

## INCULTURATION IN THE CATHOLIC RITE OF MATRIMONY AT ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH, MAUMERE

Yohanes Hans Monteiro, \*Wishal Ambrose

Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology

**Abstract:** *This study examines the inculturation of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony at St. Thomas More Parish, Maumere, by analyzing the relationship between sacramental integrity, local culture, and pastoral practice. Using a qualitative ethnographic approach, data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with clergy, parish staff, and engaged couples, and analysis of liturgical and pastoral documents. The findings show that the essential structure of the Rite of Matrimony remains intact, especially the exchange of consent, the blessing and exchange of rings, and the nuptial blessing, while local cultural expressions such as traditional attire, music, language, symbolic gestures, and family participation enrich the celebration and strengthen communal participation. The study also finds that marriage preparation, including the laporan kanonik and final pastoral consultation, functions as a space for catechesis, discernment, and accompaniment. These practices demonstrate that inculturation in this parish is not merely decorative, but pastorally guided and theologically grounded in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. This study contributes to liturgical theology and pastoral praxis by showing how local cultural forms can strengthen ecclesial identity without compromising sacramental integrity.*

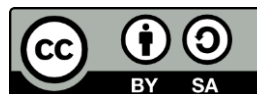
**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji inkulturasi Ritus Perkawinan Katolik di Paroki St. Thomas More, Maumere, melalui analisis relasi antara integritas sakramental, budaya lokal, dan praktik pastoral. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif etnografis, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan imam, staf paroki, dan pasangan calon menikah, serta analisis dokumen liturgis dan pastoral. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa struktur hakiki Ritus Perkawinan tetap terjaga, terutama pertukaran janji nikah, pemberkatan dan pertukaran cincin, serta berkat nikah, sementara ekspresi budaya lokal seperti busana adat, musik, bahasa, gestur simbolik, dan keterlibatan keluarga memperkaya perayaan dan memperkuat partisipasi komunal. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa persiapan perkawinan, termasuk laporan kanonik dan konsultasi pastoral akhir, berfungsi sebagai ruang katekese, discernment, dan pendampingan. Praktik tersebut menunjukkan bahwa inkulturasi di paroki ini bukan sekadar dekorasi, melainkan proses pastoral yang terarah dan berlandaskan teologis pada Misteri Paskah Kristus. Studi ini berkontribusi bagi teologi liturgi dan praksis pastoral dengan menunjukkan bagaimana bentuk budaya lokal dapat memperkuat identitas gerejawi tanpa mengorbankan integritas sakramental.

**\*Korespondensi:**

[ambrosewishal777@gmail.com](mailto:ambrosewishal777@gmail.com)

**Keywords:** *Catholic marriage, inculturation, Rite of Matrimony, pastoral accompaniment, St. Thomas More Parish, cultural adaptation*

**Kata Kunci:** Perkawinan Katolik, inkulturasi, ritus perkawinan, pendampingan pastoral, Paroki Santo Thomas More, adaptasi budaya.



*This is an open-access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.*

### INTRODUCTION

Liturgy is the public act of worship of the Catholic Church through which the mystery of Christ's salvation is made present in the life of the faithful in a real, symbolic, and ecclesial way. In the tradition of the Church, liturgy is not merely a sequence of ceremonial rites, but a sacred action that unites faith, signs, words, and the participation of the faithful in God's saving work

(Natanel, 2025). Within this framework, the sacraments occupy a central place because they are outward signs that effectively communicate God's grace to the faithful (Rukiyanto, 2023). One sacrament with rich theological, anthropological, and pastoral dimensions is the Sacrament of Matrimony, since the relationship between a man and a woman is understood not merely as a social bond or legal contract, but as a sacramental covenant reflecting Christ's love for the Church.

