

# Historical Development of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang City, Banten (2013–2022)

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**Abstract.** Over the course of nearly a decade, the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang City, Banten, has undergone significant revitalization, both in terms of infrastructure and community outreach. This study explores the historical trajectory and social influence of the church from 2013 to 2022, focusing on the interplay between physical development, congregational growth, and interreligious relations. As the first Catholic parish established in Tangerang following the expansion of the Batavia Apostolic Vicariate—now the Archdiocese of Jakarta—the church has become a vital religious and cultural institution. Through annual programs spearheaded by the parish council and socio-economic service units, the church has strengthened its role not only as a place of worship but also as a promoter of religious tolerance and social cohesion in Indonesia. The research highlights how liturgical development, community engagement, and architectural transformations collectively shaped the church's evolving identity.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The term “church” derives from the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning “assembly” or “gathering,” which was later adopted into Latin as *ecclesia* and subsequently became the Portuguese *igreja*. Portuguese missionaries introduced the term to the Indonesian archipelago during the colonial period, embedding it into the local religious lexicon (Hurriyah, 2020). While “assembly” may appear to denote a secular congregation, in theological contexts, it specifically refers to a community of believers called by God. Within Catholic doctrine, the church is considered not merely a structure but the living body of Christ—composed of individuals united by faith and sacrament.

In this context, the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church holds a significant place in the religious and socio-historical landscape of Tangerang City, Banten. It is recognized as the first Catholic parish established in Tangerang following the expansion of the Batavia Apostolic Vicariate in 1929, a jurisdiction that later evolved into the Archdiocese of Jakarta (Tripathi & Kumar, 2022). The Catholic presence in the Banten region—extending to Serang, Lebak, Pandeglang, and Tangerang—was historically anchored by missionary activities, particularly those conducted by the Franciscan Order (OFM) during the Dutch colonial era.

The institutionalization of the Catholic Church in Tangerang mirrors broader patterns of religious expansion, colonial influence, and post-independence adaptation in Indonesia. Initially emerging from missionary stations, the Church evolved into a formal parish structure, responding to demographic growth, urban development, and socio-political shifts. The historical trajectory of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Parish illustrates how Catholicism in Indonesia has adapted to local customs and engaged with multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities while maintaining its doctrinal integrity (Arvante et al., 2022; Muktiono et al., 2021).

As urbanization accelerated in Tangerang throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries, religious institutions increasingly became focal points of community organization, education, and social welfare. The parish church not only served as a site of weekly Eucharistic celebration but also emerged as a cultural and social center that promoted interreligious dialogue and civic participation. Through both its liturgical practices and community outreach, the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Parish has fostered positive relationships with non-Catholic populations, contributing to the strengthening of interfaith tolerance—a key tenet in Indonesia's pluralistic society (Shuhufi et al., 2020; Huda et al., 2024).

One defining feature of this parish is its consistent effort to respond to the evolving needs of its congregation through architectural and infrastructural improvisation. By enhancing its interior and exterior features to better accommodate growing attendance and diverse cultural expressions, the parish reflects the broader Catholic vision of inculturation—adapting religious practice to local cultural contexts without compromising core teachings (Rukiyanto, 2019). The inclusion of Javanese gamelan music during Eucharistic celebrations or the celebration of Chinese New Year festivities within church grounds illustrates this process of cultural integration.

The period from 2013 to 2022 marks a transformative decade in the parish's history. Quantitative data derived from interviews with church leaders show consistent growth in the number of congregants—from approximately 16,000 in 2013 to nearly 18,750 in 2022—necessitating both administrative restructuring and the expansion of church facilities. The demographic composition of the congregation has also diversified, including ethnic groups such as the Chinese, Javanese, Papuan, and people from Sulawesi and Maluku (Parish Priest Interview Results, 2022). This diversification has led to more inclusive cultural programming and broader pastoral outreach.

During this same period, the parish launched several programs that reflect its social mission, consistent with the Catholic Church's preferential option for the poor and marginalized. These included free medical services to prison inmates, basic food distribution during Ramadan, and health outreach in underprivileged areas (Greenwood, 2008; Klimczuk & Dovie, 2024). The church's collaborative efforts with Muslim communities during Islamic holy months have been particularly instrumental in building

interfaith solidarity (Shalihin & Sholihin, 2022).

