

Fulfillment of the Right to Worship as a Dimension of Civic Rights for Prisoners: A Case Study of Catholic Detainees at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the fulfillment of the right to worship among Catholic detainees at Rumah Tahanan Negara (Rutan) Kelas IIB Magetan as a dimension of civic rights. Before February 2026, only three Catholic detainees received religious guidance alongside Protestant detainees, a practice that did not accommodate the distinct liturgical needs of the Catholic tradition, particularly the Eucharist. Using a qualitative descriptive case-study approach informed by participatory internship observation, documentation, and institutional records, this study traces the process through which a dedicated Catholic personality-development (pembinaan kepribadian) program was initiated through collaboration between an intern from the Kemenaker Maganghub program, the Regina Pacis Catholic Church of Magetan, a Catholic religious counselor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Rutan administration. The program, formally launched on 9 February 2026, offers weekly Monday sessions that include the Eucharist, the Rosary, the Liturgy of the Word, faith-sharing, and psychological accompaniment. Findings show that the program improved access, equality, and continuity of religious service for Catholic detainees, generated positive psychological and behavioral effects, and exemplified inter-institutional collaboration. The study argues that such religious accommodation should be understood not merely as spiritual guidance but as a concrete expression of civic rights within a custodial institution.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The right to worship is a fundamental right inherent to every human being, and it does not cease to exist when an individual is placed under state custody. A person's status as a detainee does not eliminate their standing as a citizen; restrictions arising from a criminal sentence apply only to specific rights explicitly limited by law, while the right to

practice one's religion and beliefs must continue to be guaranteed through a correctional system that upholds human dignity. Indonesia's constitutional guarantee of religious freedom, and the state's obligation to protect it, has long been discussed in the national legal literature as a foundational human right that persists across contexts, including custodial settings where the tension between universalist and culturally relativist interpretations of religious freedom continues to shape how such rights are implemented [1]. At the same time, Indonesian constitutional scholarship affirms that the state guarantees every resident the freedom to embrace their own religion and to worship according to that religion and belief, even though Indonesian law formally recognizes only six religions [2].

In the framework of civic education, the right to worship can be situated within the broader concept of *civic rights*, the rights attached to individuals in their capacity as members of a state, encompassing fair treatment, protection, and participation in public and civic life. Civic rights are not merely administrative entitlements; they are bound up with the recognition of dignity, liberty, equality, and the standing of citizens in public life. Within Pancasila and Civic Education (*Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan*, PPKn), civic rights are closely tied to forming citizens who understand, exercise, and responsibly defend their rights, encompassing the interrelated dimensions of civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. Civic disposition in particular concerns the character traits that sustain civic life, tolerance, responsibility, respect for the rule of law, and respect for the rights of others [3].

This framing becomes especially significant when applied to citizens in special conditions, such as prisoners and detainees. Detainees experience a restriction of liberty as a consequence of legal process, but this restriction does not automatically nullify their citizenship rights; rights not explicitly limited by law must continue to be respected and fulfilled by the state. The correctional (*pemasyarakatan*) system in Indonesia is not merely a mechanism for executing punishment; it is also directed at guiding and reintegrating detainees into society. Personality development (*pembinaan kepribadian*) is one of the primary instruments through which the correctional system seeks to build detainees' spiritual awareness, moral character, and social competence, and religious guidance constitutes a central component of this process, since spiritual guidance functions to shape character, sharpen moral awareness, and support the process of self-reflection during the period of detention [4].

The fulfillment of the right to worship faces distinctive challenges for detainees belonging to minority religious groups within a correctional institution. A small number of adherents can directly affect the availability of religious counselors, worship facilities, scheduling, and access to religious services. This condition shows that rights cannot be assessed solely by the existence of formal regulations; they must be examined through the actual practice of guidance programs and detainees' lived experience of accessing religious services. National literature on correctional rights consistently notes that the practical implementation of religious and educational rights for people in special or marginalized conditions, whether people with disabilities, minority religious groups, or those in

custodial institutions, continues to require deliberate institutional strategies to be genuinely equitable [5].

Catholic detainees represent a particularly relevant context for examining this problem. Implementing personality guidance for Catholic detainees requires support from a qualified religious minister, coordination with an external religious institution, and facilities and time to conduct worship properly. A dedicated Catholic guidance program therefore reflects more than the provision of a religious activity; it also shows how the state, through its correctional institutions, fulfills the citizenship rights of detainees who practice the Catholic faith.