Theologically, Catholic marriage is rooted in Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, which place the free consent of the bride and groom at the center of the sacrament's constitution (Lon, 2019). ). In this perspective, marriage becomes a visible sign of faithful, indissoluble, and life-giving love that points to the relationship between Christ and the Church (Second Vatican Council, 1965; Dodaro, 2014). Therefore, the celebration of the Rite of Matrimony is never merely private, but ecclesial, liturgical, and communal (Rahawarin, 2013). It is celebrated before the Church and within the Church, so that every element accompanying it must be understood in the light of faith, sacramental theology, and legitimate liturgical order.

However, the Rite of Matrimony never takes place in a cultural vacuum. As a celebration of faith occurring within concrete human life, this rite encounters local symbols, kinship structures, regional languages, customs, and communal expressions. This is where inculturation becomes important. In the liturgical context, inculturation is not the arbitrary addition of cultural ornaments, but a process of discerning and integrating cultural values into the celebration of faith without obscuring its sacramental essence (Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 1994; Simatupang, 2019). In other words, inculturation requires a balance between fidelity to universal liturgical norms and appreciation for the richness of local culture.

This principle received theological legitimacy in the Second Vatican Council, especially through *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, which affirms that the Church does not intend to impose rigid uniformity in matters that do not concern the essence of faith and the sacraments, but opens space for prudent adaptation according to peoples and local cultures (Second Vatican Council, 1963). Postconciliar reflection has deepened this principle by understanding inculturation as a reciprocal dynamic between the Gospel and culture. Culture is not viewed as a threat to faith, but as a medium through which grace can become more visible in the life of the faithful (Bevans, 2002a; Shorter, 1988; Sitompul, 2025). At the same time, the Church remains obliged to ensure that such adaptation does not damage the theological, liturgical, and canonical integrity of the sacraments being celebrated.

Studies on liturgical inculturation have been widely discussed in theological, liturgical, and pastoral literature (Malau et al., 2024; Martasudjita, 2022). Yet many of these studies remain normative-theoretical: they explain that inculturation is possible or recommended, but do not always show how discernment works in pastoral practice within a specific local community. Research on the inculturation of the Sacrament of Matrimony is also often general in scope; it has not adequately examined how Church ministers distinguish between cultural elements that may



be integrated into the liturgy and those that should remain outside it (Eden & Pereira, 2023; Kelen, 2024; Kristeno & Meo, 2025). Consequently, an important gap remains, especially in local Churches in eastern Indonesia, where cultural traditions and Catholic liturgical life interact dynamically.

St. Thomas More Parish, Maumere, provides a relevant context for addressing these issues. Located in a strong socio-cultural environment marked by Sikka/Flores identity, this parish shows how Catholic marriage celebrations occur at the intersection of universal liturgical norms and local cultural expressions. In practice, marriage celebrations in this parish include the core liturgical elements such as the exchange of consent, the blessing and exchange of rings, and the nuptial blessing, while also including local expressions such as traditional attire, music, gestures of respect toward parents and extended family, and strong communal participation. This situation makes the parish a fertile setting for examining how inculturation is practiced, negotiated, and understood in the life of the local Church.

The pastoral practices that precede the marriage celebration also display an important dimension of inculturation. Processes such as the laporan kanonik, final consultation with the priest, and formation of engaged couples are not merely administrative procedures, but catechetical spaces and forms of pastoral accompaniment that shape how couples understand the sacramental meaning of marriage, the responsibilities of Christian family life, and the place of culture within the liturgical celebration. Therefore, inculturation in this study is not understood merely as a liturgical event on the wedding day, but as a broader pastoral process, beginning with preparation and discernment and culminating in the celebration of the sacrament itself.

Based on this context, the study asks: how is inculturation carried out in the Catholic Rite of Matrimony at St. Thomas More Parish, Maumere, and what is its theological-pastoral significance for the local Church? More specifically, this study aims to describe the forms of inculturation visible in the celebration of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony; to analyze the role of pastoral discernment in selecting and arranging cultural elements; and to interpret the theological, anthropological, and ecclesiological implications of these inculturated practices for the identity of the local Church.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design and an ethnographic orientation (Creswell, 2015; Taylor et al., 2015). This approach was chosen because the aim of the research is not to test hypotheses statistically, but to understand in depth how inculturation is practiced, interpreted, and negotiated in the celebration of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony within a particular pastoral context. The descriptive-analytical design allows the

researcher to describe liturgical and pastoral practices factually while interpreting them in the light of liturgical theology, sacramental theology, and theories of inculturation.

