



From Faith to Public Witness: Contextualizing Political Catechesis through Pastoral Cadre Formation in the Diocese of Malang

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Abstract: This study examines the contextualization of political catechesis through pastoral cadre formation within the student ministry of the Diocese of Malang. In response to the growing presence of university students and the urgent need for transformative Catholic leadership, this research explores how political catechesis can serve as a strategic tool to form students who are morally grounded, spiritually mature, and socially engaged. Using a qualitative-descriptive method, the study analyzes the *Pastoral Guidelines of the Diocese of Malang 2020–2032*, magisterial documents (e.g., *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes*, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*), and key texts on cadre formation, particularly the model introduced by Pater Joseph Beek, SJ. Theologically, the Incarnation (*et Verbum caro factum est*) serves as the foundational paradigm, highlighting God's engagement with the world and affirming the Church's mission in social transformation. The findings reveal that the Diocese's pastoral vision, especially in the area of *martyria* (witness), aligns with the objectives of cadre formation. Strategic programs for Catholic youth already embody principles conducive to leadership development and political engagement. The study concludes that political catechesis within pastoral cadre formation offers an effective and contextually relevant model for student ministry, empowering young Catholics to become "salt and light" for the Church and the nation.

INTRODUCTION

Recent news reports estimate that around 330,000 new university students will begin their studies in the city of Malang (Aminudin, 2022). With such a large number, this will certainly have an impact on the urban life dynamics of Malang's residents. This significant figure needs to be responded to according to each professional field's particular interest.

From a pastoral perspective, this increase in student numbers also affects the patterns, methods, and models of Catholic campus ministry. As students experience life in a new city, with new lifestyles and possible cultural shocks, they still need spiritual support and guidance. At this level, campus ministry takes on a much greater responsibility.

The large number of students and campuses in Malang presents many challenges and problems. On the other hand, there is also an awareness of great potential. One such opportunity is the chance to identify and recruit students who have the capacity to become "salt and light" for the Church and society. This is increasingly important given the growing need for well-formed Catholic lay leaders in society. The Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New

Evangelization has emphasized the importance of targeted or “categorical” catechesis for the faithful (Pontifical Council, 2020). Therefore, this paper aims to contribute ideas on political catechesis within the framework of leadership formation as a pastoral opportunity for campus ministry in the Diocese of Malang. The main questions are: What is leadership formation in the context of campus ministry? And how can this formation become a contextual theological approach?

Prior to this research (between 2015–2022), several studies have already explored campus ministry and leadership formation. Some examples of efforts to build pastoral bridges for students include counseling-based pastoral ministry (Mengi, 2016; Sianipar, 2017). In broader contexts (especially abroad), campus ministry is recognized as a vital means for spiritual development among students. Therefore, all stakeholders—priests, rectors, lecturers, students, and laypeople—should collaborate in developing this ministry (Hayes, 2020). Meanwhile, leadership formation has not been widely researched within Catholic circles. In the broader Christian context, it is often linked to the regeneration of church leaders (Masrina et al., 2021). Most academic studies on leadership formation tend to focus on Muslim student organizations, such as the leadership training of Muhammadiyah Student Association at Univ. Muhammadiyah Parepare (Syam & Amri, 2017), the leadership development in Muslim Student Action Union at Univ. Brawijaya (Fitrianita & Ambarsari, 2019), the concept of leadership training for religious scholars (Assiroji, 2020), leadership character-building programs at Salman Mosque (Najamunnisa et al., 2018), and leadership roles in mosque foundation management (Prayogi et al., 2016), among many others.

In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI – Indonesian Dictionary), the word *kader* (cadre) has two definitions. First, it refers to a commissioned or non-commissioned officer in the military. Second, it refers to a person expected to hold an important role in government, a political party, or similar institutions. The first definition is closely tied to the military sphere, while the second carries a political connotation. This second meaning is similar to how the term “cadre” was used by Communist Parties in the Soviet Union and China around the 1930s, referring to “individual workers, functionaries, and intellectuals affiliated with the party and actively engaged in its policies” (Alaman, 2019: 232). Consequently, *kaderisasi* (cadre formation) refers to the process of forming and preparing individuals to become cadres.