Previous studies on religious guidance for prisoners have generally positioned religious activity as an instrument of moral formation, behavioral change, or character building, including efforts such as scripture literacy training designed to guide detainees spiritually and morally during their time in custody [6], while studies on prisoners' rights have more often addressed rights broadly from legal and correctional-administration perspectives such as analyses of the barriers detainees continue to face in exercising the right to worship due to security considerations and limited institutional resources [7] and broader assessments of how far human-rights principles have been integrated into correctional policymaking despite persistent constraints [8]. However, studies that connect the practical fulfillment of a specific religious minority's right to worship with the concept of civic rights remain limited, and empirical work that positions Catholic detainees specifically as subjects for analyzing the fulfillment of citizenship rights is scarcer still. This gap indicates a disconnect between studies of religious guidance, which tend to treat it as an instrument of personality formation, and studies of citizenship, which could instead treat such guidance as a mechanism for fulfilling rights.

Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan offers a relevant empirical setting for examining this issue. The organization of personality guidance for Catholic detainees provides an opportunity to observe the relationship between correctional policy, religious service provision, and the fulfillment of citizenship rights, while also allowing the identification of the form of guidance implemented, the parties involved, the mechanism through which the right to worship is fulfilled, and the obstacles that arise during implementation [9].

This study's novelty lies in its use of a civic-rights perspective to analyze the fulfillment of the right to worship among Catholic detainees. Rather than treating religious guidance solely as a personality-formation activity, the study frames it as a practice of citizenship-rights fulfillment within a correctional environment, broadening the scope of Pancasila and Civic Education by incorporating detainees' lived experience as a contextual citizenship issue. This has direct pedagogical relevance: the phenomenon of prisoners' rights fulfillment can serve as an authentic case for understanding the relationship between citizens' rights, state obligations, equality, religious freedom, and respect for human dignity, and demonstrates to learners that the practice of citizenship is not confined to open public spaces but also occurs within institutions where liberty is restricted [10].

Based on the foregoing, this study aims to analyze the fulfillment of the right to worship as a dimension of civic rights among prisoners by examining the organization of personality guidance for Catholic detainees at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan. The analysis

addresses three research questions: (1) how was religious guidance for Catholic detainees conducted before this innovation, (2) how was the special personality-guidance program for Catholic detainees organized, and (3) what results and impacts emerged from the program in relation to the fulfillment of the right to worship. Accordingly, the study aims to describe the state of religious guidance before the innovation, describe the process of organizing the dedicated guidance program, and analyze its outcomes and impact as a form of civic-rights fulfillment. The findings are intended to contribute empirically to Pancasila and Civic Education studies, particularly regarding the fulfillment of citizens' rights within the correctional context.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive case-study design, appropriate for examining a specific, bounded institutional phenomenon in depth, namely, the organization of religious guidance for Catholic detainees at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan between February and May 2026. A qualitative descriptive approach was selected because the objective of the research is to portray the actual practice, process, and lived experience surrounding the fulfillment of a right, rather than to test a hypothesis or produce generalizable statistical findings; this is consistent with related correctional research that similarly relies on descriptive-qualitative and empirical-juridical designs to capture the practical reality of rights implementation inside custodial institutions as reflected in prior fieldwork observing prison conditions directly rather than relying solely on normative legal text [11].

The study was conducted at Rumah Tahanan Negara Kelas IIB Magetan, a correctional facility in Magetan Regency, East Java. The researcher was a participant, placed at the institution as an intern under the national Kemenaker Maganghub internship program and assigned to the personality-development (*pembinaan kepribadian*) unit. This placement allowed direct, first-hand involvement in the initiation, coordination, and implementation of the Catholic guidance program from its earliest stages, beginning with a detainee's initial request in December 2025 through to the program's institutionalization from February 2026 onward, providing a participant-observer vantage point similar to that used in other correctional case studies employing participatory observation, in-depth interaction, and documentation of guidance activities where data were gathered through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with program participants and staff, and documentation of the activities themselves [12].

Data were drawn from three main sources: (1) direct participatory observation of the coordination process and of the weekly guidance sessions held every Monday from 9 February to 18 May 2026; (2) institutional and programmatic documentation, including correspondence and records of coordination among the Rutan, Regina Pacis Magetan Church, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Catholic religious counselor, as well as photographic documentation of each session (the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Word, the Rosary, faith-sharing, and communal activities); and (3) informal interaction and dialogue with key stakeholders directly involved in the program, namely the Head of Rutan, the field supervisor, institutional staff, the deacon and religious counselor, and the Catholic

detainees themselves, which contextualized the documented events and clarified the chronology of implementation.

