



Perception of Catholic Believers Regarding the Prophetic Role of the Montfortian in the Post-Truth Era

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Abstract: The existence of the church and the growth of the faith of the people are partly shape the Monfortian life. The Montfortian plays an important role in proclaiming the Catholic faith in the Diocese of Sintang, West Kalimantan through their life testimonies, education, and teaching. Therefore, this research aims to understand the perception of Catholic believers regarding the prophetic role of the Montfortian. The research was conducted in 2 Parishes served by the Montfortian, namely the Hati St. Virgin Mary Parish in Putussibau and the Lord's Apparition Parish in Sayut. Both parishes are in West Kalimantan. The respondents numbered 129 people, including youth (Orang Muda Katolik), and parents. Data collection was done using Google Forms, requesting perceptions from Catholic believers in three parishes served by the Montfortian regarding their prophetic role. The methodology used by the author is data analysis using the perspective of the prophetic role in the Catholic view. From the results of this research, the presence of the Montfortian as bearers of the Word of God (prophets) for the people is evident. Then, there needs to be an evaluation and internal sharing for the Montfortian to renew themselves and their calling to repentance continuously. Also, there is a need for dialogue or heartfelt sharing between the people and Montfortian.

INTRODUCTION

Post-truth has become a shocking reality (Hall, 2022). The post-truth era is impacting human life. It's an era where people feel disillusioned with truth. Truth is seen as something unappealing. Post-truth is a term for this new era. *Post-truth* is an adjective that relates to and marks a condition in which objective facts have less influence on shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal beliefs, while the word "post" before it on one side means "after knowledge is known" and on the other side means "truth is no longer relevant" (Jones, 2022). So, the post-truth era is an era of emotional and belief superiority over facts, where truth on one side is assumed to have been found, and on the other side, it is disregarded.

Humans certainly lie all the time. They lie to gain served advantages, to avoid punishment, to escape responsibility, to strike enemies, to impress people. Lies, disregarding facts, relying on strong emotions and subjective beliefs have gained certain honor as a new way to accomplish things in the 21st century (Magnis-Suseno, 2020).

The term post-truth originated from political contexts, particularly during the 2016 United States presidential election. Mentions of "fake news" leaked news during that period. This phenomenon expanded from politics to social realms. Fake news is often associated with the digital age (Waisbord, 2018). The victories of Donald Trump in America and Brexiters (the British people who wanted the UK to leave the European Union) in the British Referendum by manipulating mass emotions and beliefs that disregarded reason and facts.

The post-truth era, which disregards facts and truth, molds the mental and moral character of nations into various negative narratives. The basic principle of post-truth is untruth above all else. The goal of post-truth is nothing but to shake integrity and unity, including shaking human beliefs.

The post-truth era has ushered in a host of complex problems that permeate various aspects of society, ranging from politics and media to education and interpersonal relationships. At its core, the post-truth era is characterized by a disregard for objective facts and the prioritization of subjective beliefs and emotions, leading to a distortion of reality and undermining the very foundations of truth and trust.

One prominent issue stemming from the post-truth era is the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation. With the rise of social media and digital technology, false narratives and fabricated stories can spread rapidly, often masquerading as legitimate news. This misinformation not only misleads the public but also erodes trust in reliable sources of information, such as traditional media outlets and authoritative institutions. Consequently, individuals may struggle to discern fact from fiction, leading to confusion and polarization within society.

Moreover, the post-truth era has exacerbated existing divisions and inequalities, both within and between communities. The manipulation of truth for political or ideological gain has fueled tribalism and extremism, as individuals gravitate towards echo chambers that reinforce their beliefs and values. This echo chamber effect fosters a sense of "us versus them" mentality, hindering constructive dialogue and cooperation across ideological divides.

Another significant challenge posed by the post-truth era is the erosion of democratic norms and institutions. When truth becomes subjective and facts are dismissed as irrelevant, the very basis of democratic governance is undermined. Disinformation campaigns and propaganda can undermine electoral processes, manipulate public opinion, and undermine trust in democratic institutions, threatening the integrity of democratic systems.

