

The Effectiveness of Instagram as a Means of Processing the Faith among Catholic Young People in the Parish of Gedangan Semarang

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Abstract. Instagram is a social media application that is currently being used as a news medium by the Gedangan Semarang Parish OMK. This research uses a mixed method using Google forms and in-depth interviews. This research was conducted in November 2023 with informants as many as 30 OMK Gedangan Semarang Parish who follow the Instagram account "gedanganmuda" with the criteria of being 16-35 years old and not married. The results of this research show that the preaching of faith using the Instagram account "Gedanganmuda" among OMK St. Yusup Gedangan Semarang is not effective. This is based on the results of the regression test showing that only 38.2% and 61.8% are influenced by other variables. By preaching faith through Instagram, it can bring about change, it can provide information, inspiration and motivation for young people, it can be seen anywhere and at any time. Apart from that, it can make people more interested in coming to church, and preaching the faith via Instagram "gedanganmuda" is ideal, however, the content is not opened or there is a lot of other content that is opened.

Keywords: Instagram, Preaching the Faith, Mentoring the Faith, Catholic Young People, Gedangan

BACKGROUND

Young Catholics from the Gedangan Parish, Semarang, use Instagram as a reporting medium. The account is called "gedanganmuda" in this account, users share photos and videos of various activities of Catholic Young People in the Gedangan Parish, Semarang. Instagram is a social media that is very popular nowadays, especially for young people. Gedangan Parish OMK chose to use Instagram to keep up with the times, modern times require OMK to be ready to face challenges. Instagram is a fun image application platform, every content contained in posts from the "gedanganmuda" Instagram account provides knowledge about Saints, information related to youth, daily reflections which are always available every day. So that followers of the Instagram account "gedanganmuda" can see and read about the Catholic faith.

OMK chose Instagram as a reporting medium because Instagram has a positive influence, for example it can be used for socializing, the application is easy to use anywhere and anytime. Apart from that, Instagram can be used as a medium for learning and seeking knowledge. The negative influence of Instagram can be seen in its distribution Fake or fake news can cause a lot of problems and make teenagers believe and be incited by these hoaxes.

Instagram is an attractive social media for young people, its various features and ease of accessing information can be used as a reporting medium. In addition, for the younger generation, Instagram is changing human culture, behavior and ways of communicating. Instagram makes it easy for young people to get information, connect and communicate without the limits of place and time.

In the We Are Social report published on Friday (3/2/2023) by DataIndonesia.id, it is stated that rapid technological advances in today's era have provided many benefits for social progress. One of them is communication. The We Are Social report reports that in January 2023, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 212.9 million, or around 77% of the population, an increase of 3.85% from 205 million in January 2022.

By looking at current trends, the number of internet users in Indonesia continues to increase every year. However, this country's internet users increased in 2017. In addition, the average Indonesian uses the internet for 7 hours 42 minutes per day. In addition, 98.3% of internet users in Indonesia have handheld cellphones. Despite this, Indonesia is still one of the countries where the majority of the population is not connected to the internet. The number of people in the country who are not connected to the internet at the beginning of 2023 is the eighth largest in the world, according to data from We Are Social.

In the Catholic Church, social media such as Instagram is very helpful in preaching in the digital era. The Church proclaims the Word of God following the development of the times as the world becomes more advanced. Images and videos can be used to promote faith among modern teenagers who are familiar with Instagram. By using images posted on social media, such as pictures of saints, a preacher can get people thinking about the lives of the saints. People are invited to reflect on, remember and relive the figure of the saint through image reflection (Young, 2022).

To accompany faith during the process towards maturity, young people always need adults who have authority. The ability to develop generative power, not just the concept of power, conveys authority. All teenagers have the same characteristics. They usually have the ability to understand conceptual concepts (explicit and abstraction), have the ability to see relationships and clarity in systems, perspectives, and reflections, and usually have the ability to accept conceptual concepts. Things are popular and sensitive, and they are responsive to technological and cultural changes (Pratama, Firmanto, and Aluwesia 2021).

