



Various Cultures and One Compassion: Study of the Principles of Unity of Candidates of Priests at Fermentum Major Seminary in Bandung, West Java

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>Candidate of priest; Cultural diversity; Major seminary; RFIS; Unity of vision.</p>	<p>This research discusses the cultural differences of each candidates of priest at Fermentum Major Seminary. Cultural differences are a challenge for efforts to unify the vision with the Fermentum Major Seminary formation program. By using the unifying elements offered by the RFIS document, the candidates of priest create unity among community members with an attitude of 'Silih Asih'. 'Silih Asih' is a Sundanese philosophy that continues to be lived by the people of West Java. This research uses empirical research methods, observations, a logical thinking framework which is manifested in a sequence of narratives, descriptions and analysis. This method is complemented by literature study. Empirical research was carried out using short interviews to find out valid data from each members regarding their place of origin and ethnicity, pastoral care together with the congregation. As a result, good and correct processing is needed in dealing with these differences. The element of unity offered by the Church's document <i>Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis</i> (RFIS) and the Guidelines for the Formation of Candidates for Priests in the Bandung Diocese help the candidates of priest to find unity of vision with the seminary institution and the pastoral vision of the Bishop of Bandung. The development of an attitude of compassion must be carried out and lived by members at the Fermentum Major Seminary of the Bandung Diocese.</p>
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received 2024-04-23 Revised 2024-03-18 Accepted 2024-06-20</p>	<p>ABSTRAK</p> <p><i>Penelitian ini membahas perbedaan budaya di antara para calon imam di Seminari Tinggi Fermentum. Perbedaan budaya menjadi tantangan dalam upaya menyatukan visi dengan program pembinaan di Seminari Tinggi Fermentum. Dengan menggunakan elemen pemersatu yang ditawarkan oleh dokumen Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis (RFIS), para calon imam menciptakan kesatuan di antara anggota komunitas melalui sikap Silih Asih. Silih Asih adalah sebuah filosofi Sunda yang terus dihidupi oleh masyarakat Jawa Barat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode</i></p>

penelitian empiris, observasi, dan kerangka berpikir logis yang diwujudkan dalam rangkaian narasi, deskripsi, dan analisis. Metode ini dilengkapi dengan studi literatur. Penelitian empiris dilakukan dengan wawancara singkat untuk memperoleh data valid dari setiap anggota mengenai tempat asal dan etnisitas mereka, serta pelayanan pastoral bersama umat. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa diperlukan pengelolaan yang baik dan tepat dalam menghadapi perbedaan tersebut. Elemen kesatuan yang ditawarkan oleh dokumen Gereja Ratio Fundamentalibus Institutionibus Sacerdotalibus (RFIS) dan Pedoman Pembinaan Calon Imam di Keuskupan Bandung membantu para calon imam menemukan kesatuan visi dengan institusi seminari dan visi pastoral Uskup Bandung. Pengembangan sikap welas asih harus dilakukan dan dihidupi oleh para anggota di Seminari Tinggi Fermentum Keuskupan Bandung.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Fermentum Major Seminary is an educational institution for candidates of priests in Diocese of Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. Referring to the document for formation of candidates of priest, '*Pastores Dabo Vobis*' art. 60 (Yohanes Paulus II, 1992) seminaries are places of formation established by bishops in order to provide facilities for those called by God to serve the people as apostles. It is this appreciation of the unified experience of faith with the apostles that then directs those who are called to the task of serving as priests. Therefore, every diocese, if possible and beneficial, should build a major seminary (Code of Canon Law [CIC] canon 237 §1). The Major Seminary is a place of adequate spiritual formation for those who are called to be priests (CIC canon 235 §1). The vocation (Heuken SJ, 2004, p. 78) of priestly life cannot be separated from the concept of attachment between God and humans. God calls and humans respond. So, calling is always based on these two attitudes, namely, calling and responding. The call to priesthood is a choice that is not easy and requires seriousness from a person who is called. Those who feel confident about their calling then enter the seminary and try to live out that calling with various kinds of dynamic processing offered by major seminaries (Heuken SJ, 2004, p. 202).