Furthermore, the post-truth era has profound implications for education and critical thinking. In an environment where truth is relative and facts are contested, the ability to critically evaluate information and discern reliable sources becomes increasingly important. However, the prevalence of misinformation and the blurring of lines between fact and opinion can hinder efforts to promote media literacy and critical thinking skills among the populace.

The post-truth era presents a myriad of challenges that demand urgent attention and concerted efforts to safeguard truth, integrity, and trust in society. Addressing these problems requires a multi-faceted approach, including media literacy education, regulatory measures to

combat misinformation, and a commitment to upholding democratic values and institutions. Only through collective action can we navigate the complexities of the post-truth era and ensure a more informed, transparent, and resilient society.

In this exploration, the author draws a crucial distinction between traditional prophetic messages, rooted in sacred scriptures and revered as sources of truth by many, and the pervasive influence of the post-truth era, which glorifies falsehoods and undermines the very concept of objective (Pang, 2022). This differentiation is essential in understanding the evolving landscape of truth perception and its implications for prophetic voices.

Traditional prophetic messages, often found in religious texts like the Bible, have long served as guiding principles for believers, offering moral and ethical insights that transcend temporal realities. These messages are grounded in a belief in absolute truths and are seen as immutable sources of wisdom and guidance. However, the advent of the post-truth era introduces a paradigm shift, where truth becomes subjective and malleable, shaped by personal beliefs and emotions rather than objective facts.

In this context, the author highlights the danger of truth being indoctrinated as something unappealing, particularly in the post-truth era where falsehoods are elevated and manipulated for various agendas. When truth itself is marginalized or distorted, it inevitably impacts the perception and reception of prophetic voices. The credibility and authority of these voices may be undermined, as their messages are perceived through the lens of skepticism or disbelief.

Moreover, the glorification of lies in the post-truth era creates a culture where deceit is normalized, and skepticism towards authentic sources of truth, such as traditional prophetic messages, may flourish. This erosion of trust in objective truths further complicates the task of prophetic voices in conveying their messages effectively and persuasively.

In essence, the distinction between traditional prophetic messages and the post-truth era underscores the critical importance of preserving and upholding the integrity of truth in society. It serves as a call to vigilance against the normalization of falsehoods and a reaffirmation of the enduring value of prophetic voices grounded in timeless truths.

So, what about the concept of prophetic voice? The post-truth dogma elevates untruth above all else. While the prophetic voice emphasizes truth above all else. The sharp difference between these two sides creates a problem.

Amos 7:1-10 encapsulates a profound shift from conventional wisdom teachings to a critical confrontation against deceptive falsehoods lurking beneath a veneer of truth. Initially, the text appears to convey a traditional narrative, depicting Amos's visionary encounters and divine warnings, emblematic of wisdom literature found in biblical texts. However, beneath the surface, lies a deeper narrative that challenges the prevailing notions of truth and justice.

As the narrative unfolds, Amos, a shepherd turned prophet, confronts Amaziah, the chief priest of Bethel, who represents the establishment and its purported truths. Amos's prophetic mission transcends the conventional boundaries of wisdom teachings, aiming to expose the entrenched injustices and moral decay plaguing society. Through his confrontational dialogue with Amaziah, Amos unveils the hypocrisy and falsehoods perpetuated by those in power.

The text serves as a poignant reminder of the inherent tension between truth and deceit, wisdom and folly. Amos embodies the role of a philosophical truth-seeker, challenging the prevailing narratives and confronting the deceptive practices masquerading as truth. His prophetic voice becomes a beacon of moral clarity, illuminating the hidden injustices and societal decay obscured by the façade of institutionalized truths.

Furthermore, Amos's narrative underscores the timeless struggle against false truths and the imperative of philosophical inquiry in discerning genuine wisdom. In essence, the text evolves from a mere recounting of visionary experiences to a profound critique of societal norms and institutionalized falsehoods (Ranja, 2023). Amos's prophetic mission exemplifies the philosophical quest for truth, unmasking the hidden realities and challenging the status quo.