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 served as a litmus test for the church's resilience. Like many religious institutions worldwide, the parish adapted by transitioning its services to online platforms. Live-streamed Masses, virtual catechism classes, and online devotional activities maintained spiritual engagement during a time of physical distancing. These innovations not only ensured continuity of worship but also marked a shift toward hybrid models of ecclesiastical communication—a trend likely to persist in the post-pandemic era (Salter & Wilkinson, 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, this study is grounded in the functionalist theory of religion, particularly as articulated by Karl Marx and later sociologists. While Marx famously critiqued religion as an "opiate of the masses," he also acknowledged its capacity to provide comfort and social cohesion in a fractured society (Van Elk, 2021). In this light, the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Parish Church serves both spiritual and socio-political functions: it is a place of divine encounter and a node of communal solidarity. It offers moral guidance, educational resources, cultural affirmation, and welfare assistance—thus becoming a key actor in shaping civil society in Tangerang.

Methodologically, this research draws on a combination of primary and secondary sources, including parish records, oral histories, photographs, and academic publications. Historical methods such as heuristics and historiography are employed to reconstruct the church's development over time (Elena et al., 2010; González-González et al., 2022). These sources provide a textured understanding of how the parish navigated structural challenges, demographic shifts, and sociopolitical transformations.

In choosing to focus on the 2013–2022 period, this study captures a moment of accelerated institutional maturity and community engagement. It documents how the parish managed internal growth, responded to external challenges, and remained rooted in its foundational mission of evangelization and service. The decade in question also aligns with national and global shifts in how religious institutions interact with their congregations—balancing tradition with innovation, and devotion with development.

In conclusion, the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church represents a microcosm of the Catholic Church's role in Indonesia: a faith-based institution deeply entwined with the historical, cultural, and civic life of its surroundings. Its development over the last decade offers valuable insights into how religious communities adapt, grow, and contribute meaningfully to the public good in pluralistic societies.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of religion has long been a cornerstone of social science and humanities research, encompassing diverse interpretations that explore its moral, social, and cultural roles. The theoretical framework for analyzing religion generally falls into two broad categories: substantive and functional perspectives (Hefner, 2021; Van Elk, 2021). These paradigms help contextualize the historical development and social impact of religious institutions like the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang.

The substantive approach defines religion in terms of its content—belief in a higher power, sacred texts, rituals, and doctrines. Substantive theorists emphasize religion's spiritual and moral dimensions, rooted in personal faith and theological systems. Under this view, religion is seen as a system of beliefs and values centered on the divine. It focuses on how religion offers personal meaning, moral guidance, and a sense of sacredness for individuals and communities. The strength of this model lies in its ability to address the internal motivations and theological commitments of believers (Hefner, 2021).

In contrast, the functionalist approach examines religion as a social institution that performs critical roles within a society. Functionalist scholars such as Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx analyzed religion through its effects on social structure, cohesion, and identity. For Durkheim, religion serves to unify people by creating a collective conscience, while Marx viewed it as a reflection of material conditions, often acting as a tool for social control but also as a form of solace for oppressed populations (Van Elk, 2021). In this perspective, religion is a response to psychological and sociological needs. It offers meaning, reinforces norms, promotes solidarity, and, in some cases, fosters resistance.

In this study, the functionalist perspective is particularly useful. The Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church not only functions as a place of spiritual nourishment but also serves as a critical actor in addressing communal needs—offering healthcare, education, social services, and interfaith engagement. These functions support Marx's assertion, developed with Friedrich Engels in *On Religion*, that religion provides emotional refuge while also shaping social dynamics and power structures. Though Marx critiques religion's potential to dull revolutionary impulses, he acknowledges its role in offering moral guidance and communal identity amid hardship (Van Elk, 2021).