The theological foundation of cadre formation is rooted in the Incarnation of Christ. *Et Verbum caro factum est*—“And the Word became flesh” (John 1:14). By assuming human nature, Christ willingly entered into the very fabric of human life—its joys, sufferings, hopes, and anxieties. Through His birth in Bethlehem, in a lowly and dirty manger, God became in solidarity with the world’s suffering. He chose to be present and to “get dirty” in the painful realities of human existence. God abandoned divine comfort to become involved in the story of universal salvation.

Christ’s coming into the world is also soteriological in nature. He came to save humanity. “I came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). His presence is the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God on earth, which becomes real when human society achieves a state of justice,

peace, and well-being. As Christ Himself said, “I did not come to judge the world, but to save it” (John 12:47).

To be a cadre is to be ready to become salt and light of the world. This is the biblical basis of pastoral cadre formation—aimed at producing individuals who are immersed in the world, yet illuminate it with the light of Christ, especially in a world that often prefers darkness over light: “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.” (Matthew 5:13–15).

Cadre formation is also a response to the Church’s call to seek the common good (*bonum commune*). Every baptized person shares in the same dignity of Christ’s triple mission: priest, prophet, and king (*Lumen Gentium* 10–13). Through baptism and the anointing of the Holy Spirit in confirmation, the faithful are sealed to participate in the priestly mission of Christ in the world in their own unique way. In doing so, they also take part in the prophetic mission—bearing witness to the love of God. This mission is for the benefit of all: “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

Ut omnes unum sint—“That they may all be one” is Jesus’ prayer for His disciples, and likewise for all the faithful. The vocation of cadre formation, particularly in shaping Christian leaders, aims toward unity for the sake of the common good (*Gaudium et Spes* 24–26). This call is echoed in the opening appeal of the Council Fathers: “God, who is the Father of all, wills that all people form one family and treat one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” Since all are created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), God wills that the whole human race, originating from one source, inhabit the entire earth. This expresses the deepest meaning of interhuman relationships. Therefore, cadre formation must be driven by a spirit of unifying people, not dividing them for individual or partisan interests.

The vocation of the lay faithful is one of renewal and love for the sake of the common good (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 7–8). God’s plan for the world is that humanity cooperatively renew and continually perfect the order of society. This mission is carried out through an organized and coordinated apostolate. Given the current situation, it is even more necessary that collective forms of lay apostolate within organizations be strengthened (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 18–21).

In the Indonesian Catholic context, one of the best-known models of *kaderisasi* is *Khalsebul* (*Khalwat Sebulan – One-Month Retreat*), initiated by Father Joseph Beek, SJ (1917–1984). Father Beek defined a cadre as: “A person capable of moving the world; transforming societal conditions with a small group; becoming the backbone of the community; being the core of a social environment; different from the rest; passionately executing what one believes within moral and ethical boundaries; and aware and willing to act as Christ Himself did, descending to the world to redeem His people” (Soedarmanto, 2008: 181–182).

With Father Beek’s definition, the meaning of *cadre* is broadened. It is no longer limited to a militaristic (as a soldier) or political (as a partisan or public official) nuance. Instead, the

emphasis is placed on key characteristics such as leadership, militancy, activeness, courage, readiness, organization, service to the common good (*bonum commune*), and religious commitment. Alaman adds that a cadre is someone who is active and proactive, capable of working with others, committed, wholehearted, full of vitality, ready to be a backbone, and revolutionary (yet not anarchic) in transforming social structures (2019: 232).

