

# CITIZENSHIP CATECHESIS INITIATION FOR MAINSTREAMING POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AMONG THE Z FAITHFUL DIGITAL GENERATION

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## Abstract

*Catholic Bishop Conference through the Catechetical Commission Catholic to youth to involve in political issues and to become political leaders has become an embryonic momentum for 'citizenship catechesis'. How does social activism among Catholic youth at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru Yogyakarta become the embryo of the birth of citizenship catechesis? The two authors conducted qualitative research with a naturalistic descriptive design through participative observation, literature review and semi-structured interviews to collect data. The Catholic youth in St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru Yogyakarta, who belong to the Z generation and are actively involved in social activism, is the leading research informant. Citizenship catechesis embryo grows organically through social activism, such as Interfaith Dialogue and Segi Mubeng. Ahead of the 2024 presidential election, parishes need urgently to initiate citizenship catechesis with activities that allow the faithful Z generation to borrow Pope Francis' terminology, 'to be involved, not just observers, even spectators.'*

## Keywords:

*citizenship catechesis, the faithful Z generation, political engagement, interfaith dialogue, segi mubeng.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The political crisis became a special moment for the Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI) to introspect on its responsibilities in the political education of Catholics. The KWI Catechetical Commission encourages the parishes to mobilize professional catechists to initiate citizenship catechesis for the people. 'Social transformation catechesis,' political catechesis,' 'patriotic-citizenship catechesis,' and 'citizenship catechesis' are some of the vocabularies that have sprung up among professional catechesis activists to mainstream the political engagement of Catholic youth. The exploration of professional catechists for the content and methods of citizenship catechesis is getting even more significant with the irruption of the Z digital faithful generation in the Indonesian Catholic Church. Their irruption is disruptive to the Indonesian Catholic Church, which is committed to responding to the urgent need to initiate citizenship catechesis for mainstreaming their political engagement.

One Parish that responded creatively to this invitation was St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru Yogyakarta. Instead of formal, the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru prefers to organize citizenship catechesis informally through social activism. The subjects of citizenship catechesis who are the main target of the Parish are Catholic youth who are part of the Z digital faithful generation. Apart from taking place offline, the Parish is very active in reaching and growing the Faith of Catholic youth in the online space by maximizing the social media platforms such as *Facebook* and *Instagram*. In addition to using social media as a location for uploading documentation of social activism, the Parish utilizes digital platforms for national catechism with Catholic youth by live streaming. How is the St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru, Yogyakarta, initiated the citizenship catechesis to mainstream the political involvement of the Z digital faithful generation?

## 2. RELATED STUDIES AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before the new term 'citizenship catechesis' became popular in recent years, catechists in Indonesia first gave rise to 'social

transformation catechesis,” political catechesis<sup>1</sup>, and ‘patriotic-citizenship catechesis’<sup>2</sup>. According to them, it is crucial and urgent for the Parish,” the primary and principal way of constituting the Church in any particular area,”<sup>3</sup> to initiate political catechesis for Catholic youth. Political catechesis has a central role in reforming the current political paradigm. Political catechesis among young people aims to “cultivate themselves mentally, spiritually and morally in order to be able to face the temptations of politics and the money politics.” Meanwhile, catechesis for political activists or politicians aims to “strengthen them in defending integrity, honesty and idealism against pragmatism and money politics.”<sup>4</sup> Carrying political catechesis is necessary “from an early age for the formation of a healthy political mentality.”<sup>5</sup>

Situating it in the long history of political involvement of the Indonesian Catholic Church, Dessindi contemplates citizenship catechesis departing from literature reviews of the ‘social transformation catechesis’ perspective of Johnson W. Everett (1989), Daniel S. Schipani (1997), Thomas H. Groome (2011), Albertus Bagus Laksana (2019), and Yulius Darmaatmadja (2019). The catechism has a transformative power when it embodies the values of the kingdom of God in a pluralistic society. The transformative step in catechesis occurs when the subject of catechesis engages in social activism for the sake of the kingdom of God. In the reflection of citizenship catechesis activists, the subject of catechesis incarnates in the Indonesian context as a citizenship formation and moves them to transform the Indonesian Catholic Church to become more

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Boli Kotan Ed. *Katekese Umat dari Masa ke Masa: Jejak Pertemuan Komisi Kateketik Antar-Keuskupan Se-Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2020), 103.