Fermentum Major Seminary is a place for training prospective diocesan priests for the Diocese of Bandung which was initiated by Bishop Alexander Djajasiswaja. The Fermentum Major seminary is a sign of Bishop Djajasiswaja's love, concern and hope for the development and sustainability of Bandung Diocesan Priests in the future. Fermentum Major Seminary provides a place and opportunity for those who are called to get to know the God who called them, to recognize the depth of themselves, their vocation, to recognize their generation and community friends, and to recognize their chosen diocese (Seminari Tinggi Fermentum, 2015, p. 6).

Fermentum Major Seminary continues to develop over time. Fermentum Major Seminary succeeded in bringing diocesan priests to the people of God in the Bandung Diocese. These priests are the shepherds of God's people and strive to develop the Church of the Bandung Diocese in accordance with the direction and hopes of the Bishop of Bandung. Likewise, after the leadership of Bishop Djajasiswaja, Fermentum Major

Seminary continues to develop according to the situation that occurs. Candidates for priest experience ups and downs from year to year. In a certain year there are quite a lot of seminarians who register with *Fermentum*, but in the following year, the number of seminarians who register may be small. This situation continues to be felt as an event of grace and an endless effort to produce priests for the sustainability of the Bandung Diocesan Church (Seminari Tinggi *Fermentum*, 2015, p. 9).

Over that time, *Fermentum* Major Seminary now has quite a large number of seminarians. In the 2023-2024 Academic Year, *Fermentum* Major Seminary members from Propaedeutic Year level to highest level numbered 42. This number seems to show that the interest of young people who feel they are called to become Bandung diocesan priests has increased since the founding of *Fermentum* Major Seminary. In a seminary, candidates of priest certainly do not only come from one place or region, but can be very diverse. Those who feel called have one common goal, to become priests. However, they need to be aware that when they enter seminary, they bring their own motivations or cultural backgrounds. Diversity in seminaries can be unique, as well as a challenge for seminarians in dealing with cultural differences (Ninik Sri Rejeki, 2007, p. 147).

The situation of cultural diversity at *Fermentum* Major Seminary cannot be separated from the context of the Indonesian people who work with ethnicity, culture and language. Indonesia has thousands of tribes spread throughout its territory. It is not surprising that there are so many differences regarding language, ethnicity and culture. However, these differences can be united through religion. Religion is a tool to unify the nation (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 56). Religion is a means of building relationships and seeking tolerance among its people. Religion allows tribes to unite in one belief, so that differences are no longer a problem but are truly a blessing that can enrich each other and promote a sense of tolerance for each other.

It becomes clear that cultural diversity is not a problem if it can be addressed well, upholding an attitude of mutual respect, love, and considering diversity as both a wealth and a personal limitation, so that a complementary attitude is needed between these cultural differences. This is what is also sought in the process of vocational life in major seminaries. It is hoped that the candidates of priest will be able to bring the light of tolerance to their members, foster a sense of togetherness and brotherhood because of one common goal, and treat differences not as a problem but as a blessing that needs to be developed and maintained together (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 98).

What is unique is that at the *Fermentum* Major Seminary there are forty-two candidates of priest who do not only come from the Bandung area and its surroundings. They come from various regions in Indonesia with all the various cultures that accompany them. The cultural diversity that colors the life of the *Fermentum* Major Seminary community also provides a form of processing or coaching dynamics that is also unique. Why is that? Each candidate of priest has a cultural background, place of origin, and also customs that have been lived by since birth. When they enter the *Fermentum* Major Seminary, they encounter other cultures, other customs that can be very different. Of course, this is a challenge that is not easy for the lives of the candidates of priest in living their life of formation.

They are faced with cultural situations that they may have never encountered before, but in processing their vocations at major seminary, they are challenged and required to be able to overcome cultural differences, find solutions to each other so as not to experience conflict, and strive to respect each other. Likewise with the cultural culture of *Fermentum* Major Seminary in the West Java region, the candidates of priest have to adapt to Sundanese culture, in fact they are integrated into Sundanese culture. The challenges of differences can present problems in the dynamics of processing prospective priests. Differences often mean uncomfortable

situations, giving rise to confusion about how to act, not being free to communicate, and even the inability to face conflict because differences can be very contradictory.