In conclusion, Amos 7:1-10 transcends its surface narrative, delving into the depths of philosophical inquiry and moral critique. It underscores the transformative power of prophetic truth-telling in challenging entrenched falsehoods and advocating for justice. Through Amos's confrontation with deceptive truths, the text invites readers to engage in critical reflection and philosophical discernment, ultimately striving for a deeper understanding of truth and justice in society (Wipakthamrongkun, 2022).

This study does not intend exegesis in the narrow sense. This finding is more about the author's personal disposition towards reading phenomena or reality and studying the texts of Scripture. The calling of every member of the church is to be a priest, prophet, and king. This task will be prominent in biblical, namely Amos 7:10-17. In the context of this text, three central figures are highlighted, namely Amaziah (priest), Jeroboam (king), and Amos (prophet). There is a clash (conflict) between Amaziah (priest) and Amos (prophet). This study follows the studies of predecessors.

In the time of Amos, there was social and moral decline, both in Israel and in Judah. The people engaged in much social injustice and spiritual hypocrisy, which concerned Amos, stating that the people of Israel had "sold the righteous for silver" (2:6); meaning in Israel, human trafficking occurred, both men, women, and children were sold into slavery as repayment for debt. Amos did not need much time to see the real situation. His eyes and ears were sharpened by the contents of five visions of corruption and destruction of the kingdom of Israel, so one round of visits was enough to determine the diagnosis: the kingdom and society of Israel were severely ill, the traditional foundation of prosperity was being destroyed by the upper class. For the sake of profit and luxury of the rich and powerful, the self-guarantee of national prosperity, namely the principle of ancestral land protected by traditional law, was being destroyed.

The Book of Amos 7:1-10 is very good at describing how the prophetic voice calls out amidst the grandeur of falsehood. The prophetic voice always faces clashes and rejections. In biblical stories, the central conflict arises when a priest begins to provoke by sending several people to King Jeroboam. This is a problem of justice and morality. Amos emerges as a mouthpiece of God. He is a prophet. The prophetic function is not to carry out institutional functions hindered by various political interests. Amos is capable of overcoming truth itself.

METHOD

The methodology used in this study is hermeneutic method, namely interpreting the meaning of scripture with data or social situations. The verb *hermeneuein* is understood as interpreting a message "from another world" to people or societies facing that message in their own historical-social contexts. Terminologically, hermeneutics is the science and theory of interpretation aimed at explaining the text starting from its characteristics, both objective (grammatical meaning of words and historical variations) and subjective (author's intent). The word hermeneutics indicates the entire area where the *hermeneuein* activity takes place, which consists of at least three main elements: (1) The presence of signs, messages, news that often take the form of texts; (2) There must be a group of recipients who are curious or feel strange about the message or text; and (3) There must be intermediaries close to both sides (Ilyas, 2003).

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here are the results of the perceptions of Catholic believers from the Parishes of the Lord's Apparition in Sayut and the Hati St. Virgin Mary in Tak Bernoda Putussibau. In this study, there were 129 respondents. From the 129 respondents, they were divided into three categories: status, gender, and occupation. Among the 129 respondents, Catholic youth accounted for 63.6%, parents comprised 21.7%, and youth groups (Remaka) were in third place, at 14.7%. In terms of gender distribution, females ranked first at 63.6%, followed by males at 36.4%. Regarding occupation, students occupied the top position at 69.8%, followed by private employees at 15.5%, and teachers/government employees at 11.6%.

From the available data, we can see that the presence of the Montfortian greatly assists the growth of the faith of the people. They initiate mission activities starting from prayer and surrendering themselves to God. Among the 129 respondents, the majority answered that they indeed apply prayer as the initial step in their mission. From 100%, 86% agreed that Montfortian carry out missions starting from prayer.

Based on the released data, almost the majority view the proclamation of Montfortian positively. The author finds it interesting when focusing on some respondents who see things differently. For me, this is something intriguing. In the question about being ready to serve the people, without favoritism, there were 5 people or about 12% who answered negatively. From the question about reading literature about faith or the church, 4 people or about 10% answered not at all. Why does the author bring this up? The prophetic role is not about majority consensus. But what about those who answered negatively? I checked and re-checked; the educational backgrounds of the respondents were also adequate, with teachers and government employees among those who answered not at all.