Instagram, in particular, as a news platform, has the ability to help teens reflect and affirm their faith. OMK hopes that Instagram can function as a means of preaching faith because it directs users to practice the message of the Holy Bible through concrete actions in their daily

lives. Instagram also allows users to communicate about their faith to gain strength and strengthen their faith. OMK also learns about saints through Instagram (Atmaja, 2020).

THEORETICAL BASIS

Proclamation of Faith

In worldly life, preaching the faith is very important for OMK because many people are irresponsible and think the Catholic faith is just a slogan. Instagram, as a preaching platform, can help children learn about faith and the grace they receive. Apart from that, OMK is not just a congregation that comes and goes to church; everyone has a calling to respond to missionary duties. OMK can carry out the simplest mission, namely realizing and carrying out its obligations to participate in church life.

According to Yohanes Dwi Harsanto (2018), the Church must always renew itself; this is a necessity, not an option. It cannot be denied that the younger generation plays a major role in moving these things forward. According to Yohanes Dwi Harsanto (2018), the Church must always renew itself; this is a necessity, not an option. It cannot be denied that the younger generation plays an important role in renewing the Church. Since Pope John Paul II, the Church has seen youth as an upcoming reality and not just a certain age group. The church must develop a young generation that is critical, active, cheerful and rich in innovation (Lestari and Gaudiawan 2019).

According to Marcel Beding (1997:18), The essence of proclaiming salvation is to proclaim the Gospel (Kingdom of God) to everyone, so that all believers are called to be heralds. What is called proclamation, or evangelization, is bringing the good news throughout the world and changing and renewing humanity from within. Spreading the good news about Jesus to others is the essence of proclaiming the faith (Young 2022).

Young Catholics (OMK) believe that Instagram can be both good and bad for the Church. Opportunities that can be utilized include helping to disseminate information about Church youth activities, facilitating communication between OMKs within the parish and parish, expanding friendships with other Christian young people, and providing inspiration for other OMKs to participate through posting their activities. On the other hand, the dangers posed include encouraging inactive OMK individuals to be harassed and fostering a sense of individualism, especially within OMK associations. (Lestari and Gaudiawan 2019).

Instagram

Likewise, Instagram can upload photos using the internet network, so that the information conveyed can be received quickly. Instagram comes from the word "instant" or "insta", like Polaroid cameras which were previously known as "instant photos". Instagram was first created in San Francisco by Kevin Systrom and Michel "Mike" Krieger from Brazil, who were contemporaries Instagram also displays photos instantly, and gram comes from Telegram, which functions to send messages and upload photos via the internet, which are accessed quickly. (Ansori, 2015).

Instagram is an application that focuses on the experience of sharing photos through social networks on mobile devices. Instagram has reached 100 million active users participating in its activities every month, and 40 million photos are posted every day. Instagram has become very popular because of its focus on easy sharing of photos with friends through various filters. This application is suitable for photo collections because of its attractive and simple appearance and various choices (Efendi et al. 2023).

Faith Assistance in the Digital Era

Faith support is something that young people really need and not more because the friend is better than the person they are with, but because of the supernatural powers they have. Mentoring seems like a good way to track a young person's growth in faith as we grow and develop with others. The younger generation is truly trained and guided to grow and not get lost thanks to mentoring. The demand continues to drive in-depth mentoring and leadership training. Therefore, the younger generation has the necessary strength to organize themselves to face these problems and difficulties in everyday life (Jimmy and Rahawarin 2023).

Trandandae Catechism no. 18 states in the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II in 1979 that "catechesis is the formation of children, youth and people to maturity in the faith, including in particular the transmission of Christian teachings, usually managed in an organized and systematic manner, with the aim of guiding the listening community into a complete Christian life. The digital world is entering all aspects of human life quickly. This digital flow has the greatest impact on the younger generation. The advancement of the digital world allows many tempting offers to enter young people's lives quickly (Jimmy and Rahawarin 2023).

Currently, young people are also a very important group in society. Young people need more attention and help as they face the challenges of the modern world. Remember that current technological advances may result in a decrease in social emotions and an increase in

individualism. To face today's challenges, the younger generation is increasingly being asked to think logically and critically. It is not surprising that its creation is often dominated by self-pride, until it ultimately sinks into personal selfishness (Jimmy and Rahawarin 2023).

