impact. Encountering God is a testament to His love. It is God who extends an invitation to humanity, and it is up to individuals to accept and realize this invitation. Therefore, catechists are called to delve deeper into all of their life experiences, particularly those that involve encountering God, as these experiences have the power to save and positively influence human life. Catechists, like journalists, must cultivate strong relationships as they live out their lives and report on their experiences. A catechist's life, which is directed towards God, should be a testament to His presence and accompanied by His power. Catechists are considered to be intimately connected to the Word of God. Through their spirituality, they are able to reflect upon and make sense of all the life events they encounter. Reading God's word and attending church services are not mere rituals, but rather meaningful acts that deepen their spirituality.

BORDER AREA AND THE FAITH EXPERIENCE

The geographical distance between various locations often poses challenges for catechists in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. This has left a profound impact on many catechists, who selflessly carry out their service without considering the financial rewards. Among these catechists are

Catholic religious teachers who are actively involved in formal education at elementary, middle, and high schools. Some hold civil servant positions, while others do not. In addition to their role as religious educators, some of them also serve as catechists within the church, entrusted by the Pastor with this important responsibility. The faith experience of these catechists in border areas is characterized by a demanding and dedicated service that requires immense enthusiasm and hard work. They willingly sacrifice their time and energy to fulfill their reporting duties in these remote regions. Their commitment as catechists is unwavering, as they serve for the greater glory of God. Typically, these catechists have received education specifically tailored for their role. They have completed studies in Catholic Religious Education and Teaching, as well as Theological Philosophy Education. Some have even pursued further education to become brothers or servants. This comprehensive education equips them with the necessary skills to effectively proclaim God's message of love within the communities surrounding Entikong. This commitment further strengthens and purifies their faith, especially when confronted with the unique challenges of the border areas. On the other hand, the border areas are home to a significant population, and the catechists are acutely aware of the great need for their presence. This realization fuels their passion to continue their work in these remote regions until the very end. They firmly believe that their presence has a profound impact on the lives of many individuals, particularly through pastoral care services such as assisting pastors in preparing worship celebrations, providing faith counseling, and leading various religious practices.

THE CHALLENGES FACED BY CATECHISTS IN BORDER REGIONS

The border area between Indonesia and Malaysia in Sanggau Regency presents various challenges for catechists. This region is characterized by hilly plateaus, swamps, and rivers such as the Kapuas River and the Sekayam River. The soil type in Sanggau district is predominantly podzolic, which is evenly distributed throughout the sub-district. Additionally, the area is surrounded by rubber and oil palm plantations, making the majority of the population engaged in farming these crops.

The geographical location of this region poses a significant challenge for catechists in providing their services. Development in these areas has not been evenly distributed, resulting in inadequate access to basic facilities such as roads and public transportation. This lack of infrastructure hinders the reporting process for catechists. Furthermore, not all catechists reside in the areas where they work, requiring them to travel long distances of 2 to 3 hours

by motorbike. Some locations are inaccessible by private transportation, necessitating the use of boats and walking.

In addition to the challenges posed by inadequate facilities and infrastructure, catechists also face the issue of an imbalanced ratio between the number of people and the number of catechists. Many state schools in the region do not have Catholic religious teachers, which is a particular concern for catechists. It is disheartening to find numerous Catholic students in state schools without access to a Catholic teacher. One catechist shared that he had to visit fifteen sub-districts and discovered that many Catholic schools lacked religious teachers. Consequently, many community areas have individuals but lack worship ministers due to the shortage of catechists.

The Beduai Parish, which serves 21 stations/villages, faces these challenges on a daily basis. The list of stations/villages includes Beduai Parish Center, Pemodis Village, and Muara Ilai Village. Despite the difficulties encountered, catechists continue to persevere in their mission to provide spiritual guidance and support to the Catholic community in these border areas.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF PREACHING IN BORDER AREAS

Catechists approach the challenges they face with a sense of gratitude. These challenges provide them with an opportunity to align their lives more closely with the life of Jesus Christ. As they navigate these challenges, catechists are able to enhance their ministry and delve deeper into the teachings of God's love. They also find meaning in their own life experiences by strengthening their faith, reflecting on their journey, and embracing the missionary spirit that guides them. Despite the obstacles they encounter, Jesus Christ remains unwavering in His mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God. His suffering and death served as the catalyst for His glorious resurrection. The path to becoming a catechist in a border area is filled with numerous challenges, albeit on a smaller scale compared to the preaching carried out by Christ. Catechists strive to emulate Christ's perseverance and maintain their enthusiasm for serving, despite the limitations they face and the various challenges that arise.

Catechists confront these challenges through prayer. Prayer serves as a means of connecting believers with God, much like how Christ prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Catechists emulate Christ's attitude of surrender to His Heavenly Father (cf. Matthew 26:36-46). Christ's prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane exemplifies His human limitations. His plea to the Father reflects the fear that any human would experience when faced with impending events. However, Christ also recognized that this was His purpose in the world. His suffering

and death would become part of the Mysteries of God's Salvation. Through prayer, Christ regained His strength and enthusiasm. Prayer represents the deepest expression of a person's faith in God. By praying, catechists gain a deeper understanding of their role as messengers. Prayer serves as a reminder of their purpose as catechists, which is to proclaim the work of God in the world.

CONCLUSION

Spirituality encompasses the inner force that motivates and awakens an individual, including their spirit, breath, zest for life, and the enthusiasm to persevere and continue living. The spirituality of one's life greatly influences their dignified and humane existence. Through spirituality, individuals are able to delve into profound experiences and deepen their understanding of life. In a way, spirituality acts as a driving force, empowering humans to face challenges without easily giving up. It enables individuals to discover themselves, connect with others, comprehend the nature of creation, and seek a connection with a higher power. By recognizing the purpose of life, spirituality becomes a guiding principle in human existence.

In the context of Christianity, the spirituality of a Christian life originates from Jesus Christ himself. Christ's actions and teachings serve as a testament to his spirituality, and he safeguards his Church by bestowing the Holy Spirit upon it. The Holy Spirit's work instills the power of divine love, uniting all members of the Church under Christ's leadership. This fosters a sense of "comunio" through continuous communication of faith, which radiates a genuine life force. Sustaining this communication is crucial for nurturing faith, fostering brotherhood, and engaging in acts of loving service. Therefore, catechesis plays a vital role. The specific objective of catechesis is to develop and expand the budding faith with God's assistance, strengthening the Christian lives of believers, both young and old, day by day. Catechesis is a form of service that contributes to the growth of faith. Catechists in border areas typically possess religious teaching or education in philosophy and theology, in accordance with KHK canon 785. Catechesis in these regions is a challenging endeavor, as catechists face obstacles such as a shortage of personnel, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and the remote locations of their mission areas.

As indicated in the analysis, this work finds important recommendations regarding the spirit of catechists. Catechists should strive to be role models of faith, particularly in fostering a sense of community among believers. Catholics should also find inspiration from preachers or catechists. It is important for Catholics to recognize and appreciate the efforts of catechists

in meeting the spiritual needs of fellow Catholics. For Catholic universities, there is a responsibility to impart the spirituality embraced by catechists in border areas to the students. These students will eventually become future catechists in border areas themselves.

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