Understanding religion's functional dimensions is especially relevant in the Indonesian context, where religious institutions often fill gaps left by the state in providing social welfare. As observed by Shuhufi et al. (2020) and Muktiono et al. (2021), Catholic institutions in Indonesia frequently serve as hubs of healthcare, education, and social integration—particularly in areas characterized by ethnic and religious plurality. In this regard, the Catholic Church does not operate in isolation but is embedded within a broader interfaith network, reflecting Indonesia's commitment to *Pancasila*, the national ideology that upholds religious harmony.

Studies such as Arvante et al. (2022) and Huda et al. (2024) further highlight the importance of religious institutions in fostering interreligious understanding. The Catholic Church's involvement in social outreach and public events promotes dialogue with Muslim-majority communities in Indonesia, mitigating sectarian tensions and encouraging mutual respect. This aligns with functionalist theories that view religion as a stabilizing force in complex societies.

Additionally, research on religious education and liturgical adaptation shows how churches like the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Parish have embraced inculturation—the process by which religious practices are adapted to local cultures (Rukiyanto, 2019). For instance, the church incorporates Javanese and Chinese traditions into its celebrations, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging among ethnically diverse congregants. This practice strengthens social cohesion, deepens community participation, and illustrates how religious institutions mediate between global doctrines and local identities.

From a methodological standpoint, historical research into religious institutions often employs a combination of oral history, archival analysis, and ethnographic observation (Elena et al., 2010). This study relies on such methods to reconstruct the church's institutional memory and trace its evolution across key periods of development. González-González et al. (2022) underscore the value of historical reenactment and narrative in making past experiences relevant to contemporary contexts—especially when investigating how churches navigate modernization, urbanization, and cultural transformation.

In summary, the literature demonstrates that religion in Indonesia functions not only as a system of belief but also as a robust institution capable of responding to societal needs and transformations. By situating the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish within this broader theoretical and empirical discourse, this study highlights how local religious history is deeply

interconnected with social, political, and cultural developments. The functionalist perspective, in particular, helps explain how the church has managed to remain relevant and influential in a rapidly changing urban environment like Tangerang.

### 3. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative historical research method to investigate the development of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang City, Banten, during the period 2013–2022. Historical research is essential for reconstructing past events and understanding the socio-cultural and institutional transformations of religious communities over time. The research process includes five key stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, historiography, and validation—each crucial in ensuring historical accuracy and scholarly reliability (Elena et al., 2010; González-González et al., 2022).

#### 3.1. Heuristics (Data Collection)

Heuristics, the first stage in historical research, involves collecting and identifying relevant sources. In this study, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary sources include church archives, parish newsletters, visual documentation (such as photographs of church events), interview transcripts from parish clergy, and official communications from the Archdiocese of Jakarta. These documents provide first-hand insights into the church's physical development, congregational dynamics, and social outreach activities during the targeted decade.

In addition to primary data, secondary sources were consulted to situate the church's development within broader religious, cultural, and political contexts. These include academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, previous historical research, government reports on religious demographics, and media publications. Literature reviews also drew from scholarly work on Indonesian religious history, urban religious pluralism, and the sociology of religion (Hefner, 2021; Muktiono et al., 2021; Firman, 2008).

This dual-source approach enables triangulation, strengthening the validity of historical reconstruction by comparing multiple accounts of the same event or phenomenon (Xu et al., 2021).

#### 3.2. Source Criticism (Evaluation)

The second stage, source criticism, involves evaluating the credibility, origin, and reliability of collected sources. Primary documents were assessed based on their date of creation, authorship, proximity to the events described, and consistency with other sources. For instance, statements from the parish priest and long-serving church members were corroborated with parish records and external media coverage.

Source criticism was also applied to visual materials such as photographs and parish publications, ensuring that image dates and event descriptions matched documented timelines. This evaluation ensures that anecdotal narratives, while rich in detail, are grounded in verifiable fact (Elena et al., 2010).

#### 3.3. Interpretation (Analysis)

In the interpretation phase, qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Key themes—such as infrastructural development, ethnic diversity among congregants, liturgical innovations, and social service activities—were identified and coded based on frequency and significance in the source material.

This interpretive process draws on the functionalist theory of religion, particularly the idea that religious institutions fulfill social, cultural, and psychological functions within society (Van Elk, 2021). The church's responses to urbanization, migration, and interfaith interaction are interpreted as intentional adaptations to shifting community needs.

