



Lenten Repentance in a Participatory-Synodal Journey: Strengthening the Life Orientation of the Priest of the Diocese of Bangka-Belitung

Antonius Moa

Fakultas Filsafat, Universitas Katolik Santo Thomas, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Corresponding Author Antonius Moa	Lenten repentance is a process of renewal of life orientation that does not stop at ascetic practice, but needs to be seen in the way Church ministers build relationships with God, others, and the ministry community. This Community Service activity aims to deepen repentance as metanoia and connect it with participatory-synodal spirituality for the priests of the Bangka-Belitung Diocese. The activity was held in Parittiga, West Bangka Regency, Bangka-Belitung Islands, on March 14, 2023 as part of the South Kevikepan Imam Meeting. The recollection session was attended by 39 participants, consisting of 27 diocesan priests, 3 religious priests, 1 deacon, and 8 brothers. The method of activities includes theological-interactive presentations, deepening the meaning of Lent, personal reflection, synodal dialogue, and afternoon worship. The results of the activities at the process level show the availability of a structured space for reflection, strengthening the understanding of communion, participation, and mission, and the affirmation of repentance as the basis for ministry renewal. This model of recollection is relevant for ongoing coaching because it combines theological foundations, pastoral experiences, community dialogue, and personal follow-up. Keywords: priest; metanoia; Lent; synodality; Pastoral Ministry

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](#) license



INTRODUCTION

Priesthood service requires continuous self-renewal because the quality of the Church's service is determined not only by administrative ability and theological mastery, but also by the depth of a relationship with God, human maturity, the ability to listen, and the willingness to walk with the people. Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis emphasizes that priest formation is an integral process that includes human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions and needs to be continued throughout the life of ministry (Congregation for the Clergy, 2017). In this framework, recollection is not just an additional activity, but a space to reassess motivation, relationship patterns, and service directions.

Lent provides a powerful context for such renewal. Repentance or metanoia does not stop at repentance, but concerns a change in the way we think, judge, choose, and act. Gaudete et Exsultate affirm that holiness grows through patience, gentleness, courage, self-control, prayer, and daily service (Francis, 2018a). For a priest, repentance therefore needs to

Lenten Repentance in a Participatory-Synodal Journey: Strengthening the Life Orientation of the Priest of the Diocese of Bangka-Belitung- **Antonius Moa**

be seen in how to exercise authority, face conflicts, build cooperation, accept correction, and be present to the faithful in an empathetic manner.

Service challenges are also growing along with social and digital cultural changes. The Synod's preparatory document on youth affirms that the digital environment influences the identity, relationships, choices, and discernment processes of the young generation (Synod of Bishops, 2017). Church ministers need to assess how digital communication patterns, speed of information, and reactive tendencies affect the quality of pastoral attendance. Social-emotional maturity, such as self-control, empathy, openness, and cooperation, is related to the quality of relationships and the ability to cope with environmental demands (OECD, 2021).

Synodal spirituality provides a concrete framework for linking personal repentance with ministry renewal. The International Theological Commission (2018) describes synodality as the way of life and action of the Church that is manifested through walking together, listening, participation, and responsibility in mission. The 2021 Synod Preparatory Document places communion, participation, and mission as three interrelated axes in the life of the Church (General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, 2021a). Thus, personal repentance is a prerequisite for synodality, while the synodal process is a space for testing the authenticity of repentance.

This need is relevant for the Bangka-Belitung Diocese which gathers priests, deacons, and brothers from various parishes and communities. The differences in the context of ministry, the geographical conditions of the archipelago, the needs of the people, and the dynamics of the pastoral program demand coordination that is not purely structural, but rooted in communal spirituality. *Christus Vivit* emphasizes the importance of mentoring that respects personal freedom, process, experience, and responsibility (Francis, 2019). This principle can be applied in the ongoing coaching of Church servants so that service evaluation becomes a process of growth, not just an administrative assessment.

Fraternal life is also an important measure of pastoral renewal. *Fratelli Tutti* affirms the culture of encounter, openness, dialogue, and brotherhood as a way to build a common life that goes beyond the interests of the group (Francis, 2020a). *Patris Corde* exemplifies service that is humble, creative, responsible, and does not seek the spotlight (Francis, 2020b). Both perspectives reinforce the understanding that pastoral leadership needs to be built through closeness, service, and a willingness to work together.

The *Vademecum Synod* offers spiritual conversation as a method that combines prayer, listening to experience, speaking honestly, and opening oneself to the movements of the Spirit (General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, 2021b). Pope Francis also emphasized three important actions in the synodal journey, namely meeting, listening, and discernment (Francis, 2021). This approach is relevant for priest recollection because it helps participants not only receive the material, but also process the experience of the ministry and recognize the corrective actions that need to be taken.