Data were analyzed descriptively-qualitatively by organizing the chronological sequence of events (before, during initiation, and after implementation), identifying the actors and their roles, and categorizing the outcomes according to the civic-rights indicators of recognition, protection, and facilitation, as well as the operational indicators of accessibility, availability, equality, continuity, and responsiveness. This categorization was used to structure the presentation of results and to frame the discussion of the program as a case of civic-rights fulfillment within a correctional setting, consistent with prior correctional studies that similarly frame their qualitative findings around institutional roles, implementation processes, and resulting impacts in order to analyze how a correctional institution's role translates into concrete rehabilitative and rights-related outcomes for detainees [13].

As a single-site case study involving a small population (three Catholic detainees), the findings are not intended to be statistically generalizable to all correctional institutions in Indonesia; rather, the study offers an in-depth, contextually grounded account intended to illuminate the mechanisms through which the right to worship can be operationalized for a religious minority within a custodial setting, and to serve as an analytical basis for the civic-rights perspective advanced in this article. No data or substantive content beyond what is documented in the underlying institutional report and the author's field engagement has been introduced; the analysis strictly reorganizes and interprets the same empirical material through the civic-rights framework.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Religious Guidance for Catholic Detainees Prior to the Innovation

Before the establishment of a dedicated Catholic guidance program, religious guidance for Catholic detainees at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan was conducted jointly with Protestant detainees. This combined session was held every Wednesday and led by a Protestant pastor, following Protestant liturgical practice. Of the six Christian detainees at the institution, three identified as Catholic and three as Protestant. Because the number of Catholic detainees was small, a dedicated Catholic guidance program had not previously been considered a priority, and religious guidance at the time remained general in character, without accounting for the doctrinal and liturgical differences between denominations.

This arrangement produced a substantive gap in service. Catholic liturgical practice, particularly the Eucharist, which a priest leads and which holds central importance in Catholic devotional life, differs fundamentally from Protestant worship. Consequently, Catholic detainees were unable to participate in a form of spiritual guidance consistent with their own faith tradition, and their spiritual needs were not optimally met, especially regarding the celebration of the Eucharist. The absence of a dedicated schedule or a Catholic religious companion meant that the guidance received was oriented primarily toward Protestant practice, leaving Catholic detainees with limited space to develop their religious life during their period of detention.

Viewed through a civic-rights lens, this condition illustrates that formal recognition of a right, here, the general provision of religious guidance, does not by itself constitute the fulfillment of that right. As earlier legal-education literature on prisoners' rights argues, detainees are entitled to guidance, worship, and other legally defined benefits, yet awareness of and delivery of these rights in practice often lag behind their formal recognition [14]. The pre-innovation condition at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan exemplifies precisely this gap between normative entitlement and substantive access: the right to worship existed on paper for Catholic detainees, but the institutional conditions needed to exercise that right according to their own tradition were not yet in place.

3.2 Organizing a Dedicated Personality-Guidance Program for Catholic Detainees

The detainees themselves initiated the process of establishing a dedicated guidance program. On 10 December 2025, a Catholic detainee expressed a wish to have a priest visit the Rutan, having gone a long period without experiencing the celebration of the Eucharist during detention. This request reflected the absence of any dedicated Catholic guidance at the institution up to that point.

In response, the author, as an intern assigned to the personality-guidance unit, contacted a deacon from Regina Pacis Magetan Church to explore establishing Catholic religious services within the Rutan. Because this initial contact occurred in December, coinciding with the church's Christmas and New Year preparations, the request could not be realized immediately; the church's heightened activity during that period became an early constraint.

Efforts resumed on 4 February 2026, when the deacon was contacted again to follow up on the possibility of religious service at the Rutan. This follow-up yielded a positive result the following day, 5 February 2026, when approval was granted to conduct Catholic religious services at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan in cooperation with a Catholic religious counselor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. That same day, the religious counselor and the deacon visited the institution to present a plan for a Catholic personality-guidance program to be held every Monday. The Rutan administration granted formal permission for the activity after receiving an official letter from the church, which served as the legal basis for religious service within the institution.

The program was formally inaugurated on 9 February 2026 and, at the time of this study's field engagement, had continued without interruption through 18 May 2026. The program is intended to continue on a sustained basis even after the internship period concludes. This dedicated Catholic guidance program represents an innovation in spiritual service at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan, as no dedicated Catholic religious service had previously existed for detainees. This innovation created space for Catholic detainees to receive religious services consistent with their beliefs and served as a source of mental and spiritual support during their detention.