<sup>2</sup> Komkat KWI. *Semangat Misioner Katekis: Pertemuan Nasional Katekis IV: Kegembiraan dan Pembaruan Semangat Misioner Katekis, Menyambut 100 Tahun Maximum Illud* (Yogyakarta, Kanisius, 2022), 314.

<sup>3</sup> Synod of Bishop, *XV Ordinary General Assembly Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment*. Vatican, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana (2018), no. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Boli Kotan, *Katekese Umat dari Masa ke Masa: Jejak Pertemuan Komisi Kateketik Antar Keuskupan Se-Indonesia*, 103.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Boli Kotan, *Katekese Umat dari Masa ke Masa: Jejak Pertemuan Komisi Kateketik Antar Keuskupan Se-Indonesia*, 103.

significant and relevant.<sup>6</sup> The author further explores citizenship catechesis through qualitative research on the Z digital faithful generation in the St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru.

The Z generation, born from 1995 to 2013, are ‘digital natives.’ This generation lives in a financially resilient environment, and their environment is rapidly changing with digital technology.<sup>7</sup> They uninterruptedly connect to the internet, but are lonely, less open to spirituality, have anxiety problems, seek answers with engagement and want change.<sup>8</sup> They are surfing in social activism in this new ‘agora’ to build civic society. Social media is a reference for information search engines and an instrument for political engagement in the public sphere. Refusing to become “consumers,” they desire to become “contributors.”<sup>9</sup> Some are passive in the Church’s life, including catechesis, because the programs are unattractive.<sup>10</sup> In addition to faith growth, pastoral care for young people needs to help them form communities that live the Christian faith through youth and social programs.<sup>11</sup>

Born in and growing up in digital culture, the Z generation gave birth to a new political engagement style, a mixture of offline and online activism. In addition to political activism in offline spaces, the Z generation is also very articulate in expressing their aspirations on political issues in online spaces. Social media is a reference for the Z generation seeking information and a tool for political engagement in the public sphere. It is not surprising that many of them express their political aspirations through social media channels, create

<sup>6</sup> Kristhalia Dessindi “Katekese Kebangsaan: Usaha Gereja di Tengah Persoalan Kebangsaan, Beriman, dan Bernegara,” in *Tren Katekese Zaman Sekarang*. Ed. FX. Heryatno Wono Wulung (Yogyakarta, YK: Kanisius, 2021), 176-190.

<sup>7</sup> Gen Z Research. “What We Know About Gen Z, One Hope God’s Word, Every Child,” in *Literature Review* 2018, 1-12.

<sup>8</sup> Barna Institute. *The Connected Generation: How Christian Leaders Around the World Can Strengthen Faith and Well-Being Among 18-35-Year-Olds* (US: Barna Institute, 2019), 16.

<sup>9</sup> Barna Institute, *The Connected Generation: How Christian Leaders Around the World Can Strengthen Faith and Well-Being Among 18-35-Year-Olds*, 127.

<sup>10</sup> Barna Institute, *The Connected Generation: How Christian Leaders Around the World Can Strengthen Faith and Well-Being Among 18-35-Year-Olds*, 61.