Interpretive insights were further informed by the framework of inculturation, which explains how religious traditions adapt to and incorporate local cultural practices (Rukiyanto, 2019). For example, the church's incorporation of Javanese gamelan and Chinese New Year festivities into liturgical life was interpreted as a deliberate cultural integration strategy.

#### 3.4. Historiography (Writing)

The fourth stage—historiography—refers to the structured writing and presentation of historical findings. Here, the researcher reconstructs a coherent narrative from collected data, integrating factual content with analytical interpretation. The historiographical approach employed aligns with González-González et al. (2022), who advocate for narrative-based historical writing that connects empirical data with thematic insights.

Each chapter of this study reflects this approach, blending documentary analysis with narrative flow. The structure moves chronologically while drawing attention to thematic patterns across time. Events such as the renovation of church infrastructure, expansion of social services, and pandemic-era adaptations are described not as isolated episodes but as part of a larger trajectory of growth and transformation.

#### 3.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was not required for this study as it is based on publicly available documents, institutional archives, and voluntary interviews with parish staff. Verbal consent was obtained for all interviews, and participants' identities have been anonymized where appropriate to maintain confidentiality.

The research follows ethical standards in historical scholarship, including proper citation, source attribution, and avoidance of bias in interpretation.

The methodology adopted in this study ensures a rigorous, credible, and contextualized understanding of the historical development of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang. By combining archival research, oral history, and interpretive analysis within a functionalist theoretical framework, the study reconstructs how the church adapted to demographic, cultural, and institutional challenges over a critical decade.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Historical Context of Parish Formation

The establishment of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang traces its roots to the missionary activities of the Dutch colonial period. Catholicism first took institutional form in the area through the expansion of the Batavia Apostolic Vicariate in 1929, encompassing regions such as Tangerang, Serang, and Pandeglang (Tripathi & Kumar, 2022). The early Catholic presence was formalized with the assignment of missionary priests, such as Father Jacobus Van Leengoed in 1948, who initiated pastoral duties and administered the first recorded baptism in Tangerang (Posada et al., 2020).

These early years were marked by limited infrastructure and mobile pastoral care. However, efforts were made to develop Catholic education and worship facilities, including the acquisition and renovation of a former school building that became the Strada School under Franciscan missionary supervision (Yang et al., 2025). This period laid the groundwork for institutional stability and the eventual construction of a dedicated church structure.

The transition from mission stations (*stasi*) to a fully-fledged parish occurred gradually. By the early 1970s, due to significant increases in the number of congregants and the geographic spread of the faithful, the church leadership initiated the construction of a new church building. In 1973, this new facility was completed and inaugurated by Mgr. Leo Soekoto, the Archbishop of Jakarta, symbolizing the parish's maturity and commitment to expanded religious services (Van Der Watt, 2023).

### 4.2. Growth of the Catholic Community (2013–2022)

From 2013 to 2022, the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Parish Church experienced marked demographic and structural growth. According to parish records and interview data, the number of congregants increased from 16,000 in 2013 to 18,750 by 2022. This growth can be attributed to multiple factors: urban migration, natural population increase, and successful evangelization and outreach programs (Parish Priest Interview Results, 2022).

Table 1 in the original manuscript documents this steady numerical growth. However, the data also reveal ethnic diversity within the congregation. The Javanese, Chinese, Papuan, and Sulawesi ethnic groups constitute significant proportions of the parish membership. By 2022, the Chinese and Javanese ethnic groups were the most dominant, partly due to the church's cultural inclusivity, such as hosting gamelan-accompanied Masses during the Javanese *Satu Suro* and Chinese New Year celebrations (Rejowska, 2023).

This embrace of cultural plurality not only reflects the Church's commitment to inculturation but also enhances its role in fostering inter-ethnic unity among congregants. These liturgical and social events became a medium for integrating diverse communities, strengthening collective religious identity across cultural lines (Rukiyanto, 2019).

