

The Effect of Praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family to the Selected Filipino Catholic Students in Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila

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Abstract- *The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of praying the Act of Consecration to the Blessed Trinity to Filipino Catholic students in Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila for one month. A qualitative research design was used, with 13 students chosen from a class consisting of 57 students. The results showed that praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family positively impacted students' relationships with the Virgin Mary. The study also highlighted the importance of inclusivity, understanding religious practices, and helping Filipino families develop prayer habits.*

Indexed Terms- *Act of Consecration, Inclusivity, Prayer, Virgin Mary, Understanding Religious Practices.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The world recognizes the rich, colorful, and lively culture of the Philippines. Its inhabitants are renowned for being amiable, vivacious, joyous, and strong-willed. The language, traditions, and customs of the Philippines, along with the growth and advancement of religion, all have a significant impact on the behaviors, attitudes, and habits of its people.

Religion is the structured set of practices, cultural norms, and beliefs that relate humankind to spiritual objects or phenomena. Because the bulk of Filipinos are monotheistic, the Philippines is one of only two nations where Roman Catholicism is the most widely practiced religion. With roughly 76% of the population being Catholic, the nation is ranked third in the world. Through festivals, celebrations, and customs, the Christian religion has influenced the identity of the Filipino people. As a legacy and a representation of the nation's identity, the first mass celebrated on Limasawa in 1521 and its spread

throughout colonialism are acknowledged. Filipinos attend church on Sundays in order to pray, spend time with their families, and remember the Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Feasts and festivities are held in honor of significant figures in the history of Christianity.

The Catholic faith is largely relied upon by Filipinos for moral guidance and guidance in daily life. Worship and prayer are intimate channels of communication with God that offer consolation and moral support in the face of life's challenges. Filipinos are renowned for their intense devotion and their conviction that God is able to resolve grave issues.

Filipinos have their own worship practices, such as the traditional "Aba Ginoong Maria" prayer, which is a salutation to Mary and a prayer for her assistance, and the traditional "Angelus" prayer, which is a devotion to the Virgin Mary. The significance and spirituality of Filipinos are reflected in these prayers. Jesus taught the "Ama Namin" prayer, which is regarded as the central Christian prayer and provides guidance on how to properly communicate with God.

When they pray, Filipinos show their seriousness and sincerity by wearing rosaries. Apostles Creed is the first prayer before each bead, acting as a physical reminder for fervent prayer. A standard rosary has 59 interlocking beads, 53 of which are for "Hail Mary" and six of which are for "Our Father."

And speaking of which, one of the things that Catholics introduced and often pray is the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. According to the Apostolate for Family Consecration (n.d.), this is a way to dedicate one's own family to the Holy Family, which is made up of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. This offering will demonstrate the voluntary choice to

completely worship Jesus with the help of Mary and Joseph.

There is a lack of research on the experiences of Generation Z and the efficacy of prayer, which contributes to the declining faith and relationship between the Lord and the younger generation of Filipinos. Research from Social Weather Stations (SWS) revealed that while 73% of Filipinos value religion, only half of them regularly attend religious services—only 34% do so on a weekly basis

It is crucial to discuss how people's prayer habits affect their lives in this specific circumstance due to the inconsistencies and lack of comprehensive research on the topic. This issue highlighted the significance of studying the impact of prayer on people's daily lives and its efficacy.

Finding out how much the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family improves the lives of those who pray is the main goal of this study.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The objectives of the study are :

1. Compare the lives of the respondents before and after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family for one month.
2. Explain the changes experienced by the respondents after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family for one month.
3. State the newly developed relationships of the respondents with the Virgin Mary after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family for a month.

Succinctly, the statements of purpose are :

1. Describe the prayer life status of the participants before and after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family for one month.
2. Describe the changes/improvements in the participants' lives after praying the prayer for one month.
3. Describe the newfound relationship of the participants to the Blessed Mother after praying the prayer for one month.

III. RESEARCH LOCALE

This study was conducted in Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, where the chosen participants and observers were currently undertaking their freshman year in college. The said study was under the supervision of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, to which the professor belonged.

IV. SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was focused on the effects of praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family to the selected Filipino Catholic first-year students in the course of Bachelor Secondary Education at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in the school year 2023-2024. The participants of the study are limited to the students of Dr. Bernardo F. Ramos. The researcher selected a particular group of students that consisted of 12 participants who are Catholics and consisted of 2 observers who belonged to different religious affiliations .