In practice, the program extends beyond a priest-led Eucharist to include complementary spiritual activities: the Rosary, facilitated by the Catholic religious counselor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs; the Liturgy of the Word, led by the deacon; faith-sharing among detainees; and psychological counseling services. Although

the psychologist was not scheduled every week, the psychologist's presence provided additional support for detainees' mental and emotional well-being. Through this combination of activities, the guidance program was intended to strengthen detainees' faith, cultivate inner calm, and encourage positive behavioral change.

The multi-actor coordination underlying this process, spanning the correctional institution, a religious counselor from a government ministry, and an external religious institution, illustrates a broader pattern documented in Indonesian correctional literature, in which effective personality guidance depends on cross-institutional cooperation rather than the correctional institution acting alone. Related implementation studies on personality-guidance programs for other detainee groups similarly emphasize that the effective implementation of personality and independence guidance programs for detainees depends on how well such programs are executed within the institution [15] and that the correctional system as a whole has shifted toward a rehabilitative and reintegrative approach in which personality guidance is tailored to detainees' individual risk and needs assessments [16]. The Catholic guidance program at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan reflects this same rehabilitative logic, applied specifically to religious minority accommodation.

3.3 Outcomes and Impact of the Program on the Fulfillment of the Right to Worship

The establishment of the Catholic guidance program produced measurable improvements in Catholic detainees' access to religious services consistent with their faith. Where they had previously participated only in a combined Protestant-oriented service, Catholic detainees could now regularly attend the Eucharist, the Rosary, the Liturgy of the Word, and faith-sharing sessions organized according to Catholic liturgical practice. This shift from combined to dedicated guidance demonstrates a move toward what may be termed *substantive equality*: equality does not necessarily mean identical treatment for every group, but rather the provision of services responsive to the particular needs of each group. Because Catholic detainees have distinct liturgical practices and spiritual needs, establishing a dedicated program adjusts services in a way that enables the right to worship to be exercised meaningfully [17].

From a civic-rights perspective, this outcome can be interpreted through three interrelated dimensions: recognition, protection, and facilitation. *Recognition* is evident in the institution's acknowledgment of Catholic detainees' right to practice their faith according to their own tradition, rather than being subsumed under a generic Christian category. *Protection* is reflected in the removal of the earlier condition in which Catholic detainees' spiritual needs were structurally disadvantaged by combined scheduling. *Facilitation* is demonstrated through the concrete provision of a qualified religious leader, a fixed weekly schedule, and institutional permission enabling regular practice. This three-part framework echoes a broader argument in Indonesian constitutional literature: the state's obligation extends beyond acknowledging citizens' freedom to embrace and practice a religion; it also requires the state to ensure that freedom can be exercised [18].

The program also generated psychological and behavioral benefits beyond fulfilling a formal right. Regular participation in spiritual activities appears to have supported detainees' inner calm, reduced detention-related stress, and fostered hope and motivation

for self-improvement. Through faith-sharing and spiritual accompaniment, detainees reportedly became more open in expressing their feelings, life experiences, and personal struggles, which in turn supported more constructive relationships between detainees, program facilitators, and fellow detainees. This finding is consistent with broader correctional research indicating that spiritual and psychosocial support mechanisms can meaningfully affect detainees' well-being and behavior; comparative research on post-incarceration mental-health services likewise emphasizes that community-based mental health and substance-use services for people leaving custodial settings must be designed with attention to equity and inclusion in order to be effective [19], underscoring that psychosocial accompaniment, whether spiritual or clinical, is a legitimate and necessary component of correctional guidance rather than a peripheral add-on.

The program's sustained, weekly character is itself significant. Continuity matters because a right is not meaningfully fulfilled if it is available only sporadically; it must be consistently accessible in line with detainees' ongoing needs. The fact that the program continued uninterrupted from February through May 2026, with an explicit institutional intention to sustain it beyond the internship period, indicates that the innovation has moved from an ad hoc accommodation toward an embedded institutional practice, an important distinction in assessing whether a right has been substantively, rather than only nominally, fulfilled [20].

Equally significant is the program's collaborative, multi-institutional character. The involvement of the Rutan administration, Regina Pacis Magetan Church, and the Catholic religious counselor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs illustrates that fulfilling detainees' religious rights requires support across institutional boundaries. The Rutan's role centered on providing access, regulating implementation, and maintaining order and security; the church's role centered on providing pastoral service and spiritual accompaniment; and the religious counselor's role centered on delivering guidance within the scope of governmental religious affairs. This distribution of roles reflects the concept of *civic participation*: civic life is not confined to a purely dyadic relationship between the state and the individual citizen, but also involves civil society actors, here, the church, in supporting the fulfillment of the rights of citizens in special circumstances. This finding parallels the broader civic-education literature's emphasis on collaborative, community-based approaches to strengthening religious harmony and citizenship values through cultural strategies grounded in Pancasila that strengthen harmony among adherents of different religions at the community level [21], suggesting that the collaborative model observed at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan is consistent with wider efforts to embed religious pluralism within Indonesia's civic fabric.