Catholic Young People

The KWI youth commission said that young Catholics who fall into this category are those aged between 16 and 35 years. This is because at this age young Catholics are experiencing psychological development. In addition, the age 16-35 years shows that Catholic youth consists of teenagers, so they are of working age (Sinta 2023).

According to Nugraha, young people are people who are going through a transition process from childhood to adulthood. This is the most decisive period in a person's growth emotionally, morally, spiritually, and physically. Nowadays, it is very possible for someone to experience major changes in a short period of time. In addition, human personality develops along with the direction towards maturity (Jaya, et al, 2021).

The Church's View of Young Catholics

Catholic Young People is a forum that brings together Catholic youth to continue to be a religious community that serves God and others. In the process of reaching maturity in their faith, Young Catholics face many problems. They are educated to assume responsibility as members of society and members of the Church (Koten, 2021).

Every The person who is baptized becomes part of the Church and carries out the Three Missions of Christ: Priest, Prophet, and King. As members of the Church, young Catholics have a responsibility to sanctify their lives, especially by participating in the sacraments and praying. In addition, they are obliged to serve fellow human beings according to their royal dignity, and to preach the Gospel according to their royal dignity(Koten, 2021).

According to the Dogmatic constitution Lumen Gentium in (Hardawiryana, 2002: 347), the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Confirmation are two other sacraments of initiation of grace, then escalate this task. People who have surrendered themselves to Christ and received the miraculous cleansing of the Holy Spirit are called and prepared to produce the fruit of the Spirit within themselves. This is because VaticanII stipulates that every young Catholic who has been baptized takes part in the duties of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ by performing spiritual worship to glorify God and save humanity.(Koten, 2021).

Living Situations in the Digital Era

Paul II stated the need for the Church not only to utilize digital means for preachers of the Good News, but also to use these means to establish encounters between the news of the Good News and the culture created in this digital era (Sugiyono, 2015:13).

During this period, spiritual services are usually more conventional, meaning believers are present in person to receive them. However, this kind of service model must be adapted to the developments in the circumstances and conditions of the faithful in today's digital era, which presents special challenges for the Church (Jehaut and Maigahoaku, nd).

Pope John Paul II highly valued technological media, as did previous leaders of the Catholic Church. According to him, the media is "the first Areopagus of modern times," and using it "is not enough just to spread the Christian message and the authentic teachings of the Church."

According to Coalan & Martini (2019), the Catholic Church supports the presence of modern information technology, such as the internet and social networks. This is linked to the Church's great contribution to the faithful, especially in terms of spreading religious values. Catholic Church leaders encourage the use of social media to proclaim Christian faith on a daily basis and placing religion at the center of society's attention (Jehaut and Maigahoaku, nd).

In the *Inter Mirifica* (IM) Document of the Second Vatican Council, the Church explicitly stated its response. Pope John Paul, together with all the bishops throughout the world, sought to help the Church develop according to the demands of increasingly modern times. *Inter Mirifica* actually appeared on December 4, 1963. The Church wants through *Inter Mirifica* to invite people to realize the benefits of various forms of social communication to refresh the heart and develop the mind, so that their human dignity becomes more visible and develops.

Additionally, the church recognizes that humans can misuse the medium against the Creator's intentions and distort it, which can lead to destruction. Even her motherly heart felt anxious and sad seeing the losses often caused by her abuse.

The focus of the *Inter Mirifica* Decree Article 2 above consists of two objectives. The first is an invitation for believers to take advantage of advances in science and technology, especially through means and media for evangelization or kerygmatic communication (preaching). As believers, the Church recommends that we use communication media

secondarily. The Church is aware of the fact that advances in communication technology have entered and penetrated religious life. means (tools) to spread the Gospel and expand the work of the Church.