Fermentum Major Seminary tries to respond to this cultural diversity by promoting a sense of tolerance between its members. Fermentum Major Seminary provides an open opportunity for each member to get to know each other, along with their personal and ethnic backgrounds. Apart from that, the seminary carries out joint personality processing for newly admitted members so that they have an inventory regarding their situation, the situation of their classmates and also related to emotional wounds that could trigger disputes in community life. Fermentum Major Seminary is open to the cultural diversity of its members. The hope is that in the future or when carrying out pastoral work with people and society, they can realize a sense of tolerance regarding cultural diversity.

This difference is what the candidates of priest at Fermentum Major Seminary are trying to process. Cultural diversity, which presents differences, needs to be addressed together so as not to cause conflict that originates from misunderstanding or lack of knowledge of each other. Fermentum Major Seminary is a place that provides sufficient opportunities for seminarians to get to know their classmates and the community of their older brothers. Fermentum Major Seminary as an educational institution for prospective priests, tries to provide structured and planned assistance. Mentoring and processing are summarized in four dimensions of formation, namely personality, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. These four dimensions are guidelines for the formation of priestly life offered by the document '*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*' (RFIS) (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 16). The dimensions of formation serve as a guide for seminarians in undergoing the dynamics of vocation processing at Fermentum College Seminary.

When deciding to enter the Fermentum Major Seminary, the candidates of priest cannot choose friends according to their wishes or friends from the same background. When they enter seminary, they inevitably have to deal with classmates and community situations that they may have never imagined before. They must adapt to the situation of the community and the class by first exploring personality development at the Propaedeutic Year level. Fermentum Major Seminary helps direct the previously different visions of the seminarians' vocations, towards the shared vision of the Bishop of Bandung, Bishop Antonius Subianto Bunjamin OSC '*Ut Diligatis Invicem*' – So that you love each other, is a vision that must be developed and lived by members of Fermentum Major Seminary.

This is related to the pastoral direction of the diocesan priest who helps the Bishop of Bandung's vision. So there is a match between the vision of the Fermentum Major Seminary and the vision of the Bishop of Bandung. This unity of vision with the Bishop of Bandung directs the candidates of priest to unite their goals and process their vocational life. Those who initially brought personal motivation with the culture that accompanied them, entered the Fermentum Major Seminary with the vision of the training offered, then were united with the same goal, namely the priesthood and helping the pastoral work of the Bishop of Bandung, especially developing a Church that loves each other (Seminari Tinggi Fermentum, 2015, p. 24).

This research discusses the cultural differences of each candidates of priest at Fermentum Major Seminary, the unification of vision with the Fermentum Major Seminary formation program, the unifying elements offered by the RFIS document. Finally, how do the members of Fermentum Major Seminary try to strive for unity among community members, and efforts to create a seminary that prioritizes the attitude of '*Silih Asih*'. '*Silih Asih*' is also part of Sundanese philosophy which continues to be lived by the people of West Java, especially the Sundanese tribe. Therefore, the members of Fermentum Major Seminary strive to achieve this attitude of compassion both within the seminary community and in their pastoral duties with the congregation (Seminari Tinggi Fermentum, 2015, p. 25).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses empirical research methods, observation, logical thinking framework (narration, description, analysis), and literature study (Djunatan et al., 2024). The research links this research method with the real situation that occurred at Fermentum Major Seminary. Empirical research is carried out by means of short interviews or asking questions about the region of origin of each candidates of priest and the tribe that accompanies him. Empirical research was carried out to find out valid data from each the members of Fermentum Major Seminary regarding place of origin and ethnicity. In this way, data is obtained regarding the cultural diversity of each seminarian. The observation method was based on the experience of the author who has undergone processing dynamics at the Fermentum Major Seminary for approximately eight years. This experience is important data for observing the lifestyle, relationship style, and habits of each seminarian, so that we can find the results of the cultural diversity of the candidates of priest who truly embody a unified vision with Sundanese culture, especially prioritizing the spirit of 'Silih Asih' or mutual love (Semnari Tinggi Fermentum, 2015, p. 23).