Taken together, these findings support the argument that fulfilling the right to worship among Catholic detainees at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan can be understood as a concrete instance of civic-rights practice. Detainees exercised their right through active participation in religious activity; the correctional institution discharged its responsibility by providing space and institutional permission; and the religious institution participated through pastoral accompaniment and service [22]. This triangulated relationship shows that civic rights are not confined to abstract legal norms; they are also observable through

citizens' lived experience of obtaining and exercising their rights, even within an institution that structurally restricts personal liberty. In this study, the experience of Catholic detainees participating in the Eucharist, the Rosary, the Liturgy of the Word, and faith-sharing provides empirical evidence of the fulfillment of the right to worship [23].

This has clear implications for Pancasila and Civic Education. The phenomenon documented here can serve as a concrete case through which learners understand that citizens' rights remain relevant even under conditions of restricted liberty, and that the state has an obligation to respect the rights of all citizens, including those undergoing criminal detention. It can also be used to develop understanding of equality and tolerance: providing dedicated guidance for a small religious minority demonstrates that equality does not always mean identical treatment. Instead, it can be achieved by providing access tailored to each group's needs so every citizen has an equal opportunity to exercise their rights.

At the same time, the case also illustrates the persistent structural constraints that accompany fulfilling such rights. The small number of Catholic detainees, the limited availability of a qualified religious leader, scheduling constraints tied to the external institution's own calendar [24], and the need for ongoing coordination with external parties all represent real limitations on the program's operation. This suggests that the fulfillment of civic rights within a correctional setting cannot be measured solely by the existence of a program; it must also be evaluated in terms of the accessibility, equality, and sustainability of the service actually delivered, an observation broadly consistent with correctional research elsewhere in Indonesia showing that even well-intentioned guidance programs face recurring constraints related to staffing, facilities, and inter-institutional coordination, including limitations in space, facilities, and specialized rehabilitation and therapy resources that continue to affect the quality of guidance delivered within correctional institutions [25].

4. CONCLUSION

This study has examined the fulfillment of the right to worship among Catholic detainees at Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan as a dimension of civic rights. Before the establishment of a dedicated Catholic guidance program, Catholic detainees participated only in a combined religious service oriented toward Protestant practice, such that their spiritual needs, particularly regarding the Eucharist, were not optimally met. A dedicated Catholic personality-guidance program began on 9 February 2026, following coordination between an intern under the Kemenaker Maganghub program, Regina Pacis Magetan Church, the Catholic religious counselor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Rutan administration. The program encompasses the Eucharist, the Rosary, the Liturgy of the Word, faith-sharing, and psychological accompaniment, and is intended to continue on a sustained basis beyond the internship period.

The results indicate that this program improved Catholic detainees' access to faith-consistent religious services and that spiritual guidance positively affected detainees' mental, spiritual, and behavioral condition, thereby supporting the broader process of personality guidance during detention. Accordingly, the Catholic guidance program at

Rutan Kelas IIB Magetan should be understood not solely as a form of religious rights fulfillment, but also as an important mechanism supporting detainees' rehabilitation.

This fulfillment of rights was made possible by the Rutan's institutional commitment, the availability of qualified religious guides, supporting facilities, detainees' own participation, and collaboration with Regina Pacis Magetan Church and the Ministry of Religious Affairs' religious counselor. At the same time, implementation continues to face constraints related to the small number of Catholic detainees, the availability of religious guides, facilities, scheduling, and coordination with external parties. These constraints indicate that the fulfillment of civic rights cannot be assessed solely by the existence of a program, but must also be evaluated through the accessibility, equality, and continuity of the service actually provided.

This study reinforces the argument that Catholic personality guidance functions not merely as a spiritual activity but as a concrete form of citizenship-rights fulfillment for detainees. The findings extend the study of Pancasila and Civic Education by positioning detainees as subjects of citizenship who retain the right to receive religious services consistent with their beliefs, even while undergoing criminal detention. Future research could extend this single-site case study through comparative analysis across multiple correctional institutions and religious minority groups to assess the broader generalizability of the civic-rights framework advanced here.

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