The study was conducted at St. Thomas More Parish, Maumere, which was purposively selected because it has an active liturgical life, especially in marriage celebrations, and exists within a local cultural setting that still provides space for customary expressions in the religious life of the faithful. The focus of the study is the celebration of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony and the pastoral processes accompanying it, including preparation, final consultation, and accompaniment of engaged couples.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the celebration and accompaniment of Catholic marriage (Sugiyono, 2018). The informants represented three perspectives: liturgical-pastoral leadership, parish administration, and the lived experience of engaged couples. To protect ethical confidentiality, the informants are identified by codes rather than full names. Interview data are treated as primary field data and are cited only in the body of the article; they are not placed in the bibliography.

**Table 1:** Profile of Research Informants

Code	Category	Role in the Study	Interview Time
I1	Parish priest	Explained sacramental theology, pastoral discernment, limits of cultural adaptation, and celebration of the rite.	3 and 10 Nov. 2025
I2	Assistant priest	Explained couple accompaniment, Paschal meaning of marriage, and pastoral evaluation of cultural elements.	10 Nov. 2025
I3	Parish secretary	Explained administrative and pastoral preparation, laporan kanonik, final consultation, and parish records.	3 and 8 Nov. 2025
I4	Engaged couple 1	Shared experience of preparation, family involvement, and understanding of cultural elements in the liturgy.	15 Nov. 2025
I5	Engaged couple 2	Shared experience of pastoral accompaniment, family participation, and meaning of adat in Catholic marriage.	15 Nov. 2025

Note. Interview data are primary research data. They are cited in the analysis using informant codes and are not listed as bibliographic references.

Data were collected through three main techniques: participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document study. Participant observation was carried out during marriage celebrations and related pastoral moments, including final consultations at the parish. Through observation, the researcher recorded the structure of the rite, the sequence of the celebration, the use of language, music, attire, symbolic gestures, family participation, and the involvement of the faithful. Semi-structured interviews explored participants' understanding of Catholic marriage, reasons for using cultural elements, pastoral discernment, and experiences of

inculturated celebrations. Document study examined official liturgical texts, parish guidelines, marriage catechesis materials, pastoral administrative documents such as the laporan kanonik, and visual documentation related to marriage celebrations.

The primary instrument was the researcher, supported by observation guides, interview guides, field notes, and audio recording or visual documentation when permission was granted. Data were analyzed thematically through organizing field notes and transcripts, coding recurring themes, grouping the themes into broader categories, interpreting the data inductively in light of liturgical and sacramental theology, and cross-checking data sources. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, technique triangulation, rechecking of data when clarification was needed, and thick description of the socio-cultural and liturgical context.

The study paid attention to ethical considerations because the object of research concerns sacred rites and the faith life of the faithful. Permission was obtained from the parish before data collection, participants were informed of the aims of the research, and consent was requested before interviews. Confidentiality was maintained through the use of informant codes. During observation and interviews, the researcher maintained respect for the sacredness of worship and did not interfere with the pastoral dynamics taking place.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings show that the celebration of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony at St. Thomas More Parish takes place within the framework of the Church's official liturgy while showing clear integration with local cultural elements. The basic structure of the celebration follows the Catholic Order of Marriage, especially the Liturgy of the Word, the exchange of consent, the blessing and exchange of rings, the nuptial blessing, and, when celebrated within Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This fidelity to the liturgical structure indicates that cultural elements do not replace the sacramental core, but appear as supporting expressions that enrich the celebration.