According to Father Beek's model of cadre formation, several essential aspects must be emphasized (Soedarmanto, 2008):

1. **Character Formation:** Character is formed through structured daily routines and disciplined life. The schedule includes both spiritual and intellectual activities. Every aspect of the formation process aims to develop cadres with a strong and militant character.
2. **Self-Knowledge:** Self-knowledge is a prerequisite—a *conditio sine qua non*—for personal development. It is the starting point for identifying one's talents, interests, and abilities. With self-awareness, a person can maximize their strengths and accept their weaknesses. They must believe they are unique and gifted because every human being is created in the image of God (*imago Dei*).
3. **Courageous Personality:** A cadre is expected to be courageous, ready to *vivere pericoloso*—to live dangerously. The world is tough and full of challenges. A cadre must be prepared to read the signs of the times and make bold decisions based on balanced and rational discernment.
4. **Willingness to Carry the Cross:** Every Catholic cadre is called to carry the cross. The cross is the instrument of salvation—this is the Christian faith. A cadre must be willing to bear the burdens and sufferings that come with their calling, including their own limitations and those of others. The experience of the cross becomes a means of spiritual and personal maturity.
5. **Ascetic Life:** A cadre must be tough and ready to be in uncomfortable situations. They cannot be lukewarm, but must be either hot or cold—strong and resilient. This toughness is not about being stubborn, but about enduring hardship, being ascetic, and remaining steadfast across time and change.
6. **Breaking Boundaries:** A cadre must be prepared to push beyond personal limitations. Before overcoming external barriers, they must first confront and break through internal mental blocks shaped by past wounds.
7. **Being Salt of the Earth:** Being salt means being immersed in one's context while providing distinctive flavor and meaning. A cadre must not lose their identity amid challenges. They must engage deeply in mission while not being swept away by external pressures.
8. **Community and Discernment:** Discernment is a vital quality for a cadre. They must be able to wisely evaluate the many choices presented to them, distinguishing good from evil with reason and heart. This ability also shapes a person capable of making sound decisions.

9. Mental Readiness for Invisibility: A cadre is not formed to build personal monuments. They must be willing to work without recognition, to serve even in dry, barren fields. Like a palm tree that grows in arid soil (*palma subpondere crescit*), a cadre thrives in difficult environments.

To form cadres with such qualities, a structured process of *kaderisasi* is necessary. This process requires several essential and substantive components, including trained facilitators, adequate material, clear goals and targets, and financial resources (Alaman, 2019, p. 233). Therefore, cadre formation cannot be carried out half-heartedly; it demands thorough preparation both in the short and long term. The need for professional and high-quality Catholic cadres also calls for an equally serious and high-quality formation infrastructure.

Therefore, this research offers a new contribution by exploring how leadership formation can enhance Catholic campus ministry in Malang. Leadership Formation Ministry has great potential to be developed as a key program for campus pastoral care in the Diocese of Malang. The core research questions this paper seeks to answer are: How do political catechesis and leadership formation influence students' understanding of politics and their participation as laypeople? And how do these relate to the vision of the local Church, specifically the Diocese of Malang?

METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative research, carried out through a questionnaire using Google Forms, literature review, and data collection related to leadership formation experiences that have been implemented elsewhere. This study also applies the synthesis model of contextual theology (Bevans, 2002: 161–182).

The synthesis model is a combination of three other contextual theology models: the translation model, the anthropological model, and the praxis model. Another name for the synthesis model is the analogical or dialogical model. This form of theological contextualization is culturally conditioned, drawing from both the positive values of the faith tradition and local culture. Its method involves dialogue with all parties and uses a cross-cultural comparison approach (Bevans, 2002:175).

The Synthesis Model functions as a central bridge that connects three major approaches in contextual theology: the Translation Model, the Anthropological Model, and the Praxis Model. The Translation Model emphasizes the faithful transmission of the Church's doctrinal message, ensuring continuity with the apostolic tradition. The Anthropological Model, by contrast, values the wisdom and positive elements within local cultures, seeking to affirm and integrate them within the life of faith. The Praxis Model focuses on concrete, transformative action inspired by the Gospel, particularly in response to social realities and injustices. At the heart of the Synthesis Model is dialogue—a method that encourages mutual exchange between the faith tradition of the Church and the lived experiences of the local cultural context. This context is not viewed merely as a passive background but as an active and vital source of theological insight. As such, the model is both analogical and dialogical, rejecting rigid dualisms and

instead pursuing a dynamic integration of faith and culture that is both faithful and relevant.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In mid-May 2023, I distributed a set of questions through an online questionnaire (via Google Forms) to participants of the leadership formation program. The purpose of this questionnaire was to explore the participants' perceptions of politics, the relationship between the Church and politics, and the impact of the formation process on their understanding. The results are presented in the following description.