<sup>11</sup> Jody Hunt, “And Then There Was Zoom: A Catholic Theological Examination on the Development of Digital Youth Ministry”, in *Religion*, 2020 (11), 565, 2.

networks based on political commitment, and share petitions related to political issues. The Z generation is very routinely following the latest information regarding citizenship rights. Almost two-thirds of the Z generation are interested in following information on political issues, such as women's rights, gender justice, and political parties.<sup>12</sup>

The Z generation, who carries the disruptive spirit of digital culture, has emerged in the Catholic Church as a digital believer. The Z digital faithful generation in the Indonesian Catholic Church is disruptive to citizenship catechesis. Andalas called for an update to the Indonesian Catholic Church in understanding catechesis, catechetical methods, and the profile of catechists. The apostolic appeal of *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979), which is still a classic reference for some catechists in understanding catechesis, catechetical methods, and the profile of catechists, is no longer adequate because predigital culture conditions it. Reading the autobiography of the Z digital faithful generation, understanding catechesis as 'teaching, the teaching of faith' needs to change to 'continuous interconnection with God without interruption.' The monologue method needs to change to 'narrative, aesthetic, and digital language.' The role of catechists needs to shift from the 'teachers who teach faith' become 'facilitators of God's grace.'<sup>13</sup>

The Church's later institutions can experience renewal and "a return to youth at different points in her age-old history."<sup>14</sup> Pope Francis asked God to free the Church from her members who would "make her grow old, encase her in the past, hold her back or keep her at a standstill."<sup>15</sup> Catholic youth can help the Catholic Church "from becoming corrupt; they can keep her moving forward, prevent her from being proud and sectarian."<sup>16</sup> They can help her "to be poorer and to bear better witness, to take the side of the poor and the

<sup>12</sup> Corey Seemiler & Meghan Grace. *Generation Z: A Century in the Making* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 276.

<sup>13</sup> Mutiara Andalas, "Irupsi Generasi Beriman Digital Z dan Disrupsi Katekese Kebangsaan" in *Diskursus: Jurnal Filsafat dan Teologi*. Volume 18, Nomor 1, April 2022, 70-93.

<sup>14</sup> Pope Francis, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christus Vivit*, no. 34.

<sup>15</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 35.

<sup>16</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 37.

outcast, to fight for justice and humbly to let herself be challenged.”<sup>17</sup> The Catholic Church recognized the need to “make more room for the voices of young people to be heard.”<sup>18</sup> Several things in her institution need renewal. For this renewal, the Catholic Church needs to “appreciate the vision but also the criticisms of young people.”<sup>19</sup>

The presence of some young Catholics in the periphery of the Church requires the Parish to restore its youth. In addition to dynamizing its pastoral activities to create more *agoras* to echo the voices of young people, the Parish needs to renew its missionary vocation as an ‘influencer of God’<sup>20</sup> today.

While parishes remain the primary and principal way of constituting the Church in any particular area, it was also observed that parishes struggle to appeal to young people and that their missionary vocation needs to be rethought. Their low profile in urban areas, their lack of original and constructive ideas, and rapidly changing lifestyles all call for a renewal of parish life. Despite various attempts at innovation, the life and activities of the young often flow past the community, without really encountering it.<sup>21</sup>

Going beyond “using instruments of communication,” young people “live in a highly digitalized culture.”<sup>22</sup> The digital world is becoming “one of social and political engagement and active citizenship.”<sup>23</sup> The Catholic Church maximizes using the web and social networks to represent “a firmly established forum for reaching and involving young people, not least in pastoral initiatives and activities”<sup>24</sup> She calls young people in the digital age “influencers of God.” They are “precious reflections of the young Christ; their radiant

<sup>17</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 38.

<sup>19</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 39.

<sup>20</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 44.

<sup>21</sup> Synod of Bishop, *XV Ordinary General Assembly Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment*. Vatican, VA: Vatican Press, 2018, no. 18.

<sup>22</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 86.

<sup>23</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 87.

<sup>24</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 87.

witness encourages us and awakens us from our lethargy.”<sup>25</sup> Pope Francis encouraged parishes to “examine, respectfully and seriously, the situation of their young people, in order to find the most fitting ways of providing them with pastoral care.”<sup>26</sup> Going beyond seeing them as the future of the Church, young people are the “present of the Church.”<sup>27</sup> They begin to “assume a number of responsibilities, sharing alongside adults in the growth of the family, society and the Church.”<sup>28</sup>