Due to time constraints, the researcher has selected to conduct the interview in online sessions to ensure the availability of the chosen participants in the study. Also, due to the availability of the participants, the researcher has opted to utilize online software applications and platforms to ensure the accomplishment of the study. Moreover, this ethnographic study lasted only for eight (8) weeks which started after the Midterm and commenced during the students' Final term.

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

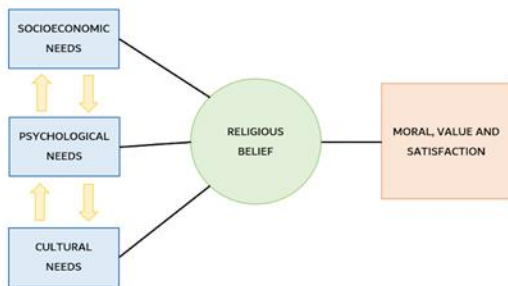
The goal of this study is to increase the faith and comprehension of Catholic students, Filipino families, educators, academics, school administrators, religious Filipino Catholics, and upcoming researchers regarding the relationship between culture and faith.

It will offer details and data regarding the use of prayer as a daily compass to guide one's thoughts, dreams, academic endeavors, and private matters. Additionally, the study will assist Filipino families in appreciating the significance of prayer and how it affects their culture.

Hopefully, the findings of the study shall motivate Instructors to create plans to help students learn about prayer and religious culture in the classroom, which will improve learning outcomes and promote moral development, Academics and school administrators to create initiatives to uplift the moral character of young Filipinos and honor the diversity of their cultural beliefs and practices; and eventually, serves as a foundation for future research, ensuring easier sharing of important information and data related to the subject matter.

VI. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1. Conceptual framework on the Influence of Socioeconomic Needs, Psychological Needs, Cultural Needs and Moral, Values and Satisfaction in Religious Beliefs.



According to a social science functionalism theory, every element that comprised and served as the foundation for society had a specific function for every individual (Lotha et al., 2023). Functionalism in the words of Radcliffe Brown, is characterized by its contribution to fostering and advancing social unit relationships.

Lumen Learning (n.d.) posits that religion serves a multitude of purposes under the functionalist framework, such as fostering social skill development, providing spiritual comfort and relief, and offering believers a sense of closure and solace. These elements reveal the main reasons behind the development of a person's religious beliefs and the ways in which those beliefs influence their behavior, manner of life, and actions.

First, a person's socioeconomic standing. Socioeconomic status (SES) is the position of an

individual or a group on the socioeconomic scale determined by a variety of social and economic factors, according to the American Psychological Association (2021). Regarding religion, this highlights the ways in which an individual's socioeconomic background can reveal a range of religious experiences that have an influence on their lives. Since they are the ones who are in need—both materially and emotionally—and because they think that religion can help them find answers to their issues, people are more inclined to engage in traditional religious activities like prayer and scripture reading.

Durkheim's functionalism theory views religion as the origin of human thought, reason, and science. Durkheim believes religion serves three major functions in society: social cohesion, social control, and meaning and purpose. Religion helps maintain social solidarity, enforce morals, and answer existential questions, and is crucial in finding solutions to financial problems and fostering solidarity through religious activities (Unicara, 2015).

Second, regarding a person's emotional or psychological requirements. When faced with difficult situations and intense feelings, Filipinos typically turn to trivial things to help them forget the things they are questioning. One way the Filipino people have come to seek guidance and receive protection from our Lord is through prayer.

Prayer is a crucial spiritual-religious coping mechanism for believers in the healing process. It helps alleviate stress, anxiety, and doubt, and is a source of strength and life. It can be more effective when prayed in a healthy relationship with God, rather than just as a typical human response to concern. This coping mechanism is essential for individuals facing difficulties in the healing process.

Thirdly, regarding its applicability to the culture a person is born into and belongs to. Due to the close ties that exist between Roman Catholicism and Filipino culture, a large number of Filipinos still adhere to their religious practices and beliefs. As a result, functionalism theory states that religion is one way for people to preserve and carry on practicing their respective cultures and religions.

Prayer is a profound practice that transcends cultural, spiritual, and personal boundaries. It's a means to express emotions, build relationships with the divine, and foster community. The reasons behind prayer are diverse, reflecting individual beliefs and values. Ultimately, prayer addresses spiritual, emotional, and communal needs.