Initial Understanding of Politics Before Leadership Formation

Before participating in leadership formation (*kaderisasi*), respondents revealed a wide range of understandings about politics, which can be grouped into three major themes: critical-negative perceptions, technical-administrative views, and ideal-normative interpretations.

First, many respondents expressed a negative and distrustful view of politics. Politics was perceived as a "dirty" arena, dominated by self-interest and marked by oppression of the marginalized. For these respondents, politics was simply a means for the elite to gain and maintain power, often at the expense of justice and the common good. One respondent described politics as "a gathering place for those seeking power, who use their position to dominate others," while another saw it as "a strategy to achieve goals, often by manipulating others."

Second, several responses reflected a more technical or administrative understanding of politics. In this view, politics is seen as part of the governmental and bureaucratic structure. It includes aspects such as state administration, public governance, political parties, and policy-making. Respondents associated politics with systems and decision-making processes within a country, referring to it as "the science of governance," "rules of the state," or simply "things related to government and public affairs."

Third, a smaller number of respondents expressed an idealistic or normative understanding of politics. They viewed politics as a tool for building justice, promoting welfare, and serving the common good. Politics was described as a dynamic relationship between society and government aimed at creating a better collective future. According to this perspective, politics involves decision-making and action that reflect shared values and goals. One respondent captured this vision by defining politics as "an instrument for achieving justice, prosperity, and the common good."

Additionally, some participants defined politics in academic terms, describing it as "a science that studies the state" or "a process involving individuals, groups, or nations in pursuit of their goals and interests."

Participants' Preliminary Perceptions of Politics before Leadership Formation and Political Catechesis

Before participating in political catechesis and leadership formation, the participants displayed a wide range of impressions and assumptions about politics—many of which leaned toward the negative. A number of respondents associated politics primarily with government and power structures, simply describing it as “government,” “state affairs,” or “something related to political parties.” Some recognized politics as a strategic process aimed at achieving societal goals such as public welfare. However, even among those who acknowledged its ideal functions, there was a clear sense of disillusionment—many believed that politics, in practice, tends to serve the interests of elites or political parties rather than the common good.

A strong theme that emerged from the responses was the perception of politics as inherently corrupt or manipulative. Terms like “dirty,” “cruel,” “oppressive,” “self-serving,” and “deceitful” appeared repeatedly. Several participants noted that their impression of politics was shaped by media portrayals or real-life observations of political corruption, collusion, and nepotism. Some described politics as a space where people seek personal gain, use power to bring down opponents, or manipulate systems for their own benefit.

Despite these dominant critical views, a few respondents expressed more open or even positive perspectives. One participant saw politics as a space to actualize ideas and visions, while another recognized it as a vital process of learning about the law and structures of the nation. There were also nuanced responses that viewed politics as a complex arena involving both benefit and harm, depending on how it is practiced. In this view, politics was neither wholly good nor bad, but a field that demands careful judgment, ethical commitment, and accountability.

Overall, the data shows that before undergoing catechetical and leadership formation, many participants held skeptical or conflicted views of politics—often rooted in real concerns about corruption and abuse of power, but also carrying seeds of curiosity and openness that can be nurtured through theological reflection and pastoral engagement.

Participants’ Preliminary Perceptions of the Relationship between the Church and Politics before Leadership Formation and Political Catechesis

Before participating in leadership formation, participants displayed a range of understandings—some vague, some more reflective—regarding the relationship between the Church and politics. A significant number of respondents expressed uncertainty or indifference, stating that they had not seriously considered the connection, or that the two realms seemed separate and unrelated. For instance, some believed that the Church and politics operate as distinct institutions, with the Church focusing on spiritual matters and politics on power and governance. Others noted that priests or religious figures should not be involved in politics, reflecting a common misunderstanding about the role of clergy versus the laity in political life.