The temptation of young people is to “withdraw into small groups,” which is “an extension of their own ego.”<sup>29</sup> The temptation worsens when they limit lay vocations to “a form of service inside the Church.”<sup>30</sup> The laity’s vocation is, first and foremost, “charity within the family and social and political charity. It is a concrete and faith-based commitment to the building of a new society. It involves living in the midst of society and the world in order to bring the Gospel everywhere, to work for the growth of peace, harmony, justice, human rights and mercy, and thus for the extension of God’s kingdom in this world.”<sup>31</sup> “Social commitment”<sup>32</sup> is a characteristic of today’s young people. There is also a readiness to “commit themselves to initiatives of volunteer work, active citizenship and social solidarity”<sup>33</sup> for the sake of the *bonum commune*. Overcome indifference, and they are “the protagonist of revolution of charity and service” by “providing Christian responses to social and political problems.”<sup>34</sup>

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS

This academic research is qualitative with a naturalistic descriptive design. The research took place with a literature review

<sup>25</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 49.

<sup>26</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 103

<sup>27</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 64.

<sup>28</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 64.

<sup>29</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 168.

<sup>30</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 168.

<sup>31</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 168.

<sup>32</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 170.

<sup>33</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 170.

<sup>34</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 174.

on the political engagement of Catholic youth(OMK) at St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru<sup>35</sup>, observations on Parish catechetical programs, and semi-structured interviews with 11 Catholic youth as informants from April 2020 – May 2022. The authors select informants based on their understanding of involvement in the nation's life as Catholics in a society characterized by poverty, cultural diversity and religious plurality through activities that the Parish collaborates with and even initiates. The research question focuses on the meaning of Catholic youth involvement in social activism as a contribution to initiating citizenship catechesis, which in the perspective of professional catechesis activists has not been formally carried out in parishes until now.

This pioneering academic research reaches out to the Z digital faithful generation in the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru Yogyakarta, active in activism and civic discourse through Srawung Lintas Iman and Sega Mubeng. The exclusion of other social activism that may have contributed to their political formation is a research limitation. The main focus of the research is articulating the initiative of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru in designing activism and citizenship discourse, which hopes to make an academic contribution to professional catechesis activists in contemplating the content and methods of citizenship catechesis. This paper presents Church documents on political engagement as further enrichment of the results of interviews with informants. Hopefully, this academic research can contribute ideas to other parishes that wish to initiate the implementation of citizenship catechesis.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of citizenship catechesis in the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru Yogyakarta attracted the author's attention because instead of the discourse of professional catechesis activists, the Parish started from community activism. The initiators of citizenship catechesis are young social activists, most of whom have no academic background in the field of catechesis. Citizenship catechesis was not born out of a form of faith formation that took place formally with the catechist as a professional facilitator. Citizenship catechesis

<sup>35</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 174.



does not take place formally following the activity steps depicted by professional catechesis activists. The citizenship catechesis, which took place in the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru, does not start from discourse. It departs from social activism. The discourse on citizenship catechesis was born out of shared Christian praxis, the activism of the Z digital faithful generation as a present-day Church that lives with the religious others at home with Indonesia and its citizenship issues.

Living as neighbours without a border in society gives birth to social awareness of the people in the face of daily life problems that impact residents. St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru grounds the citizenship discourse on the Catholic youth through youth and social activities, such as Sega Mubeng and Srawung Lintas Iman. Informant (I)9, a young Catholic involved in various activism, stated that the citizenship catechesis in the Parish takes place informally through activities involving interfaith communities, such as Srawung Lintas Iman. Many informants are involved in Srawung Lintas Faith activities. Other informants mentioned involvement in deepening faith in Lingkungan and Wilayah, national holiday ceremonies, ecumenical Christmas celebrations, and Sega Mubeng. According to them, the activism of Srawung Lintas Iman and Sega Mubeng helped them find a meeting point between life as members of the Catholic Church and Indonesia.