Observational data show that forms of inculturation are visible in the use of traditional attire, music, local language, symbolic gestures, and the involvement of extended family. Traditional attire worn by the bride and groom and by members of the assembly is understood as a symbol of cultural identity, respect for ancestral inheritance, and affirmation that marriage is a communal event. Traditional music is used in selected moments such as the entrance procession, the offertory procession, and communion, thereby creating an atmosphere familiar to the faithful while maintaining a sacred character. The use of local language in songs, prayers of the faithful, or pastoral explanations helps increase participation, especially among older members of the community.

Another important finding is the strong involvement of the family throughout the entire series of celebrations. Marriage is not understood only as the union of two individuals, but as the

union of two extended families and a wider community. Parents, siblings, and family representatives often take part in processions, offerings, and gestures of respect. This pattern shows that the Sacrament of Matrimony is interpreted within a relational, social, and communal framework. From the perspective of ritual anthropology, this involvement marks marriage as a rite of passage that publicly transforms the social status of the couple and integrates them into a new network of responsibilities (Turner, 1969; Van gennep, 1960).

In the pastoral sphere, the laporan kanonik process and final parish consultations have functions broader than administrative verification. They become spaces of catechesis, accompaniment, and strengthening of faith for engaged couples. Priests and parish staff explain the sacramental meaning of marriage, readiness for fidelity, the call to sacrifice, and Christian responsibility in family life. At this stage, the cultural elements to be used in the celebration are also discussed so that they remain aligned with liturgical norms and Church teaching. I3 described the process as a moment to speak about documents, readiness, family traditions, and what is possible within the Church (I3, interview, November 8, 2025).

The field data can be summarized into four main themes: fidelity to the sacramental structure of the Roman Rite; the integration of local cultural expressions as accompanying symbols; the communal interpretation of marriage through family participation; and pastoral discernment through marriage preparation. These themes show that inculturation in the parish is not a spontaneous or uncontrolled addition of local customs, but a process shaped by ecclesial norms, pastoral judgment, and the lived culture of the faithful.

**Table 2: Main Empirical Themes**

Theme	Empirical Evidence	Analytical Meaning
Liturgical fidelity	Consent, blessing and exchange of rings, nuptial blessing, and Eucharistic structure remain intact.	Inculturation enriches but does not replace sacramental core.
Cultural symbols	Traditional attire, music, local language, and gestures accompany selected ritual moments.	Culture mediates participation and symbolic understanding.
Family participation	Parents, siblings, and family representatives are visibly involved in processions and gestures.	Marriage is received as a communal and ecclesial event.
Pastoral discernment	Laporan kanonik and final consultation discuss readiness and permissible cultural elements.	Pastoral accompaniment functions as catechesis and liturgical formation.

## DISCUSSION

### Conformity with Liturgical Norms

Field observations indicate that the Rite of Matrimony at St. Thomas More Parish consistently follows the basic structure prescribed by the Order of Celebrating Matrimony. The

celebration is ordinarily conducted within the context of the Eucharist, beginning with the introductory rites, followed by the Liturgy of the Word, the celebration of the sacrament of marriage, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the concluding rites. The exchange of matrimonial consent remains the central ritual moment of the celebration and is articulated using prescribed liturgical texts. The blessing and exchange of rings, the nuptial blessing, and the prayers of the faithful are carried out in accordance with the Roman Rite (Catholic Church, 2016).

This finding is significant because it shows that inculturation at the parish does not alter the constitutive elements of the sacrament. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* allows adaptation to peoples and cultures, but it also insists that liturgical regulation belongs to the competent ecclesiastical authority and that no one may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on personal initiative (Second Vatican Council, 1963). *Varietates Legitimae* further clarifies that inculturation must respect the substantial unity of the Roman Rite and the integrity of sacramental signs (Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 1994). Therefore, the practice observed in the parish can be considered consistent with the Church's liturgical discipline insofar as cultural elements accompany, rather than replace, the core sacramental actions.

The distinction between cultural accompaniment and liturgical substitution is crucial. Traditional attire, music, language, and gestures have pastoral value when they help the faithful participate more consciously and meaningfully, but they become problematic if they obscure the exchange of consent or reduce the sacrament to a customary ceremony. In this parish, the pastoral practice of discussing cultural elements during preparation functions as a safeguard, ensuring that local culture remains in service of the sacrament rather than becoming its organizing center.