Several participants associated the Church’s role with moral guidance, emphasizing that while the Church as an institution should not engage in partisan politics, it has a responsibility to help the faithful navigate political realities based on Gospel values—such as justice, peace, and the common good. These respondents acknowledged that Catholic laypeople should be

encouraged to participate in political life, guided by the Church's teachings, especially in matters concerning the dignity of human life and social justice.

Others expressed more critical views, suggesting that the Church has shown apathy toward national political issues, or that its voice has not been strong enough in responding to societal injustices. Nevertheless, some recognized the Church's historical role in shaping societies and saw its current involvement—though cautious—as still morally and socially influential. A few responses also reflected a growing awareness that political engagement is an expression of faith in action and a space where Christians are called to witness to their values.

In sum, while the majority of participants did acknowledge a relationship between the Church and politics, their understandings were varied—ranging from confusion and skepticism to awareness of the Church's prophetic and formative role. These mixed perceptions highlight the importance of political catechesis in clarifying the distinct yet interconnected roles of the Church and politics in public life.

Participants' Understanding of Politics after Leadership Formation and Political Catechesis

Following the leadership formation and political catechesis, participants demonstrated a noticeably broader, more mature, and nuanced understanding of politics. Many no longer viewed politics merely as a struggle for power or a space dominated by manipulation. Instead, they began to see politics as a constructive and necessary process for achieving the common good, deeply connected to ethical responsibility and active citizenship.

Several participants described politics as a system of governance in which all citizens, regardless of background, have the right and obligation to participate. They now understood politics as the relationship between society and government, particularly in designing and implementing policies that promote justice, well-being, and human dignity. For some, politics had become a means of public service—a field where love, truth, and responsibility can be actualized, even calling it “a space to embody Christian love in action.”

A number of respondents recognized politics as a tool to respond to societal realities, and even as a realm where Catholics can live out their faith and vocation as Indonesian citizens. One participant emphasized that politics allows Catholics to play a role in building a just and prosperous society, without necessarily becoming partisan. Another reflected that, as Christians, participating in politics means being “salt and light,” even within nationalist political parties that pursue justice and truth.

Others offered more technical definitions, identifying politics as the science of governance, policy-making processes, or a mechanism for shaping public life. Several responses also noted politics' relevance to human rights, environmental concerns, national security, and other key societal issues. Politics was no longer seen simply as a power struggle but as an arena where values, advocacy, and communal aspirations intersect.

Although a few responses remained general or consistent with their previous views (e.g., politics as government affairs), the overall trend revealed a shift toward a more active, positive,

and integrated understanding of politics—one in which lay Catholics are called to participate not as spectators, but as agents of transformation rooted in Gospel values.

Participants' Understanding of the Relationship and Role of the Church in Politics after Leadership Formation and Political Catechesis

After engaging with materials on Catholic Social Teaching and the role of the laity in politics, participants developed a deeper and more reflective understanding of the relationship between the Church and politics. Many acknowledged for the first time that the Church indeed has a mission not only in the spiritual realm but also in the public and social spheres. They began to see the Church as having a legitimate voice in the pursuit of justice, the common good, and moral guidance in political life.

Several participants emphasized that the Church must not remain silent or distant from political realities, especially when it comes to defending the rights of the oppressed and guiding society through ethical principles. Some even stated that the Church “must engage in politics” to liberate people from injustice, while others highlighted the need for the Church to equip young Catholics with the capacity and formation to participate actively in civic and political life.

A significant number of respondents distinguished between partisan political involvement, which they believed the Church as an institution should avoid, and moral-political engagement, which they felt the Church must encourage among the faithful. They recognized the laity, not the clergy, as the primary actors in practical politics—yet expected the Church to provide guidance, moral formation, and spaces for dialogue and education on social issues.