Communities are flexible in their structure in distinction to a formal organization. In the community, besides sharing ideas, individuals experience interpersonal friendship. In a mutually supportive interpersonal atmosphere, they develop social and relational skills. In the community, they learn to be God's influencers starting with their peers. Friendship and exchange of ideas, often in groups, often

within more or less structured groups, offer the opportunity to strengthen social and relational skills in a context in which one is neither valued nor judged. Group experience is also a great resource for sharing the faith and for mutual help in bearing witness. The young are able to guide other young people and to exercise a genuine apostolate among their friends.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Synod of Bishop, *XV Ordinary General Assembly Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment*. Vatican, VA: Vatican Press, 2018, no. 36.

Living in a faith community at the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru, a young Catholic, sees the embryo of the Church in the digital age as “networking.” When proposing the “polyhedron,”<sup>37</sup> Pope Francis speaks of a new model of the Church and politics. “Our model is not the sphere, which is no greater than its parts, where every point is a equidistant from the centre, and there are no differences between them.”<sup>38</sup> The network model “reflects the convergence of all its parts, each of which preserves its distinctiveness. Pastoral and political activity alike seek to gather in this polyhedron the best of each.”<sup>39</sup> For communities to be at their best, as with the Amazon, both ecclesiastical and political institutions need “to cultivate without uprooting, to foster growth without weakening identity, to be supportive without being invasive.”<sup>40</sup>

The Parish has taken care of political issues by celebrating the Eucharist. I2 declares that “in the intercessory prayer, the Parish prays not only for the Pope or the Bishop but also for societal concerns.” For I3, interfaith encounters with youth from the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant Church (HKBP) and the Syuhada Mosque helped him to live as a Catholic instead of “a participant,” not “a bystander,” in Indonesia. In addition to other faith communities that are neighbours to the Parish, he interacts with the local community at the Rukun Tetangga (RT) and Rukun Warga (RW). Opportunities are open for the Catholic Church to expand the reach of religious encounters to the national level. According to I4, joining the faith formation in Lingkungan and Wilayah regarding general elections and his engagement as a voter enlivens the motto ‘100% Catholic, 100% Indonesian.’

It requires a reflective moment to realize the political content in the social activism of Catholic youth. I9 confesses her relative apathy toward political news. Social activism, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, hidden apathy towards politics among Catholic youth need further academic exploration to prevent the Parish from rushing

<sup>37</sup> Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti*, no. 190. 215.

<sup>38</sup> Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 236.

<sup>39</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 145.

<sup>40</sup> Pope Francis, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Querida Amazonia*, no. 28.

to blame them for being politically apathetic in today's society. The Catholic faith does not merely grant

interior firmness, a steadfast conviction on the part of the believer; it also sheds light on every human relationship because it is born of love and reflects God's love. It does not draw us away from the world or prove irrelevant to the concrete concerns of the men and women of our time. It is truly a good for everyone; it is a common good. Its light does not simply brighten the interior of the Church, nor does it serve solely to build an eternal city in the hereafter; it helps us build our societies in such a way that they can journey towards a future of hope.<sup>41</sup>

After organizing social activism, according to I11, the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru Yogyakarta invites Catholic youth to reflect on activities in the light of nationality and faith.

The Parish is looking for doors, not using direct ways to talk about citizenship. The doors vary, for example, Sega Mubeng. Young people from various religious affiliations participated in the rice wrap distribution on Saturday. It was still a small entry point. When they reflect, the points [citizenship catechesis] come in. We do not immediately start with the word 'citizenship,' but with the doors that make it pervasive.

Likewise, openness to other religious beliefs through Srawung Lintas Iman invites Catholic youth to "learn to accept others and their different ways of living, thinking and speaking."<sup>42</sup> "People talk about radicalism but tend to blame certain religious groups. We change the tendency of such talks by organizing activities to create common understanding, humanity, and justice." The tendency of apologetic fundamentalism among faith communities when discussing religious themes, as I11 observed it, encouraged the Parish of St. Anthony of Padua Kotabaru Yogyakarta to prefer organizing social activism to academic discourse. Through social activism by sharing rice wraps in collaboration with interfaith youth, the Z digital Catholic generation is moving forward in carrying out "a dialogue which seeks social peace and justice."<sup>43</sup> Sega Mubeng's social activism encourages all

<sup>41</sup> Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Lumen Fidei*, no. 50-51.