The logical thinking framework in this research is intended to see the relationship between the cultural diversity of candidates of priest in Fermentum Major Seminary and the dynamics of processing offered by Fermentum Major Seminary, whether it is appropriate and provides sufficient facilities to accommodate this cultural diversity, whether elements of unity have been implemented at Fermentum Major Seminary, and looking for conclusions regarding the extent to which the dynamics of processing by Fermentum seminarians are directed towards the vision of the Bishop of Bandung which is also in line with one of the practices of Sundanese philosophy, namely 'Silih Asih'. This research provides a description of the processing dynamics that occur at Fermentum Major Seminary, as well as providing information to readers. Furthermore, this research provides an analysis related to the research theme, whether the Fermentum Major Seminary is truly a place for developing priest candidates that unites them with their various cultures, whether the seminary has also directed candidates of priest to be more united with the spirit of charity which is the pastoral motto of the Bishop of Bandung (Semnari Tinggi Fermentum, 2015, p. 14). This research also uses a library study method using several reference books on the formation of prospective priests and Church documents, specifically the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (RFIS). Several book and journal sources related to the dynamics of processing prospective priests, efforts to reconcile differences due to cultural diversity, will be used to complete the data in this research.

Thus, this research method is also mixed, using qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative method because the author will use phenomenological research. Researchers will make observations, direct exploration of the author, analysis of related events or analysis of someone's habits. Apart from that, the author's experience of undergoing processing dynamics at the Fermentum Major Seminary can also be used as supporting data. The author will also use ethnographic methods by comparing or adapting the habits of a group of Sundanese people in general through observations based on experience. Quantitative method because it will use short interviews or asking questions directly to seminarians who are undergoing processing at Fermentum Major Seminary as a data collection technique. The number of seminarians with the data obtained can be valid data because it is based on direct answers from each candidates of priest. This research method is intended to find complete, correct and valid data so that it can answer the problem formulation of this research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Profile of the Fermentum Major Seminary

The Major Seminary is a place of education for prospective priests or seminarians at university level (Heuken SJ, 2004, p. 96). Fermentum Major Seminary was born from the concerns of the Bishop of Bandung at that time, Bishop Alexander Djajasiswaja because there was no major seminary to train prospective diocesan priests. He felt that it was appropriate and time for the Bandung Diocese to have a major seminary for prospective diocesan priests. So, in 1985, Bishop Djajasiswaja sent a letter to the 'Propaganda Fidei' Congregation at the Vatican asking for help with the costs of establishing a tertiary seminary (Panitia Perayaan 80 Tahun Keuskupan Bandung, 2012, p. 12). An answer was never received from the Propaganda Fidei Congregation, instead in 1986, an answer came from the German Bishops' Conference which expressed its willingness to assist the Bandung Diocese in establishing a higher seminary (Viktorahadi, 2017, p. 26). Bishop Djajasiswaja immediately sent a design of the building which was planned to be built on Suryalaya Sari street No.5, Bandung. This place was chosen because at that time it was the only land belonging to the Bandung Diocese that had no problems. Then the construction process was handed over and given responsibility to Father van Iperen OSC (Panitia Perayaan 80 Tahun Keuskupan Bandung, 2012, p. 194).

The seminary building was not yet completely finished, but on April 1 1987, the seminary began to be occupied by candidates of priest. On the occasion of discussion with the community, Bishop Djajasiswaja asked the members for their opinions and suggested names for the seminary. After much discussion and consideration, the name 'Fermentum' was chosen. This term was obtained from the final quote from the Pope's letter appointing the Bishop of Bandung. Then this name was used as the name of the Bandung Diocese Major Seminary. In Indonesian terms, 'Fermentum' is defined as yeast (Viktorahadi, 2017, p. 31). Bishop Djajasiswaja hopes that in the future priests can become yeast for the congregation and many people, able to become leaven in the Church's pastoral work with the congregation and the surrounding community. The Bishop also emphasized the message that seminarians need to continue to live up to the spirit of service based on 'market' pastoralism, involving themselves directly in the wider community (Panitia Perayaan 80 Tahun Keuskupan Bandung, 2012, p. 198).