Participants also acknowledged that the Church plays a critical role in shaping values related to justice, peace, human dignity, and social equity, and that these values have a direct impact on political decisions and policies. They saw the Church's function as forming the conscience of its members, helping them to be wise, responsible, and value-driven citizens. Several reflected on historical Church documents such as *Rerum Novarum*, recognizing the Church's long-standing concern with social and political issues for the sake of the common good.

However, some still expressed concerns about the Church becoming too entangled with partisan interests or losing its prophetic voice when it aligns too closely with political powers. They advocated for the Church to remain neutral in party politics while actively advocating for moral and social principles rooted in the Gospel.

In summary, participants' post-formation perspectives show a growing awareness that the Church and politics are not opposing spheres but deeply interconnected. They came to understand that while the Church should not become a political player in the partisan sense, it has a pastoral, prophetic, and educational responsibility to shape the political engagement of the faithful—especially lay people—based on Catholic moral and social teachings.

A Comparative Findings Between Pre- and Post-Formation Understandings

The findings of this study demonstrate a significant transformation in participants' understanding of politics and the Church's role in political life, resulting from their engagement

in leadership formation and political catechesis. Before the formation, participants largely viewed politics with suspicion and cynicism. Politics was often seen as a domain of corruption, manipulation, and power struggles, reserved for elites or politicians with self-serving agendas. Many described it as a “dirty game,” characterized by deceit and oppression, and disconnected from moral or spiritual life. This perception was accompanied by a sense of detachment, where participants, especially as Catholic laypeople, saw little reason or opportunity to engage politically in meaningful ways.

However, after participating in the formation process, participants began to articulate a more nuanced, constructive, and morally engaged understanding of politics. They came to see politics not simply as the pursuit of power but as a space for promoting the common good, justice, and the well-being of society. Politics was reframed as a legitimate and necessary arena for Catholic witness, where faith and public life are not opposed but intimately linked. Several participants recognized politics as a means to actualize Christian values—such as compassion, solidarity, and responsibility—in the structures of society. They acknowledged that political engagement is not optional for the faithful but is, in fact, part of their calling as responsible citizens and believers.

Similarly, participants’ understanding of the relationship between the Church and politics shifted considerably. Prior to the formation, many saw the Church and politics as separate and incompatible spheres. Some believed that the Church should avoid involvement in political matters altogether, while others were unsure of how the Church could or should participate. After formation, however, there was a clearer recognition that the Church, particularly through Catholic Social Teaching, has a role in forming the conscience of its members and equipping them to act ethically in the political sphere. Participants emphasized that while the Church as an institution must remain non-partisan, it must not be silent in the face of injustice. The Church is called to be a prophetic voice that educates, supports, and sends forth the laity to engage in public life grounded in Gospel values.

Most significantly, the formation helped participants rediscover their own identity as lay Catholics not merely as observers, but as active agents of transformation. They came to understand that political participation is not a departure from their faith, but rather a concrete expression of it. The integration of faith and civic responsibility was no longer an abstract idea, but a lived calling to become “salt and light” in a complex and often unjust world. In sum, the leadership formation and political catechesis successfully reoriented participants’ perspectives, empowering them to embrace a more theologically rooted, socially engaged, and mission-driven approach to politics and Church involvement.

Cadre Formation as the Contextualization of Political Catechesis in the Diocese of Malang

The pastoral vision of the Diocese of Malang during the episcopal leadership of Bishop Henricus Pidyarto Gunawan is grounded in the diocesan vision and mission, as outlined in the *Pastoral Guidelines of the Diocese of Malang 2020–2032* (Keuskupan Malang, 2020). In line with the bishop’s motto, *Fideliter Praedicare Evangelium Christi* (“Faithfully Proclaiming the

Gospel of Christ”), the diocesan vision is stated as: “To become a Church that is increasingly evangelical” (Keuskupan Malang, 2020).

This vision is to be implemented through several missions, encompassing structured and progressive methods, paths, and programs. These missions are divided according to the Church’s fivefold ministry: *liturgia* (liturgy/worship), *kerygma* (proclamation), *communio* (fellowship), *diakonia* (service), and *martyria* (witness).