### **Symbols, Music, Language, and Ritual Gestures**

Within the normative liturgical framework, symbols, musical forms, and ritual gestures express local cultural values rooted in Sikka and broader Flores traditions. Liturgical music frequently incorporates local melodies and rhythms, especially in entrance hymns, offertory songs, and communion chants. While culturally distinctive, these musical forms are perceived by participants as appropriate for worship because they are used in moments that support the liturgical action. This finding corresponds to the broader principle that cultural forms may be integrated into liturgy when they preserve the sacred character of worship and strengthen active participation (Second Vatican Council, 1963; Martasudjita, 2022).

The use of local language alongside the official liturgical language also enhances comprehension and participation. *Liturgiam Authenticam* emphasizes that liturgical translation must convey theological meaning faithfully, but pastoral experience shows that local language



can help the faithful hear the liturgy as a word addressed to their concrete life ( Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 2001). In this parish, the selective use of local language in hymns, prayers of the faithful, or pastoral explanations helps bridge the gap between universal liturgical forms and local reception.

Ritual gestures such as the solemn entrance procession, respectful gestures toward elders, and the visible participation of family representatives reflect local values of kinship, respect, and communal responsibility. Geertz (1973) understands culture as a system of meanings expressed through symbols, while Bell (1992) emphasizes that ritual practices shape social identity through embodied action. In this light, the gestures used in the marriage celebration are not merely decorative; they communicate a local understanding of marriage as a relational and communal event. Yet their theological value depends on pastoral discernment, because symbols must be interpreted in the light of Christian faith rather than treated as autonomous customary requirements.

### **Inculturation as an Expression of Local Faith**

The findings reveal that inculturation in the marriage liturgy occurs primarily through the integration of cultural elements that accompany the liturgical rite rather than alter its essential structure. Cultural expressions are especially evident in transitional moments such as the entrance procession, the preparation of the gifts, and gestures expressing respect for elders. These elements situate the sacrament within the local understanding of marriage as a familial and socially significant event. This confirms the insight of contextual theology that faith is always expressed through concrete languages, symbols, and historical situations (Bevans, 2002; Shorter, 1988).

Traditional symbols, vestments, and attire are among the clearest forms of inculturation. In several observed celebrations, the priest's chasuble incorporated motifs drawn from local textiles, while couples sometimes wore traditional wedding attire or combined traditional and contemporary clothing. These garments were recognized by participants as symbols of cultural identity, ancestral continuity, and social dignity. Their use within the liturgy was not viewed as distraction, but as a visible expression of faith lived within culture. Similar dynamics are noted in studies of Indonesian liturgical inculturation, where local artistic forms are accepted when they help the community encounter Christ within its own cultural horizon (Eden & Pereira, 2023; Martasudjita, 2022).

At the same time, the findings reveal an implicit process of selection. Elements perceived as incompatible with Christian belief or sacramental meaning are excluded or moved outside the liturgy. This selective integration corresponds to the theological understanding that inculturation includes both affirmation and purification of culture. The Gospel receives what is good in culture,

transforms what is ambiguous, and rejects what contradicts the dignity of the sacrament (Francis, 2016; Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 1994).

### **Marriage as a Communal Event**

Marriage in this parish is understood as a communal event, not merely a personal decision between two individuals. The involvement of extended family and community figures shows that marriage is interpreted as an event that unites interfamily relationships, strengthens social solidarity, and confirms shared responsibility. From this perspective, the marriage liturgy becomes a space that both displays and sanctifies social relationships already alive within local culture (Eden & Pereira, 2023).