Roman Catholicism is shaped by individual reasons for prayer, leading to diverse values and moral perspectives. Filipino Catholicism, characterized by affective tendencies, celebrates festivals, community feasts, and traditional practices during Holy Week and Christmas. Preaching, singing, and emotional devotion are central to Filipino Catholic practice.

And finally, how the aforementioned components relate to an individual's morality and behavior. What gives Filipinos a sense of fulfillment or satisfaction from prayer is a strong sense of spiritual connection. Acuña et al. (2019) state that other religious practices, such as the rosary prayer, are essential for enhancing one's relationship with Jesus Christ. These activities have an impact on how they create their own values or value each individual based on their needs. The majority of these principles are now ingrained in Filipino society's history and identity.

Moreover, Gaspar (2015) asserts that the element of compromise is what distinguishes the way our people pray to Jesus, Mary, the angels, and the saints. Most Filipinos' intentions for prayer are material and daily necessities because of the diverse material needs of the average Filipino family, which is still impoverished and often experiences financial difficulties. Last but not least, the most popular prayers are those for health and recovery from diseases; the more serious the ailment, the more intense the prayer.

Simply put, a person's religious beliefs, which are influenced by a variety of factors, ultimately determine how they respond to the functionalism theory, which holds that each person sees the social contexts in which they live in relation to their individual roles in the lives of others.

VII. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

There have been studies where philosophers have discussed their opinions about the term "religion." According to Max Weber, many Catholics' faith in Christianity is an expression of their hope that they will be saved from any kind of calamity, issue, or unfavorable aspect of society. Karl Marx saw religion as the sanctuary of the majority, providing a way out of society's cruelty, injustice, and condemnation under his conflict theory. Emile Durkheim added that religion is what unites people in having a shared objective and value systems rooted in doctrines and symbols. Emile Durkheim added that religion is what unites people to share a common objective and value systems rooted in doctrines and symbols. Furthermore, he made the point that as the world's scientific and technological achievements progress, the influence of religion on an individual's life will inevitably wane. According to Durkheim, the incident can be linked to the present, especially in the Philippines, where it is becoming more and more evident that a growing number of Filipinos are losing faith in God and prayer.

An article in Prayers World (2023) states that the Philippines is well-known for its deeply ingrained Catholicism as well as its vibrant blend of various religious beliefs. The Filipino people are renowned for their intense devotion to prayer, which they use to express gratitude to God and seek guidance from him in trying times. People praying is a common sight in public spaces like streets, churches, and even homes. In the daily lives of the Filipino people, prayer is an essential component. Regardless of their religion, Filipinos think that through prayer they can interact with a higher power and receive blessings and guidance.

For instance, Filipinos are renowned for celebrating religious holidays and events, indicating the close relationship that each Filipino has with faith and life, in addition to worshiping and spending every Sunday of the week at local churches. According to the aforementioned claim, *misa de gallo*, or "*simbang gabi*," is the customary practice of Filipinos, who believe that wishes made for themselves or for others can come true after the days of worship (Umali, 2018).

Moreover, Catholics today consciously include prayer into their daily routines. The prayers in the collection conveyed gratitude for Mary's and God's existence. God, the Virgin Mary, and Jesus Christ are the three religious figures most revered in Italian prayers, according to Garelli's (2016) study. It is known that there are many different reasons why people pray. A person can communicate directly with God in the first instance, expressing their devotion and speaking to the sacred; in the second, they can ask God for general or situation-specific guidance, comfort, and support.

It is clear from this that Filipinos in the Philippines have different reasons for devoting time to prayer. For instance, Filipinos place a great emphasis on their religious convictions, particularly during difficult times like natural disasters. An article published in *Prayer for the Philippines* (n.d.) that referenced a study by Del Rosario et al. (2018) states that the prayer's plea for divine solace and hope is in line with the emotional upheaval that Typhoon Haiyan victims are going through, suggesting a psychological need for comfort and support. Thus, combining faith and resilience is a common theme in Filipino culture.

Along with pleading for divine intervention, the prayer underscores the value of resilient inner strength, which is consistent with research showing a positive relationship between resilience and religious faith. The Lord's invocation and plea for divine mercy in the prayer are consistent with the deeply ingrained spiritual and cultural values of Filipino society. In psychological discourse, prayer frequently appears as a crisis-coping strategy.