The church also needs to repent from the top-down pastoral style that characterizes the old-fashioned evangelization, where the church unilaterally replaces native language, customs, ceremonies, and traditions with those of the Western church. This is not meant to diminish respect for the dedication of past missionaries who truly followed it according to the context

of that time, but it is recognized that such a top-down style is no longer relevant to the current situation. The church needs to observe the situation of the people and based on that, proclaim the good news. The truly good news that stems from reality will always be awaited by the people (Tari, 2021).

One example that needs to be emulated is the prophets Amos and Augustine. Augustine wrote in one of his quotes as follows: "By effort, research, discussion, or asceticism, all philosophers try to achieve a happy life. That is the only reason they philosophize. I think, between them and us, Christians, there is indeed a similarity. Because if I ask you, Christians, why you believe in Christ and become Christians, then rightly you would answer: because you want to live happily. The longing for happiness is shared by philosophers and Christians, but not entirely true. I should say: it is shared by all people without exception, whether good or bad" (Irudayaraj, 2019).

Dialog and heartfelt sharing with the people: "If I experience that faith helps me to build my life, to become a mature and whole person, and to address various complex problems in society and the world situation, then I will continue to hold onto that faith..." (Kirchberger, 2007:295). The call to be a prophet, as articulated in Amos 7:10-17, transcends mere verbal communication; it is a profound summons to embody the divine Word in one's being and actions, becoming a conduit for the divine presence in the world. This sacred calling is not limited to ancient times but resonates throughout history, including within the Montfortian tradition of monasticism.

At its core, the prophetic vocation entails bearing the Word of God to humanity. This is not a passive role but an active engagement with the divine will, a commitment to speak truth to power and advocate for justice, righteousness, and compassion in the world. In the Montfortian context, are called to emulate the prophetic tradition by embodying the values of their faith and actively participating in the mission of evangelization.

Central to the prophetic mission is the creation of space for dialogue and heartfelt communication with the people. This echoes the prophetic practice of listening deeply to the concerns, hopes, and struggles of individuals and communities. The prophet does not simply impart divine messages from a position of authority; rather, they enter into genuine encounters with others, cultivating empathy, understanding, and solidarity.

Crucially, the prophet listens without the need to interject or offer immediate commentary. This practice reflects a profound humility and openness to the presence of the divine in the other, recognizing that true dialogue requires receptivity and a willingness to be transformed by the encounter. In the Montfortian tradition, are called to emulate this attitude of humble listening, creating sacred spaces where individuals can express themselves freely and feel truly heard and understood.

Furthermore, the prophet's calm heart signifies a state of inner peace and tranquility, rooted in deep spiritual grounding and trust in the divine. In the midst of tumultuous times and challenging circumstances, the prophet remains steadfast and centered, offering a source of

strength and stability for others. This inner serenity is not passive but an active choice to cultivate a peaceful presence, even in the face of adversity.

The prophetic call to create space for dialogue and heartfelt communication is not confined to formal settings or structured encounters. Rather, it permeates every aspect of the prophet's life, infusing their interactions with authenticity, compassion, and integrity. In the Montfortian tradition, this means embodying the values of humility, simplicity, and charity in all relationships, whether with fellow , laypeople, or society at large (Joseph, 2022).

Ultimately, the prophetic vocation is a sacred trust, a divine commission to be God's presence in the world, to bear witness to the transformative power of love and truth (Sardono, 2023). In the Montfortian tradition, are called to embrace this vocation wholeheartedly, dedicating themselves to the service of others and the realization of God's kingdom on earth. Through their commitment to creating spaces for dialogue and heartfelt communication, they become living embodiments of the prophetic ideal, shining beacons of hope and inspiration in a world in need of healing and reconciliation.

Heartfelt sharing with the people constitutes a cornerstone of genuine openness and connectivity within any community, particularly within religious contexts where trust and understanding are paramount. This profound exchange fosters an environment of mutual respect, empathy, and collaboration, laying the groundwork for meaningful dialogue and collective growth. However, as revealed by the released data, the response to this outreach effort has been nuanced, indicating both areas of resonance and areas of concern.