Anthropologically, marriage can be read as a rite of passage. Van Gennep (1960) explains that rites of passage mark transitions in social status, while Turner (1969) emphasizes the communal and liminal character of ritual. In the observed celebrations, the couple is not simply entering a private contract; they are publicly recognized as a new family unit within the Church and community. The presence of parents, family representatives, and communal gestures helps the assembly recognize this transition. Theologically, this communal meaning does not weaken the sacrament; it clarifies that Christian marriage is an ecclesial reality, lived in the communion of the Church and oriented toward the good of the family and society (Second Vatican Council, 1965; John Paul II, 1981).

The pastoral challenge is to keep the communal character of marriage from being reduced to social obligation. In some contexts, adat expectations can become so strong that the sacramental meaning of marriage is overshadowed by family prestige or cultural performance. The parish's emphasis on final pastoral consultation helps address this risk by reminding couples and families that cultural celebration must remain subordinate to the sacramental covenant.

### **Pastoral Discernment and Couple Formation**

The laporan kanonik process and final consultations show that inculturation does not proceed spontaneously, but through pastoral discernment. Church ministers evaluate which cultural elements may be integrated and which need to be limited so as not to contradict sacramental meaning. This confirms that pastoral accompaniment is not only administrative, but also pedagogical and theological (Purba et al., 2023; Sawo, 2024). Engaged couples are helped to understand that marriage is a vocation of faith; consequently, culture is placed within the framework of proclaiming Christian values rather than being treated as an end in itself.

The interviews clarify this process. I1 emphasized that marriage is not only a tradition or family celebration, but a sacrament in which the couple enters into the self-giving love of Christ (I1, interview, November 3 and 10, 2025). I2 similarly highlighted the Paschal dimension of

marriage, explaining that couples are guided to understand marriage as joy, sacrifice, forgiveness, and fidelity (I2, interview, November 10, 2025). I4 and I5 confirmed that the preparation process helped them see marriage not only as a matter between two persons, but as a covenant involving God, the Church, and the family community (I4-I5, interview, November 15, 2025).

This pattern is consistent with *Amoris Laetitia*, which emphasizes the need for patient pastoral accompaniment of couples and families (Francis, 2016), and with *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, which proposes marriage preparation as a gradual formation process rather than a brief administrative requirement (Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, 2022). The parish practice therefore has strong pastoral significance: it turns administrative moments into spaces of catechesis, discernment, and liturgical education.

### **Theological and Ecclesiological Implications**

Theologically, the inculturated celebration of marriage at St. Thomas More Parish shows that the Sacrament of Matrimony is rooted in the Paschal Mystery of Christ while being expressed through the concrete cultural life of the faithful. Cultural elements do not create the sacrament; the free consent of the couple and the Church's liturgical celebration remain central. Yet culture can help the community perceive the sacrament as meaningful, embodied, and socially transformative. In this sense, inculturation has an incarnational dimension: grace does not erase culture, but works in and through it when culture is purified and oriented toward Christ.

Ecclesiologicaly, the practice strengthens the identity of the local Church. The parish becomes a living expression of catholicity in which universal faith and local culture are not opposed, but mutually illuminate each other. *Familiaris Consortio* emphasizes that Christian families and marriages are integral to the life and mission of the Church (John Paul II, 1981). In the observed practice, families, clergy, and the parish community participate in making the sacrament visible as both ecclesial and cultural. This strengthens the faithful's sense of belonging to the Church and deepens participation in liturgical life.

Nevertheless, the practice also reveals the need for more systematic liturgical formation. Not all members of the faithful necessarily understand the theological meaning of the cultural elements used in the celebration. Some may understand them only as social traditions or ceremonial decorations (Martasudjita, 2022). Therefore, marriage catechesis should include explicit reflection on sacramental signs, cultural symbols, the limits of liturgical adaptation, and the Paschal meaning of Christian marriage. Without adequate formation, inculturation can lose its theological depth and become aesthetic display.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that inculturation in the Catholic Rite of Matrimony at St. Thomas More Parish, Maumere, is a real and intentional pastoral-liturgical practice carried out in fidelity to the Church's sacramental structure. Local cultural elements such as traditional attire, music,

language, symbolic gestures, and family participation are present not to replace the core of the rite, but to enrich the celebration so that it becomes more communicative, participatory, and meaningful for the faithful.