<sup>42</sup> Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 250.

<sup>43</sup> Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 250.

participants to “enter the field of charity at its most vast, namely political charity.”<sup>44</sup>

Through Srawung Lintas Faith and Sega Mubeng, the Catholic youth at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru, Yogyakarta, show the face of the Catholic Church, which has entered into political love. I6 expects that “the St. Antony of Padua Parish can educate Catholic youth in many ways not to shut themselves down in their closed faith community. She can organize social activism that involves diverse youth and wider society. She can facilitate Catholic youth’s engagement in present issues related to Indonesia as a pluralistic society.” Social activism led Catholic youth to initiate informal citizenship catechesis. “Love, spiritual the heart of politics,” moves young people to “express and participate new pathways” in social activism.<sup>45</sup> This initiative inspires other parishes to initiate citizenship catechesis through social activism organically.

The informants submitted several suggestions for mainstreaming the political engagement of Catholic youth. I1, I5, and I6, which experienced a deepening of faith led by catechists that have happened conventionally, proposed to the Parish to increase the number of social activism. I6 and I8 add to the need for the Parish to arrange civic gatherings periodically as an enrichment for the practice of social activism. Catholic youth long for the Parish’s social activism to be sustainable rather than sporadic. Regarding the formal implementation of citizenship catechesis, I2, I4, I5 and I10 see that parishes need an ongoing formation that empowers catechists’ pastoral mobility in contemplating catechesis that connects to the Z digital faithful generation. They also hope that citizenship catechesis will not only appear before the general election moment and disappear shortly afterwards.

The Z digital faithful generation, according to I6, does not have to do extensive social activism to raise a sense of nationality as Indonesian citizens. They can become full Indonesian citizens by engaging in community service, greeting neighbours, and encountering them in diverse communities without losing their identity as faithful Catholics.

<sup>44</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 180; Pius XI, *Address to the Italian Catholic Federation of University Students* (18 December 1927): *L’Osservatore Romano*, December 23 (1927), 3.

<sup>45</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 187.

Recently, he has experienced that building social friendships in a pluralistic society is more complicated. This concern about religious polarity in neighbourly life can be an entry point for parishes to contextualize citizenship catechesis. The Parish engages Catholic youth as subjects of citizenship catechesis to see the challenge of populism not “from the balcony of the church.”<sup>46</sup> In Pope Francis’ reflection, populism is at its depth a “distortion of the people, democracy and nation,”<sup>47</sup> even “the delegitimization of it.”<sup>48</sup>

The disruption of the Z digital faithful generation encouraged the parishes to return Catholic youth initially at the periphery to the frontier. Pope Francis encourages the pastoral renewal of parishes in reaching and involving young Catholic youth in the mission of the Church in today’s world. In Pope Francis’ reflection, young people have “marvellous strength.”<sup>49</sup> When the Church accompanies them out of self-isolation, Catholic youth are “capable of great sacrifices for others and the community.”<sup>50</sup> They can “find new fields for mission in the most varied settings. For example, since they are already familiar with social networks, they should be encouraged to fill them with God, fraternity and commitment.”<sup>51</sup> The involvement of Catholic youth in the mission of the Church dynamizes the informal initiation of citizenship catechesis.

According to I7 and I10, they have never experienced formal citizenship catechesis as professional catechists contemplate it. According to these two informants, citizenship catechesis has not yet become an “independent activity” in the Parish. The catechists “insert” the theme of the Catholic political engagement in the nation’s life when they facilitate faith formation in Lingkungan and Wilayah. The limitation, according to I7, is that “the discourse on citizenship is superficial because the catechists only mention it in a moment.” According to I10, the achievement of citizenship catechesis is highly dependent on the initiative of each catechist. In line with I1, who

<sup>46</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 143.

<sup>47</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 160.

<sup>48</sup> Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, no. 157.

<sup>49</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 110.

<sup>50</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 110.