Bishop Djajasiswaja is very concerned about the lives of prospective priests. As evidenced in his visits to parishes in the Bandung Diocese, he emphasized that one of the duties of a bishop, order, congregation, order or diocese anywhere is to develop and prepare a line of diocesan priests as the backbone of the diocese in the future (Panitia Perayaan 80 Tahun Keuskupan Bandung, 2012, p. 201). So to realize the Bishop's wishes and hopes, Fermentum Major Seminary chose Saint John the Baptist as the patron of the seminary. With the example and enthusiasm of John the Baptist, it is hoped that the candidates of priest can open the way for people to salvation in God, as well as for them to be increasingly useful for the Church and surrounding society.

During its development, the major seminary on Suryalaya Sari street was no longer able to accommodate the number of seminarians. So Bishop Djajasiswaja thought about looking for another place that would better meet these needs. With the help of figures who could help implement his vision, Bishop Djajasiswaja formed the Building Committee for the new Fermentum Major Seminary. Then the committee bought land near Husein Sastranegara Airport, precisely in Citepus village. Bishop Djajasiswaja asked Father Y.B. Mangunwijaya to design the drawings for the Fermentum Major Seminary building in Citepus (Viktorahadi, 2017, p. 78). Father Mangunwijaya expressed his impression of the uneven contour of the Citepus land, making it good for building a seminary with a unit system. This unit form later became the specialty of the Fermentum Major Seminary in Citepus village. The unit form enables the residents to get to know each other, work together, know their weaknesses and limitations, complement each other, and be more intense in their relationships with each other (Panitia

Perayaan 80 Tahun Keuskupan Bandung, 2012, p. 201). The unit system will be able to accommodate up to eight seminarians per unit.

Construction of the Fermentum Major Seminary building in Citepus began on November 11 1994. As time went by, various obstacles were faced, but construction continued. On August 12, 1995, the seminary building had not been completed, but due to urgent circumstances, it forced the seminary to be occupied immediately. The candidates of priest began to occupy the Citepus village building. In this way, they began to adapt and socialize with the community around Citepus village. Finally, on November 15 1997, the Fermentum Major Seminary building of the Bandung Diocese, located in the village of Citepus III, was officially blessed by the Archbishop of Semarang, Bishop Ignatius Suharyo, accompanied by the Bishop of Bogor, Bishop Michael Cosmas Angkur OFM, and Bishop of Bandung, Bishop Alexander Djajasiswaja (Seminari Tinggi Fermentum, 2015, p. 6). Thus, the Saint John the Baptist Fermentum Major Seminary in Citepus has become a place for training prospective priests for the Bandung Diocese to this day.

b. Unifying Elements in the dynamics of Fermentum Major Seminary

In the dynamics of vocation processing at Fermentum Major Seminary, the RFIS Church document specifically explains four dimensions of formation that can help the seminarians' processing process. These four dimensions are the human dimension, spiritual dimension, intellectual dimension, and pastoral dimension. These dimensions of formation enable seminarians to discover who they are, establish a close relationship with the God who called them, and get closer to the image of Christ who was sent by the Father to carry out His plan of salvation and love (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 98).

Through the four dimensions of formation, seminarians are introduced to the same processing as one another, harmonized and unified with a shared vision of life which becomes the unifying elements in life's vocation. You need to realize that the call processing process is a journey, nothing is done once or forced to change. Training for the candidates of priest must be given in stages according to the level or level that they undergo each year. There are visions and goals to be achieved together at every level of coaching. At Fermentum Major Seminary the candidates of priest must undergo training from the Propaedeutic Year level, Philosophical Studies Level, Pastoral Orientation Year Level, and Theological Studies Level. The division of levels also emphasizes that at each level, there is a process that is certainly different, as the levels increase, the shared vision and goals towards the priesthood will be increasingly directed to be achieved in accordance with the targets that have been formulated in the Guidebook for the formation of prospective priests at Fermentum Major Seminary, Bandung Diocese (Viktorahadi, 2017, p. 89).