The findings show that the process of inculturation does not take place only during the liturgical celebration itself, but begins in marriage preparation through the laporan kanonik, final consultation, and pastoral accompaniment. In this process, priests and pastoral workers exercise discernment to determine which cultural elements can be appropriately integrated without obscuring the theological meaning and sacramental integrity of marriage. Healthy inculturation therefore requires a balance between openness to local culture and fidelity to the Church's liturgical norms.

Theologically, this practice shows that the Sacrament of Matrimony is lived as a covenant rooted in the love of Christ and expressed within the concrete cultural context of the faithful. Ecclesiologically, it strengthens the identity of the local Church as a communion that remains catholic in faith while being present in the language, symbols, and cultural experience of its people. Pastoral recommendations arising from this study include the need for a parish-level guideline on cultural elements in marriage liturgy, more systematic liturgical formation for couples and families, and continued collaboration between clergy, catechists, and family representatives in discerning adat practices.

This study has several limitations. It was conducted in one parish and therefore does not claim broad generalization to all parishes or dioceses. It used a qualitative approach with a limited number of observations and informants, so the findings emphasize depth rather than statistical breadth. Future research may compare inculturation practices in several parishes in Flores, examine the reception of inculturated marriage liturgy among different generations, or study the relationship between customary marriage practices and canonical preparation in greater detail.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bell, C. (1992). *Ritual theory, ritual practice*. Oxford university press.
- Bevans, S. B. (2002a). *Model-Model Teologi Kontekstual*. Ladalero.
- Bevans, S. B. (2002b). *Models of contextual theology*. Orbis Books.
- Church, C. (2016). *The order of celebrating matrimony* (2nd ed.). United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- Council, S. V. (1963). *Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the sacred liturgy*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Council, S. V. (1965). *Gaudium et spes: Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world*. Liberia Editrice Vaticana.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Penelitian Kualitatif dan Desain Riset*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Dicastery for Laity, F. and L. (2022). *Catechumenal pathways for married life: Pastoral guidelines for particular churches*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