This invitation prioritizes communication. Next, Pope Paul VI's Encyclical on *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) in 1975. This discussed evangelization and emphasized the importance of all Christians—not just ordained priests—in spreading the Catholic religion. The *Nuntiandi* Council was born on December 8 1975 and aims to show the Church's concern about the changing circumstances and conditions of the world, especially the rapid development of information and communication technology today. The Church continues to look for ways to adapt methods of proclaiming the Gospel to circumstances, places and cultures so that they remain effective in conveying the Gospelmessage to everyone.

And John Paul II's Encyclical on *Redemptoris Missio* (RM) was born on December 7 1990, the Pope began by stating his belief in the "importance of missionary activity" emphasizing missionary activity which is specifically directed towards the nations. And since 1967, every year the Holy Father has given a Pastoral Letter on the occasion of World Social Communication Day. What was started by Pope Paul VI was continued byPope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis (Sugiyono, 2015:37).

From the message made by the Pope, Look at how the Church treats the development of digital media. Regarding these developments, the church did not remain silent. The Church is aware that the advancement of media has had an impact on everyone,including people who believe in God. Media influences many things, not just media use;they influence people's feelings, mentality, behavior and culture. As the leader of the Church, the Pope expresses his pastoral attitude (Sugiyono, 2015:37).

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this writing is a mix method research method. By combining two research approaches, namely quantitative and qualitative, in research activities, the data obtained will be more comprehensive, valid and objective.(Nia and Loisa 2019).

The type of data in this development is player data. Preliminary data is data obtained directly from the first hand which is collected directly from the source. This data was obtained from the results of the questionnaire. The subjects of this research were 30 people from OMK Santo Yusup Gedangan Semarang. Data sources obtained from questionnaires, interviews and

observations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on research results, Instagram is used as a medium to spread faith at OMK Santo Yusup Gedangan Semarang. Preaching of faith at St. Yusup Gedangan has involved OMK. They are people who have school, college and work activities. Of course, they also have their own hobbies and interests that need to be channeled.

Furthermore, the proclamation of faith via Instagram can also be seen in the regression test which shows that the influence of Instagram use on the proclamation of faith is 38.2%. From the results of the regression test, when linked to standard measures of effectiveness, it can be concluded that preaching faith using Instagram is not effective if it is less than $< 40\%$ and is effective if the regression test results reach $\geq 80\%$.

Then from the strengths and weaknesses of Instagram "gedanganmuda" for preaching faith. With the growing progress of the times, Instagram can be used as a mass communication tool, to inform about OMK Gedangan activities, mentoring and preaching the faith. Instagram social media helps church creativity to proclaim the news of salvation, namely the Gospel. OMK realizes that Instagram's advantages can be used to disseminate information quickly and easily, but its weaknesses also include the spread of fake news. Apart from that, specifically making people spend more time in front of the screen, there are OMKs who spend more than 6 hours.

And also according to the Gedangan Semarang Parish OMK, the ideal of preaching the faith using Instagram is ideal. OMK also gave an opinion on the Instagram they use to communicate, interact without meeting. OMK lives in the current era to be able to keep up with digital advances, Instagram as a forum, so that there is information about activities related to OMK, then what young people need, such as Bible verses so that young people see and can live out that faith.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research, preaching the faith using Instagram in Gedangan Parish, Semarang, is not effective. However, it is ideal, even though as time advances, there are more and more challenges in using Instagram social media which can be a threat at the same time for OMK, the large amount of content circulating, without any content filtering. Instagram is a social media platform that allows the dissemination of information quickly and easily. In the "Gedanganmuda" Instagram account, based on the content shared, it contains daily

devotions, knowledge about Santo/Santa and then there are also activities carried out by OMK Gedangan itself. The hope is that this post can attract other young people to grow and develop in their faith.

Preaching of faith at St. Yusup Gedangan has involved OMK by using Instagram to reach out or share all information that is easy and can attract other people who are interested in coming to Church, then it is for the Church to keep up with the current era to be able to keep up with digital progress, then the Church also takes part to be able to provide effectiveness for young people's activities as a reporting medium. And most importantly as a forum for OMK in information media. They are people who have school, college and work activities. Of course, they also have their own hobbies and interests that need to be channeled.

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