According to RFIS, personality dimensions are the main basis for the entire process of developing prospective priests. In this dimension, seminarians cultivate physical, psychological health (being able to control themselves, emotional balance, healthy and well-managed sexuality) and self-morality, especially mature inner processing. Personality processing is important because it influences a person's ability to provide objective judgments, decide well, be able to judge right and wrong actions, and the ability to take responsibility maturely (Strange, 2007, p. 127).

The spiritual dimension is an absolutely necessary cultivation for the candidates of priest. They will later become shepherds of the people, a clergyman, so this spiritual element is necessary and must be the main thing. Spiritual formation is aimed at fostering a spirit of love in communion with God who calls, building an intimate friendship with Jesus the Good Shepherd. This spiritual relationship with God is what fosters an attitude of love based on an attitude of humility and willingness to sacrifice from the candidates of priest. This spiritual element will also lead to the pastoral work of the candidates of priest in the future becoming more humble and prioritizing love (RFIS, art. 101).

The essence of spiritual cultivation is unceasing prayer. Candidates of priest are invited to continue praying, both individually and communally, but prayer must become a guideline and habit that must be continuously carried out by a prospective priest (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, art. 33). The intellectual dimension involves the development of all the potential of reason, harmony of thinking, logic of

thinking, especially in the fields of study of philosophy, theology, human sciences and society). Deep intellectual knowledge is an important provision for the priest's future pastoral ministry work (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 114). Intellectual formation is considered central and integral for the candidates of priest because it helps them in carrying out their pastoral duties. Rational development, which is based on broad knowledge and insight, also provides an illustration and contribution to the growth of imams as witnesses and prophets for the people and society (RFIS, art. 117).

The Pastoral Dimension is an effort to develop skills and abilities in carrying out pastoral duties, liturgical services and sacraments. Therefore, pastoral formation cannot be separated from the life of the candidates of priest. The development of the pastoral side allows them to consider real situations and take into account all possibilities. They are also trained to have the courage to make and take decisions based on careful consideration (RFIS, art. 20). This pastoral dimension also invites the candidates of priest to love the diocese they will serve, the tasks and work entrusted to them, and their relationships with others in a good and healthy manner. This spirit is also sought as a unifying element in the lives of the candidates of priest (RFIS, art. 124).

The four dimensions of processing offered by this RFIS document encourage seminarians to arrive at a unified vision of the priesthood when undergoing processing in higher seminaries. The unifying elements of this vocation provide direction, guidance and a comprehensive explanation of the life of a prospective priest. So in the formation of prospective priests, these four dimensions need to be given in full and continuously, not in parts or just one dimension (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 13). In particular, the guidebook for the formation of prospective priests at the Fermentum Major Seminary adds one dimension, namely community. Community is an important element because it is related to the personal development of seminarians. Community life allows the formation of a seminarian's identity (Viktorahadi, 2017, p. 78). Community plays a role in refining vocations, cultivating spiritual life with the same goal. This community life must be built with a spirit of friendship and brotherhood (Komisi Seminari KWI, 2020, p. 35). In this way, the unifying elements in the formation of prospective priests at Fermentum Major Seminary become complete, especially in addressing the cultural differences of the candidates of priest.

c. Profile of Candidates for Diocesan Priests at Fermentum Major Seminary

Data on seminarians at Fermentum Major Seminary in the 2023-2024 Academic Year numbered 42. As explained in the introduction, these seminarians do not only come from the Bandung City area or Bandung Diocese, but come from various regions in Indonesia. Apart from that, they also bring a cultural background that has been lived in their family since they were children. This research made observations and asked each candidates of priest directly about their father's ethnic origin. The data that has been collected is as follows.

Table 1. Distribution of Ethnic Groups of Prospective Priests at the Fermentum Major Seminary, Bandung Diocese

No	Origin	Number
1	Javanese	14
2	Batak	5
3	Flores	11
4	Manado	2
5	Papua	1
6	Chinese	7
7	Maluku	1
8	Borneo's Dayak	1
Total		42

Source: Research results, 2024.

Based on the data above, information was found that some tribes have quite a lot of representation compared to other tribes. The cultural diversity of these candidates of priest is interesting because none of them are from the original Sundanese tribe. This is different from the Javanese tribe who dominates the membership of the Fermentum Major Seminary. Data regarding ethnicity of origin is obtained from the father's ethnic line. Indeed, in brief interviews with the candidates of priest, it was stated that the majority of them were a mixture of two ethnic groups.