- Dodaro, R. (2014). *Remaining in the truth of Christ: marriage and communion in the Catholic Church*. Ignatius Press.
- Eden, A., & Pereira, A. A. (2023). Inkulturasi Gondang Sabangunan Batak Toba Dalam Liturgi Pemberkatan Perkawinan: Perjumpaan Kristus Dan GerejaNya Dengan Budaya Lokal. *Sapa: Jurnal Kateketik Dan Pastoral*, 8(1), 25–37. <https://doi.org/10.53544/sapa.v8i1.344>
- Francis. (2016). *Amoris laetitia: Post-synodal apostolic exhortation on love in the family*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books.
- II, J. P. (1981). *Familiaris consortio: Apostolic exhortation on the role of the Christian family in the modern world*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Kelen, Y. N. P. (2024). *Perbandingan Ritus Kaweng Gate dalam Kebudayaan Masyarakat Lewoloba dan Ritus Perkawinan Katolik serta Kemungkinan Inkulturasi Liturgi Perkawinan*. <http://repository.iftkledalero.ac.id/id/eprint/2479>
- Kristeno, M. R., & Meo, Y. W. B. L. (2025). Perkawinan Katolik sebagai sakramen: Kajian hukum Gereja dalam konteks pluralisme agama di Barito Timur. *Jurnal Pastoral Kateketik*, 2(2), 48–60. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.70343/ntas4518>
- Lon, Y. S. (2019). *Hukum Perkawinan Sakramental dalam Gereja Katolik*. PT Kanisius.
- Malau, C. L., Raya, T. B., & Endi, Y. (2024). Inkulturasi gereja Asia: Suatu tinjauan inkulturasi dalam terang dokumen FABC. *Jurnal Pelayan Pastoral*, 5(1), 56–66. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.53544/jpp.v5i1.495>
- Martasudjita, E. P. D. (2022). Inkulturasi Dan Tata Perayaan Ekaristi 2020 Gambaran Berinkulturasi dalam Konteks Indonesia: Gambaran Berinkulturasi dalam Konteks Indonesia. *Studia Philosophica et Theologica*, 22(2), 159–180. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35312/spet.v22i2.441>
- Natanel, M. Z. (2025). Suatu Pandangan Teologi Lutheran Tentang Liturgi Ibadah Sebagai Kesaksian Iman Gereja. *Kaluteros: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen*, 7(1), 13–22. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.60146/kaluteros.v7i1.123>
- Purba, A., Sihombing, J. S., & Antono, Y. S. (2023). MANFAAT KATEKESE PERSIAPAN PERKAWINAN BAGI KELUARGA MUDA DALAM MEMBANGUN KELUARGA RUKUN KRISTIANI: Sebuah Studi Pastoral atas Kanon 1063 dan 1064, KHK 1983 di Paroki Santo Joseph Jalan Kain Batik-Pematangsiantar. *Logos: Jurnal Pendidikan, Katekese, Dan Pastoral*, 141–151. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.54367/logos.v20i2.2994>
- Rahawarin, B. A. (2013). Aspek Pastoral - Kateketis Dalam Liturgi Perkawinan. *Logos: Jurnal Pendidikan, Katekese, Dan Pastoral*, 2(1), 12–137. <https://ejournal-stpakambon.id/index.php/JL/article/view/54>
- Rukiyanto, B. A. (2023). *Mengenal Tujuh Sakramen* (P. M. Andalas, Ed.; Pertama). Sanata Dharma University Press.
- Sacraments, C. for D. W. and the D. of the. (1994). *Fourth Instruction for the Right Application of the Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=5149>
- Sacraments, C. for D. W. and the D. of the. (2001). *Liturgiam authenticam: Fifth instruction for the right implementation of the constitution on the sacred liturgy*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.



- Sawo, E. S. (2024). Pengembangan Modul Katekese Perkawinan Berbasis Keluarga Sebagai Fondasi Pendampingan Pasangan Muda Pasca-Pernikahan. *Sepakat: Jurnal Pastoral Kateketik*, 10(2), 50–68. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58374/sepakat.v10i2.347>
- Shorter, A. (1988). *Toward a theology of inculturation*. Orbis Books.
- Simatupang, W. P. (2019). *AGAMA DAN SENI (Studi Pemanfaatan Seni pada Liturgi Ekaristi di Gereja Katolik St. Athanasius Agung, Karangpanas, Semarang)*. [http://eprints.undip.ac.id/81070/1/Skripsi\\_Wilmart\\_13060114140013.pdf](http://eprints.undip.ac.id/81070/1/Skripsi_Wilmart_13060114140013.pdf)
- Sitompul, P. H. (2025). Misi dan Budaya: Membangun Jembatan Antara Injil dan Tradisi Lokal. *Jurnal Teologi Pondok Daud*, 8(2). <https://ejournal.sttpk-medan.ac.id/index.php/pondokdaud/article/view/143>
- Sugiyono, S. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif*. Alfabeta.
- Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. L. (2015). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource*. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Turner, V. (1969). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Aldine Publishing.
- Van gennep, A. (1960). *The rites of passage* (M. B. Vizedom & G. L. Caffee, Eds.). University of Chicago Press.
- Vatican, I. I. (1963). *Sacrosanctum concilium. "Konstitusi tentang Liturgi Suci"* (4th ed.).

#### Interviews:

- Dange, D. (2025, November 3 & 10). Parish priest, St. Thomas More Church, Maumere. Personal interviews.
- Dajog, A., SVD. (2025, November 10). Assistant priest, St. Thomas More Church, Maumere. Personal interview.
- Hana, M. (2025, November 3 & 8). Parish secretary, St. Thomas More Church, Maumere. Personal interviews.
- Marriage candidates: Niron, A., & Wina, M.; Bano, Y., & Rika, L. (2025, November 15). Personal interviews.