Based on this context, this PKM activity is designed as a metanoia-synodal recollection model that moves from deepening faith, examining life orientation, reflection on service experience, dialogue, to personal commitment. The purpose of the activity is to deepen the understanding of Lent repentance, affirm the relationship between personal renewal and synodal journey, provide a space for reflection on the orientation of ministry, and strengthen communion, participation, and mission awareness in the life of the Bangka-Belitung Diocese.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

Location and Participants of the Activity

The activity was held in Parittiga, West Bangka Regency, Bangka-Belitung Islands, on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. The recollection took place at 16.30-18.30 and was the opening part of the South Kevikepan Priests Meeting on March 14-16, 2023. Based on the official attendance list, the activity was attended by 39 participants consisting of 27 diocesan priests, 3 religious priests, 1 deacon, and 8 brothers.

Approach and Method

The program uses a theological, reflective, participatory, and contextual approach. The theological approach provides the foundation of Scripture and the teachings of the Church; a reflective approach helps participants process experiences; a participatory approach opens up a space for listening and dialogue; while the contextual approach connects the theme with the dynamics of the Bangka-Belitung Diocese's services. The Method of Implementation of Activities is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Method of Implementation of Activities

No.	Method	Description
1	Interactive lectures	An exposition of repentance as metanoia and its relationship to communion, participation, and mission.
2	Deepening of faith	Reading of the theme of Lent in the light of the ministry experience.
3	Personal reflection	Examination of life orientation, sources of joy, obstacles, and actions of renewal.
4	Dialogue sinodal	Listening to the experiences of others without judging and processing them in the spirit of discernment.
5	Worship and integration	A combination of material, prayer, togetherness, and self-evaluation.
6	Documentary verification	Review the schedule, attendance list, event news, and resource person certificates.

Stages of Implementation

The stages of the activity start from coordination with the vicarage, identification of needs, preparation of materials, implementation of collection, reflection and worship, documentation, and evaluation of the process. The flow is designed so that coaching does not stop at knowledge transfer, but integrates understanding, prayer, togetherness, and personal commitment.



Figure 1. Flow of PKM Activities Implementation

RESULTS OF ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSIONS

Implementation and Verification of Activities

Administrative documentation shows that the recollection was carried out as scheduled on March 14, 2023 in Parittiga. Official schedules verify the series of activities and session times; the attendance list verifies the number and composition of participants; the minutes contain themes, speakers, institutions, venues, and endorsements; while the certificate confirms the assignment of Antonius Moa, Lic.S.Th. as a resource person. The evidence ensures that the description of the results is based on actual execution, not on assumptions. The documentation and verification function are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Documentation and Verification Functions

Documents	Verification Function	Findings
Activity schedule	Ensure dates, sequences, and durations	The collection took place at 16.30-18.30.
Attendance list	Ensure the number and category of participants	It was recorded that 39 participants signed.
Minutes	Ensure themes, sources, venues, and endorsements	The activity was approved by the vikepan.
Certificate	Ensure the assignment of resource persons	Anthony Moore, Lic.S.Th. Recorded as a resource person.

Process and External Access

The activity resulted in a structured space for reflection on Lent repentance and ministry responsibilities. The material affirms that metanoia is not just a correction of outward behavior, but a change in the center of life orientation from self-interest to God's will and shared service. In the synodal framework, these changes are seen in the ability to listen,

accept corrections, appreciate differences, and place pastoral duties as a shared responsibility.

The placement of recollection at the beginning of the priest's meeting is the strength of the program. Participants are first invited to arrange their mental disposition before entering the study of Church documents, presentation of commission programs, Eucharistic celebrations, and the agenda of the visitation. This structure helps to insulate pastoral planning from technocratic tendencies and affirms that the Church's program needs to be born of mutual repentance and discernment. The composition of participants based on the attendance list is presented in table 3.

Table 3. Composition of Participants Based on Attendance List

Category	Quantity	Percentage	Remarks
Diocesan priest (RD)	27	69,2%	Recorded on the attendance list
Religious priest (RP)	3	7,7%	Recorded on the attendance list
Deacon	1	2,6%	Recorded on the attendance list
Brother	8	20,5%	Recorded on the attendance list
Total	39	100%	All participants signed



Figure 2. Composition of Recollection Participants Based on Attendance List

Discussion

The activity shows that personal repentance and pastoral renewal are inseparable. *Gaudete et Exsultate* place holiness in faithfulness, patience, courage, self-control, and concrete service (Francis, 2018a). In the life of a priest, this value is seen through the willingness to evaluate how to lead, communicate, use authority, and respond to the needs of the people. Recollection becomes effective when spiritual themes are translated into concrete questions about habits and ministry choices.