There are also those who have Sundanese blood from their mother's side, but this research takes ethnic data from their father's side or patriarchal. Apart from that, there are several candidates of priest who have lived and were even born in West Java, Bandung City and surrounding areas, but in developing their personalities in the family, they were given knowledge and accustomed to the customs and customs of their fathers. This data shows the extraordinary diversity of members at Fermentum Major seminary. This is unique and inspiring because the Fermentum Major Seminary as an educational institution for prospective priests in the city of Bandung, requires introducing and maintaining West Javanese culture, especially Sundanese.

Based on this data, it can be found that candidates of priest are very diverse in terms of culture or ethnic origin. It's interesting because they decided to enter the Fermentum Major Seminary with Sundanese culture. Even though there are several candidates of priest who come from the city of Bandung and its surroundings, they still don't know much about Sundanese culture, language use and Sundanese customs. The candidates of priest are united in the Fermentum Major Seminary and try to get to know Sundanese culture by acting and speaking Sundanese words. There was a worship celebration at the Fermentum Higher Seminary which used Sundanese, starting to get used to using Sundanese in daily life.

The candidates of priest who come from outside the city of Bandung also have to learn and adapt to the dynamics of Sundanese culture at the Fermentum Major Seminary. In other words, Fermentum Major Seminary is a place to unite the cultural diversity of members, to live together and adapt to one culture inherent in the seminary, namely Sundanese culture. Therefore, the candidates of priest are united by Sundanese culture, even though they still adhere to their original ethnicity and culture. At least the seminarians can recognize, know and understand Sundanese culture which is the basis of culture at the Bandung Diocese Fermentum Major Seminary.

d. Unity of Vision with the motto of the Bishop of Bandung

The term *silih asih* is one part of three terms that constitute the philosophy of Sundanese society. The philosophy is '*Silih Asah, Silih Asih, Silih Asuh*'. It derived from the Ancient Sundanese manuscript '*Sanghyang Siksakanda(ng) Karesian*' (1518) or Part of the Rules or Teachings about Wise Living based on Darma (Djunatan, 2011, p. 288). In '*Darma*' it is stated that there are three provisions on earth, namely queen, '*rama*', '*rishi*'. '*Ratu*' is interpreted as the preserver, '*Rama*' as the creator, and '*Rishi*' because of his function as a purifier from negative elements. '*Rishis*' are associated with spiritual advisors and guardians of noble values closely with the term '*asah*' (sharpening). The queen is described as the leader of the government and who carries out noble values in life so it is closely related to the term '*asih*' (loving). The queen or king has an attitude of compassion and compassion. '*Rama*' is associated with village elders who create peace, prosperity and ensure that the family's needs are always met. The character of '*Rama*' is associated with the term '*asuh*' (nurturing) because of his nurturing, maintaining and ensuring life (Djunatan, 2011, p. 295).

Based on the understanding of the Sundanese people's philosophy of life, the term '*Silih Asih*' is important because it is related to efforts to maintain the noble values of society so that they are always carried out well. Apart from that, the term compassion is associated with an

attitude of sacrifice, love, selflessness, sincerity, and giving the best. However, you also need to realize that these three terms cannot be separated because they complement each other. Compassion is based on love, so in living your life you should uphold this quality of love as an effort towards your own and the common good. This philosophy is maintained and continues to be carried out by the Sundanese people. Likewise, in relation to the Bandung Diocese Catholic Church which is located in an area with a Sundanese cultural base, efforts must be made to maintain Sundanese philosophy (Djunatan, 2011, p. 310).