### 4.3. Infrastructure Development and Liturgical Innovation

In response to the increasing number of congregants and evolving liturgical needs, the parish implemented several phases of infrastructure renovation and expansion. The 2013–2014 renovations were modest due to limited financial resources, yet they marked a strategic shift toward future growth (Ukah, 2019). Parish income—primarily derived from weekly offerings and donations—was carefully allocated between internal needs and contributions to the Archdiocese of Jakarta, emphasizing financial transparency and shared ecclesiastical responsibility (Koehrsen & Heuser, 2019).

Subsequent years saw enhancements to the sanctuary, catechesis classrooms, audiovisual systems for digital liturgy, and community gathering spaces. These developments not only improved physical capacity but also symbolized the parish's commitment to offering a dignified and inclusive space for worship and education.

A significant innovation during this decade was the Church's use of digital media—especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, when physical gatherings were restricted, the parish livestreamed Masses, organized online catechism classes, and established WhatsApp-based prayer networks. This digital transformation expanded the Church's reach beyond physical walls and allowed continuity in pastoral care and worship (Salter & Wilkinson, 2023).

### 4.4. Social Outreach and Community Engagement

The Church's influence extended beyond its walls into the broader socio-religious landscape of Tangerang City. Social outreach programs were critical components of its mission, reflecting the Church's theological commitment to the preferential option for the poor.

In 2013, the parish hosted its ninth Personal Evangelization Course, a program that educates parishioners on faith articulation and evangelism. The theme, "Let Us Be Ready to Be Sent," underscored the Church's focus on forming active agents of social and spiritual transformation (Bryan et al., 2020).

In 2015, the parish partnered with other regional parishes to provide free medical services to over 700 inmates at the Class 2A Youth Penitentiary in Tangerang. This initiative demonstrated the Church's concern for marginalized groups and exemplified its public witness to Christian compassion (Greenwood, 2008).

By 2018, as part of the Church's 70th anniversary, the parish organized a "Gowok" event—an acronym derived from "jalan kaki" (walking)—attended by 1,200 people. The event included competitions, social recreation, and cultural displays designed to build community bonds. It was complemented by the distribution of basic necessities to underprivileged households during Ramadan, an act of interfaith solidarity and local peacebuilding (Shalihin & Sholihin, 2022).

In 2022, the parish intensified its social service outreach, particularly through a program that distributed food packages and cleaning supplies to the Miftahul Huda Orphanage in Rawa Kucing, Sewan. Funded by parishioner donations, the initiative reflected a growing institutional maturity in charity coordination and interfaith cooperation (Klimczuk & Dovie, 2024).

### 4.5. Impact on Religious Tolerance and Civic Identity

Perhaps the most profound outcome of the Church's activities over the past decade is its contribution to religious tolerance and civic harmony. Situated in a predominantly Muslim area, the parish has actively sought ways to integrate and harmonize religious coexistence through both symbolic gestures and concrete programs.

The parish's Ramadan food drives, interfaith dialogues, and participation in community festivals signify a proactive approach to peacebuilding. These efforts align with national efforts to preserve religious harmony under Indonesia's *Pancasila* ideology and resonate with international discourses on faith-based peacebuilding (Qurtuby, 2013; Haynes, 2009).

Moreover, by nurturing an internal culture of ethnic inclusivity and promoting an external posture of mutual respect, the Church has become a model for other faith institutions in urban Indonesia.

#### 4.6. Development of the Catholic Community

The church which is the place of worship for Christians has been mentioned in the term "People of God". As stated in the New Testament Scriptures, precisely in chapter 2, verses 41-47, which explains that the people who have entrusted Jesus Christ as the Son of God have given the congregations as their followers to carry out the ceremony of self-baptism. The self-baptism ceremony is considered the first step in learning the teachings handed down by the apostles, which ultimately fulfills them in holding charismatic gatherings to pray and celebrate the eucharist together.

Likewise in the New Testament Scriptures, precisely in chapter 28 verses 19-20, it emphasizes that we must go to preach the Kingdom of God. Make them (in the sense of "congregation") disciples of Jesus and celebrate His baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Teach them what Jesus Christ Himself taught, who always taught His followers until the end of time. This depiction in the Gospel of Matthew is part of a song of thanksgiving to Jesus Christ in "Thematic Songs: Calling, Mission and Service" from the book of Praise and Thanksgiving with number 695 entitled "I Hear the Whisper of Your Voice" (KWI Liturgy Commission, 2011, p. 685).