The synodal framework extends repentance from the personal realm to relationships and missions. The International Theological Commission (2018) affirms synodality as walking together in listening, participation, and responsibility. The 2021 Synod Preparatory Document also places communion, participation, and mission as one unit (General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, 2021a). Therefore, a conversion that does not change the way of relating loses pastoral power, while synodality without inner renewal risks becoming a formal procedure.

Dialogue and reflection in activities support the formation of pastoral wisdom. Wise reasoning includes the ability to consider different perspectives, recognize limitations, and prioritize the common good (Grossmann et al., 2017). When Church servants listen to the experiences of their peers, they learn to see problems not only from the perspective of personal assignment, but from the needs of communities and shared missions. This process

is important in the context of a vicaposition that brings together a wide range of parishes and ministry situations.

Human maturity also determines the quality of the synodal journey. OECD (2021) shows the importance of self-control, empathy, openness, perseverance, and cooperation for the quality of relationships. In ministry, these competencies help priests deal with differences, accept criticism, manage tensions, and communicate defensively. Christus Vivit also reminds that healthy mentoring respects personal freedom, experience, and responsibility (Francis, 2019).

The culture of brotherhood provides a social foundation for a change in life orientation. Fratelli Tutti invites the Church to build a culture of encounter and fraternity that goes beyond the interests of the group (Francis, 2020a). Patris Corde shows a service style that is humble, creative, faithful, and not self-centered (Francis, 2020b). Both documents reinforce the message of recollection that the joy of service grows when servants are able to make room for others and work for the common good.

The Vademecum Synod places spiritual conversation as a means of listening to experience, praying, speaking honestly, and discerning together (General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, 2021b). Pope Francis emphasized meeting, listening, and discernment as the three basic actions of the synodal journey (Francis, 2021). A recollection model that combines materials, reflection, dialogue, and worship has moved in line with this approach, although the impact of behavior change cannot be measured because pre-test, post-test, and post-activity monitoring are not available.

CONCLUSION

PKM activities in the form of Lent repentance recollections have been held in Parittiga, West Bangka Regency, on March 14, 2023 as part of the South Kevikepan Imam Meeting. The activity was attended by 39 participants and verified through the official schedule, attendance list, event news, and resource person certificates. The theme of repentance in the participatory-synodal journey successfully provides a space for reflection that connects personal renewal with communion, participation, and mission. The placement of the recollection before the discussion of the pastoral program confirms that spirituality needs to be the basis for ministry coordination and planning. The activity resulted in process achievements in the form of strengthening the common language, involvement across service statuses, and integration between materials, worship, brotherhood, and pastoral agendas. In the next implementation, the evaluation needs to be complemented by pre-test, post-test, written reflection, and monitoring so that the impact of change can be measured more objectively.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author expressed his gratitude to the Bangka-Belitung Provincial Government, especially RD. Yustinianus Ta'Laleng as the Episcopal Vicar of Bangka-Belitung, the committee of the Southern Diocese Priests Meeting in Parittiga, as well as all priests, deacons, and brothers who participated in the activity. Appreciation was also conveyed to the Faculty of Philosophy of the Catholic University of Santo Thomas for its support for the implementation of community service.

REFERENCES

- Congregation for the Clergy. (2017). The gift of the priestly vocation: Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2017). Nonviolence: A style of politics for peace. Message for the 50th World Day of Peace. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2018a). Gaudete et exsultate: Apostolic exhortation on the call to holiness in today's world. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2018b). Together with young people, let us bring the Gospel to all: Message for World Mission Day 2018. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2019). Christus vivit: Post-synodal apostolic exhortation to young people and to the entire People of God. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2020a). Fratelli tutti: Encyclical letter on fraternity and social friendship. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2020b). Patris corde: Apostolic letter on the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of Saint Joseph as patron of the universal Church. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Francis. (2021). Address for the opening of the synodal path. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops. (2021a). For a synodal Church: Communion, participation, and mission Preparatory document. Vatican.
- General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops. (2021b). Vademecum for the Synod on Synodality. Vatican.
- Grossmann, I., Gerlach, T. M., & Denissen, J. J. A. (2017). Wise reasoning in the face of everyday life challenges. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 8(7), 813–821.
- International Theological Commission. (2018). Synodality in the life and mission of the Church. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). Beyond academic learning: First results from the survey of social and emotional skills. OECD Publishing.
- Santrock, J. W. (2018). Life-span development (17th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Synod of Bishops. (2017). Young people, the faith and vocational discernment: Preparatory document. Vatican.
- Synod of Bishops. (2018). Young people, the faith and vocational discernment: Final document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly. Vatican.