The data unveiled a striking trend: individuals who disagreed with the perceived prophetic role of the Montfortian were found among both those intimately connected to the monastic community and those distanced from church life (Depa, 2023). This dichotomy underscores the complexity of perception and highlights the necessity of exploring underlying factors that may influence individuals' perspectives. Those closest to the Monfortian, often intimately familiar with their daily lives and spiritual practices, might have higher expectations or more critical assessments of their prophetic role. This proximity can provide a unique vantage point, allowing for deeper insights into the ' actions and behaviors. Conversely, individuals distant from church life may lack the context or understanding to fully appreciate the nuances of the ' prophetic mission, leading to skepticism or disagreement.

Moreover, the assessment that few judged the to display a prophetic role, while seemingly disheartening, offers valuable insights into areas for reflection and improvement within the monastic community. Rather than dismissing these judgments, they should be viewed as opportunities for growth and self-examination. Each dissenting voice represents a potential avenue for dialogue and understanding, a chance to bridge gaps and cultivate greater authenticity and resonance in the ' prophetic witness.

Indeed, it is crucial not to dismiss or ignore such judgments, as they serve as barometers of community perception and sentiment. While it may be challenging to confront criticism, especially from those close to the community, doing so with humility and openness can yield invaluable insights and strengthen relationships. Embracing feedback, whether positive or

negative, is integral to the process of continuous improvement and alignment with the core values of the monastic tradition. In essence, the acknowledgment of dissenting voices underscores the importance of humility and self-reflection within the monastic community. Rather than viewing disagreement as a sign of failure, it should be embraced as an opportunity for dialogue, growth, and deeper connection with the broader community. By remaining open to critique and actively engaging with differing perspectives, the Montfortian can further cultivate an environment of trust, authenticity, and prophetic witness in their interactions with the people they serve.

In conclusion, heartfelt sharing with the people serves as a catalyst for openness and understanding within the monastic community. The recognition of differing perspectives, even those that challenge the perceived prophetic role of the , offers valuable opportunities for reflection and growth. By embracing feedback with humility and openness, the Montfortian can strengthen their prophetic witness and deepen their connection with the people they serve, fostering a community rooted in trust, empathy, and shared values.

CONCLUSION

The post-truth era presents formidable challenges for upholding the values of truth and integrity. In this era, truth is often manipulated and distorted to serve the interests of particular factions or individuals. Despite these obstacles, stand at the forefront of the battle against falsehoods, embodying the prophetic tradition in their commitment to speaking truth to power. Like the prophet Amos of old, Montfortians emerge as modern-day prophets, boldly proclaiming the unadulterated Word of God without compromise or concession to personal agendas.

Central to the prophetic mission is the call to repentance and continual self-renewal. Prophets are tasked not only with delivering divine messages but also with embodying a spirit of humility and introspection. This call to repentance entails an ongoing process of spiritual growth and transformation, rooted in faith and inner conviction. Through self-renewal, prophets cultivate a deeper connection to their faith and a heightened sensitivity to the divine will (Jacobsen, 20180).

Furthermore, dialogue and heartfelt sharing with the people serve as essential components of the prophetic mission. By engaging in genuine dialogue and empathetic listening, prophets can assess the quality of pastoral care and better understand the needs and concerns of the community. This intimate exchange fosters a sense of mutual trust and solidarity, laying the groundwork for authentic relationships and meaningful collaboration in the pursuit of truth and justice (Mayod, 2023).

In conclusion, the post-truth era poses significant challenges for upholding the values of truth and integrity, yet remain steadfast in their commitment to the prophetic mission. Through repentance and continual self-renewal, they embody the spirit of prophetic leadership, speaking truth to power and challenging falsehoods wherever they may arise. By engaging in dialogue and heartfelt sharing with the people, gauge the quality of pastoral care and foster

genuine connections rooted in mutual respect and understanding. In this way, they continue to uphold the timeless values of truth, justice, and compassion in an ever-changing world.

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