Table 1: Catholic Congregation Growth Per Year (Estimate)

| Years | Number of people |
|-------|------------------|
| 2013  | 16.000           |
| 2014  | 16.500           |
| 2015  | 17.300           |
| 2016  | 17.800           |
| 2017  | 17.900           |
| 2018  | 18.000           |
| 2019  | 18.120           |
| 2020  | 18.150           |
| 2021  | 18.250           |
| 2022  | 18.750           |

Source: Parish Priest Interview Results

Table 2: Development of Catholic Congregations Based on Ethnicity (Estimate).

| Ethnicity  | Years |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
|            | 2013  | 2014  | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019   | 2020   | 2021  | 2022  |
| Chinese    | 3.5k  | 3.5k  | 3.6k  | 3.9k  | 3.9k  | 3.95k | 4.0k   | 4.0k   | 4.7k  | 4.7k  |
| Javanese   | 4k    | 4.5k  | 4.7k  | 4.7k  | 4.7k  | 4.7k  | 4.7k   | 4.7k   | 4.0k  | 4.7k  |
| Papuan     | 3k    | 3k    | 3.1k  | 3.3k  | 3.3k  | 3.35k | 3.35k  | 3.35k  | 3.35k | 3.35k |
| Sulawesi   | 2.5k  | 2.5k  | 2.7k  | 2.9k  | 3.0k  | 3.0k  | 3.05k  | 3.05k  | 3.1k  | 3k    |
| Maluku     | 2.5k  | 2.5k  | 2.9k  | 3.0k  | 3.0k  | 3.0k  | 3.0k   | 3.05k  | 3.1k  | 3k    |
| Foreigners | 0.5k  | 0.5k  | 0.3k  | -     | -     | -     | -      | -      | -     | -     |
| Total      | 16k   | 16.5k | 17.3k | 17.8k | 17.9k | 18k   | 18.12k | 18.15k | 18.25 | -     |

Source: Parish Priest Interview Results

From the two estimated data above, the Javanese are more dominant than the Chinese in the 2013-2021 period. However, it is different when entering 2022, where the Chinese ethnic group occupies the first position like the Javanese ethnic group. This is because the calendar of events held by the Catholic Church greatly affects the number of congregants at the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Church. This is indicated by the Javanese having the "Satu Suro" event, which celebrates the eucharist using gamelan and sinden musical instruments, while the Chinese have the "Chinese New Year" event which is held every year (Rejowska, 2023). However, the Catholic Church does not rule out the possibility of calibrating events for other ethnic groups in celebrating the eucharist with the congregation and in accordance with the culture inherent in the ethnicity of its congregation.

#### 4.7. Development of Improvisation of Facilities and Infrastructure in Facilitating the Increase in the Number of Congregations at the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Tangerang City, Banten

At the beginning of the pioneering of the church which was still in the form of a station in 1952, which already had a coverage of the Tangerang Region consisting of 17 sub-districts in the district, it had facilities from infrastructure that were only sufficient for the number of congregations who performed worship (Gubler, 2011). However, around the end of the 80s, the City of Tangerang experienced a significant increase into a city that was fairly advanced in terms of population. The influx of immigrants also made the City of Tangerang large. Most of these immigrants came from Java Island, including Central Java and East Java (Firman, 2008).

In early 1987, the parish church "Heart of the Immaculate Virgin Mary" underwent renovations that occurred in the parish church building as a place of worship, especially in the appearance of the church (Ukah, 2019). The appearance of the church in 2013 to 2014 only showed ornaments and facilities that looked simple. This is because the church in that year had not received enough income to renovate the church. In the distribution of income, donations given by the congregation not only became income for the church's cash but were also divided for cash that would be given to the Archdiocese of Jakarta (Koehrsen & Heuser, 2019).