Student pastoral care in the Diocese of Malang does not yet function as an independent ministry unit, although a priest moderator has been assigned to accompany Catholic students in Malang. Nevertheless, the spirit of cadre formation for students aligns with the witnessing mission of the diocese. The general mission of the Witnessing Office of the Diocese of Malang is: “To increase the militancy of the faithful in the task of mission and evangelization within a pluralistic society through the formation and accompaniment of lay apostolic activities” (Keuskupan Malang, 2020: 42).

The realization of this diocesan vision and the general mission of the Witnessing Office is carried out systematically and progressively through programs with specific and concrete goals. Over the next 12 years, this mission will be implemented in three stages to reach its targets. The goals are as follows (Keuskupan Malang, 2020: 42):

2020–2023:

1. To cultivate awareness and zeal among the faithful regarding their identity and mission as Catholics to evangelize and contribute to building Indonesian society based on universal Christian values, Pancasila, and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity).
2. To provide political education for the faithful and special guidance for laypeople involved in civil society organizations or political institutions, holding public office, or working in government agencies, so that they may become witnesses to truth, justice, and honesty.

2024–2027:

3. To actively organize or participate in interreligious and interfaith activities to introduce or manifest the Church’s presence in the collaborative building of society.
4. To develop local social character and cultural heritage, inspired and infused with Gospel and Christian values.

2028–2032:

5. To implement Catholic Social Teaching among all members of the Church and in society—especially in promoting anti-corruption systems and just, fraternal structures.
6. To become an inclusive Church, open and outward-moving, shaping social structures with Gospel values.

All members of the Church—clergy, religious, and laity—are expected to work together to achieve these overarching goals. These general objectives are further formulated into strategic programs, categorized according to the age group of the faithful, from toddlers to the elderly. In relation to campus ministry, these strategic programs are embodied in the target group of Catholic Youth (OMK). The goal is to form young Catholics who are socially integrated in Church and society—active, strong in faith, knowledgeable, and of strong character.

The strategies to achieve these goals are outlined as follows (Keuskupan Malang, 2020):

1. Conduct cadre formation for militant leadership at the neighborhood and parish levels.
2. Organize LKTD (Basic Leadership Training) and provide accompaniment for youth in practical political life.
3. Recruit mentors who can guide youth in learning how to organize.
4. Involve young people in social outreach and community service.
5. Form parish media teams (website, social media).
6. Pay greater attention to inactive youth so they do not abandon their faith.
7. Provide pre-marital courses or accompaniment.

Almost all of these strategic programs designed to fulfill the mission of the Witnessing Office share common goals and spirit with pastoral cadre formation. Both emphasize character and faith formation, not only to strengthen existing faith but also to equip young Catholics to withstand the challenges of modern times. Through cadre formation, it is hoped that graduates will be ready to “go forth” and serve both Church and society.

The aim of pastoral cadre formation is to shape individuals who are militant, ready, courageous, and spiritually rooted—grounded in the core values of both Church teaching and societal needs. As a contextualization of pastoral theology, cadre formation carries the following foundational elements:

1. Sacred Scripture, Magisterium, and Catholic Social Teaching (e.g., *bonum commune*, incarnational spirituality, etc.)
2. National Spirituality rooted in Pancasila and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI)
3. The Vision and Mission of the Diocese of Malang
4. Holistic Personal Formation, including intellectual, psychological, emotional, and personality development.

CONCLUSION

Considering the meaning and noble intention of pastoral cadre formation—namely, to form students with militant character, courage, integrity, spirituality, and more—it is evident that this model is highly suitable for student pastoral ministry. Both the Church and the State are in urgent need of agents of transformation within society. The Diocese of Malang, centered in the city of Malang, is an ideal context for implementing pastoral cadre formation. With the overwhelming number of university students, the need for student pastoral care has become increasingly urgent.

Therefore, this paper concludes that: (1) Political catechesis within the framework of pastoral cadre formation presents a promising and relevant opportunity to be implemented as part of the student pastoral program in Malang, and (2) Pastoral cadre formation is an effective means of shaping Catholic students to become the salt and light for both the Church and the nation.

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