Furthermore, in the context of the Diocese of Bandung, the term '*Silih Asih*' is lived out based on the motto of the Bishop of Bandung, Bishop Antonius Subianto Bunjamin OSC, namely '*Ut Diligatis Invicem*' – you should love one another. This motto is also the hope of the Bishop of Bandung for the Church of the Bandung Diocese to carry out Jesus' command to love one another which is a form of love for God and others (Krismastono, 2024, p. 56). The explanation above should be clear for the movement of the Bandung Diocese which has a unified vision with the term *silih asih* in Sundanese philosophy. Attitudes to love each other, take care of each other, do good, and defend the truth). The Diocese of Bandung, through Bishop Anton, wants to present a Church with a spirit of compassion for everyone and thereby bringing everyone to goodness. The hope is that the Bandung Diocesan Church can become a community of God's disciples who are increasingly compassionate and able to present a merciful God to everyone (Krismastono, 2024, p. 69).

e. One Compassion '*Silih Asih*'

Through the data collected and discussion regarding the ethnic origins of the candidates of priest at Fermentum Major Seminary and discussion of the term *silih asih* which is part of the three aspects of life in the philosophy of Sundanese society, a connection can be found. When enter the seminary, the candidates of priest are faced with differences in their respective tribes or customs, which are then discovered and brought into harmony with the formation process at the seminary. The consequences that candidates of priest must face are managing, controlling and respecting each other's cultural differences, as well as adapting to Sundanese culture. Fermentum Major Seminary is in the Bandung area which is the base of Sundanese culture.

Therefore, like it or not, the candidates of priest will be introduced to elements of Sundanese culture. What has the seminary done to provide a forum for the candidates of priest to get to know and adapt to Sundanese culture? In the early years, the seminary held Sundanese language classes every Friday, held Eucharist celebrations or Sundanese masses, also on Fridays. Apart from that, the seminary also accommodates its members who have the courage to create worship texts, deliver readings or give sermons in Sundanese. In this way, the candidates of priest are helped to adapt to Sundanese culture, especially those who come from areas outside West Java. The seminary unites the various cultures of seminarians through Sundanese culture as a means of introduction and adaptation.

In relation to the unity of prospective priests from various cultures, one of the reasons is that the Fermentum Major Seminary is under the Diocese of Bandung. Moreover, this seminary is a place for nurturing candidates for diocesan priests, so all forms or processing of vocations are linked or aligned with the pastoral vision of the Bishop of Bandung. Compassion ('*Silih Asih*') is the fruit of reflection on the motto of the Bishop of Bandung so that it becomes the vision of the pastoral movement of the Diocese of Bandung, including the Fermentum Major Seminary. Based on the results of observations, it was found that candidates of priest, the higher the level of training in the Seminary, the more they will be cultivated and trained in the spirit of unity. Unity as one force, one base unit, one community, and one fellow caller.

The Fermentum Major Seminary Community strives for a spirit of brotherhood based on compassion. They get used to reminding each other, listening to each other, strengthening each other, giving each other themselves for the common good. They are also used to building a

committee for certain major activities, having a mutual sense that their interests are not only for themselves but for the sake of everyone, the good of the community. Compassion is developed in the spirit of unity and brotherhood among seminarians. Apart from being an effort to align themselves with the pastoral vision of the Bishop of Bandung, it is also a provision for their pastoral work among the people. Of course, the pastoral work of diocesan priests in the future will be based on an attitude of charity or *'Silih Asih'*.

4. CONCLUSION

Fermentum Major Seminary has become a place of education for prospective priests that accommodates the cultural differences of its members. The seminary is always open to differences, but does not make these differences an exception for certain cultures, dropping certain cultures, emphasizing certain cultures, but as a wealth that must be maintained. The seminary, which seeks to maintain Sundanese culture, is intended not to promote Sundanese culture, but to introduce that the Fermentum Major Seminary is within the characteristics of West Javanese society which is unique to the Sundanese tribe.

The candidates of priest were able to overcome these cultural differences by using the principle of compassion or *'Silih Asih'* which is also echoed in the motto of the Bishop of Bandung. They are invited to love each other, respect each other's culture, adapt to the existing culture. In this way, the candidates of priest will be increasingly able to recognize the characteristics of the pastoral field they will work on in the future. While maintaining the cultural richness at Fermentum Major Seminary, the candidates of priest try to carry out their pastoral ministry duties with one spirit, namely one of compassion. Fermentum Major Seminary has created unity for prospective priests from various cultures, one compassion, for the Church and society for the common good.

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