#### 4.8. The Influence of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church on Social Society in Tangerang City, Banten (2013 - 2022)

In the Old Testament, precisely taken from chapter 3, verse 22, it states that there is no end to measuring the greatness of His faithful love and mercy (Haynes, 2009). This quote taken from the Book of Lamentations is then fulfilled again in the New Testament, precisely taken from chapter 2, verses 4, 8-10, which also states that what has been bestowed upon us is His abundant love and the faith that saves us is the grace that He has given us. What He has given is not our own because we, as humans, are His creations created to be able to do good works that God has prepared beforehand. He also wants us to be able to live with and in Him. From the two Bible quotes, especially in the Old Testament from the Book of Lamentations and in the New Testament from the Book of Ephesians, it is a fulfillment of the duties and obligations given by God as a form of influence of the Catholic Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in the social aspect towards the congregation and adherents of other religions in the surrounding area and areas that are also included in the authority of the Archdiocese of Jakarta.

In 2013

In 2013, the Personal Evangelization Course program was implemented. The Personal Evangelization Course is a teaching and measurement of the Catholic faith (Bryan et al., 2020). The Personal Evangelization Course held in 2013 was the ninth class celebration and raised the theme "Let Us Be Ready to Be Sent" which was held from May 6 to September 17, 2013.

In 2015

In 2015, there were several agendas that had an impact on the social aspects of the community for the congregation and other people in the Tangerang City area. However, the focus of the author was the free medical treatment event at the Class 2A Youth Penitentiary in Tangerang City, Banten. The event, which collaborated with 5 Catholic parish churches, namely the Santa Monika Parish, the Pamulang Catholic Church, namely the Saint Barnabas Parish, the Alam Sutera Catholic Church, namely the Saint Laurensius Parish, the Bintaro Jaya Catholic Church Sector 7, namely the Santa Maria Regina Parish, and the Bintaro Catholic Church, namely the Matius Penginjil Parish, has served 700 inmates who have received medical treatment and was held on September 19, 2015 (Greenwood, 2008).

In 2018

In 2018, several agendas affected the social aspects of the community for the congregation and other people in the Tangerang City area. Some of these agendas were the implementation of the gowok event and the distribution of kenduri. In order to welcome the 70th Anniversary of the Church, one of the events held was a healthy walk event (Qurtuby, 2013). This healthy walk event was called Gowok, which is a play on the word "Jalan Kaki". This event was attended by around 1,200 people and aims to be a means for the congregation to gather in competitions, sports, family recreation, and others as an internal form and a means for the congregation to be able to interact with the Tangerang City community in realizing harmony and tolerance between religious communities as an external form.



Figure 1: Gowok Event.

Source: [www.beritasatu.com](http://www.beritasatu.com)

In order to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Church, one of the events held was a joint prayer and distribution of basic necessities to the community in the area around the Catholic church. The joint prayer and distribution of basic necessities coincided with the entry of the Holy Month of Ramadan (Shalihin & Sholihin, 2022). With this event, we can establish relationships with people who have different beliefs and can also foster a high sense of brotherhood and find the value and meaning of solidarity.



**Figure 2.**  
Joint Prayer Event.  
Source: [www.beritasatu.com](http://www.beritasatu.com)

In the year of 2022:

In 2022, there are several agendas that have an impact on the social aspects of society for congregations and adherents of other beliefs in the Tangerang City area. However, the author's focus is the procurement program in social service activities, namely the distribution of basic necessities and cleaning equipment which are donations from the congregation (Klimczuk & Dovie, 2024). The program was well received and welcomed with joy, and the program was carried out on April 4, 2022 at the Miftahul Huda Orphanage located in Rawa Kucing, Sewan, Tangerang City, Banten.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion material above, it can be concluded that the church is a place of worship for the Christian congregation in welcoming the Body and Blood of Christ. The Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Parish Church in Tangerang City, Banten, became the first Catholic parish church in Tangerang City, Banten, which is under the Archdiocese of Jakarta. Then, along with the development from year to year, there was an increase in the development of the congregation and church architecture as a form of close equality between the two. After that, there was also an influence in the development between the congregation and architecture in the social aspects of society. The influence of the social aspects of society can affect the congregation and also people with different beliefs as a form of tolerance towards religious communities. Starting from the submission of sacrificial animals, social service activities, cultural preservation, etc.

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