<sup>51</sup> Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 241.

observes that the content and methods of catechesis are still very synonymous with “religious teaching,” I8 views that catechetical content needs to go beyond “doctrinal teaching.” “Citizenship catechesis,” according to I11, “is not a formula that the parish teaches, but “a way of life that we practice daily.”

All informants declared that the ongoing formation of catechists in the digital age to ‘reach young people and grow their faith’ is the most considerable task for St. Anthony of Padua Parish Kotabaru in initiating citizenship catechesis. The ‘predigital accent’ is still very apparent among Parish’s older catechists. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the migration of the Church as a ‘connected community of digital religious persons’ from ‘*ecclesia parochialis*’ to ‘*ecclesia domestica*’<sup>52</sup> with the installation of digital infrastructure and the formation of digital service communities. The inertia of parish catechists to migrate in the proclamation of the joyful Gospel makes the transition from predigital to digital immigrant takes longer. Beyond the technicalities and techniques of operating digital tools, catechists need to immerse themselves in digital culture to become an ‘influencer of God’ for the Z digital faithful generation who are the subject of citizenship catechesis.

In-depth interviews with informants posed exciting questions to professional catechists regarding initiating citizenship catechesis in the Parish for the Z digital faithful generation. St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru prefers to organize an informal citizenship catechesis. She interprets various social activism, especially Srawung Lintas Iman and Sega Mubeng, as a form of ‘citizenship catechesis in practice.’ The strength of this informal catechesis lies in the baptism of Catholic youth in contextual political issues in their locality. In the interviews, some informants proposed to the Parish to increase the number of social activism that would include them in direct engagement with national issues. Assisting them in interpreting their involvement in local and national issues as shared Christian praxis is a great challenge for most digital immigrant catechists.

A new pathway opens for the St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru to initiate citizenship catechesis, which professional

<sup>52</sup> Mutiara Andalas, “Mobilitas Spiritual, Mobilitas Eklesial: Praksis Cinta Gereja di Tengah Wabah Pandemi Covid-19,” v-xxxi.

catechesis activists contemplate. The Parish's openness to initiating citizenship catechesis in a more formal format reveals pastoral mobility among her catechists to engage Catholic youth in politics. Instead of being an introvert, the Indonesian Catholic Church is a missionary facing national issues. The Parish needs to listen to the input of Catholic youth regarding catechetical content to facilitate the transformation of those who may initially be introverted into God influencers amid the Indonesian political context that calls for their engagement as Catholics. The Parish also needs to turn her ears to the input of the Z digital faithful generation regarding the centrality of "narrative, aesthetic and digital language"<sup>53</sup> in their lives when contemplating new methods of citizenship catechesis.

## 5. CONCLUSION

St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kotabaru, Yogyakarta, an informal citizenship catechesis in response to the invitation of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference, through the Catechetical Commission, in mainstreaming political engagement of the Z digital faithful generation. There are many meeting points between formal citizenship catechesis that professional catechesis activists contemplate and informal catechesis that the Parish has practised. Informal citizenship catechesis facilitators must contemplate mainstreaming the political engagement of Catholic youth through social activism. The Parish needs input to create a reflective moment of social activism, becoming an informal citizenship catechesis for Catholic youth. The encounter with the Z digital faithful generation helps the Parish dynamize social activism into an informal citizenship catechesis. Professional catechesis activists can help the Parish to dynamize the informal citizenship catechesis to mainstream the political engagement of Catholic youth.

<sup>53</sup> Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *Directory for Catechesis* (USA: United States of Catholic Bishop Conference, 2020), no. 204-217; Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 65; Pope Francis, *Message for the 52<sup>nd</sup> World Day of Social Communication*, 2018; Synod of Bishop, *XV Ordinary General Assembly Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment* (Vatican, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2018), no. 8. 21-22. 45. 47-48. 56; Pope Francis, *Message for the 53<sup>rd</sup> World Day of Social Communication*, 2019; Pope Francis, *Message for the 54<sup>th</sup> World Day of Social Communication*, 2020; Pope Francis, *Message for the 55<sup>th</sup> World Day of Social Communication*, 2021.

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