Furthermore, a lot of Filipinos believe that the Catholic faith is very important in their society, as many different examples have shown. Filipinos consider prayer, or faith, to be a way to build a close, personal relationship with God. Even with all of the challenges they face every day, they believe that they can find peace, direction, and moral support in their lives. The perception of the Filipino people as being extremely religious stems from their conviction that God is able to resolve any significant problem that they encounter (Asael, 2023).

Another concrete example of this argument is the experience of the Filipino people during the pandemic

that destroyed the socioeconomic stability of their country. This gave support to the research based on Canete's (2021) paper, which asserted that Filipinos are respected for their strong religious beliefs. Their faith endures despite the most difficult times in their shared history. The Filipino Catholic faithful were strengthened in their religious practice rather than hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Catholics in the Philippines have discovered ways to demonstrate their solidarity and unity in their profession of faith, such as participating in virtual and online masses, hearing religious talks, and offering prayers at home or online.

In relation to the previous sentence, Castillo et al. (2020) stressed the importance of attending to spiritual as well as physical health during the global COVID-19 pandemic. In order to highlight its efforts to assist people during this health crisis, the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines has been actively offering support and making interventions on social media. It provided an answer for religious practices that were affected by safety precautions during the pandemic in the Philippines, such as church masses and prayers.

There are coping mechanisms for Filipinos to deal with the stressors that the pandemic brings, even though the current circumstances have lessened this natural tendency toward socialization. Maintaining one's spirituality and religious beliefs is the most widely used method for reducing anxiety related to pandemics. Because their faith gives their lives purpose and gives them hope that something positive will emerge from the chaotic state of their current circumstances, people with faith in God have been found to have better mental stability.

In light of those assertions, it can be observed that social psychology theory influences Filipino attitudes and viewpoints on religion. The study of how various events or phenomena, or "social variables," affect an individual's behavior, attitude, perceptions, and beliefs is known as social psychology theory. This theory incorporates a deeper understanding and investigation of the relationship between individuals' thoughts and other social influences. This theory looks into how social events impact a person's brain, which is the source of their emotions and habits, as well as how society functions overall, according to the American Psychological Association (APA) (Maryville

University, n.d.). According to this theory, religion is related to the situational aspect of research because it influences people's perspectives. By using this component, people can demonstrate how their culture, religion, and beliefs directly affect them via their behavior (McLeod, 2023).

It also has to do with how the social impact theories relate to one another. According to Bibb Latané, one of its proponents, each person is impacted by the behavior and influence of other people in their surroundings, which is essentially how culture is defined (Guy-Evans, 2023). According to the theory, rituals and traditions that are passed down from generation to generation have an impact on how perspectives are shaped. Through the prism of Filipinos, their beliefs, behaviors, and customs are influenced by the ongoing spread of a particular social aspect, much like in social psychology theory..

Priests and other leaders or overseers of Catholic religious sects are among the particular personalities that have a direct impact on the way that Filipinos view attending church and paying respect to other religions. To elucidate further, there is a strong correlation between the two theories and the phenomenon of Filipinos being highly religious and devoted to praising and worshipping. These social factors influence how they will behave toward themselves and resolve the internal and external issues they are going through. In conclusion, their religious convictions may have an impact on how they think and approach deciphering their own mysteries.

The prayers of the Filipinos can be used in many different ways to honor God, Mary, and Jesus Christ. Even though the rosary is typically associated with Roman Catholics, rosaries are used by people of many different religions as a means of prayer. Filipinos have a strong bond and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, as evidenced by history. This reverence is evident in the political and economic life of the populace as well as in the many popular devotions. The depth of Filipino Catholic devotion to Mary and authentic Christian life is exemplified by the "rosary revolution" (Yu, 2003).

There were times in these situations when Christians, particularly Catholics, questioned why they should

pray to Mary rather than God or Jesus directly. Mary, as the Blessed Mother, is the heavenly advocate who will mediate between Jesus and His people, according to Revelation 12:17 (Nash, n.d.). According to Valencia (2022), Mary is comparable to the mother of all her children in this world, who never gets tired of raising her children and giving herself for them, as stressed in the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. Every prayer explains a different facet of the Catholic faith, such as communion with God as Father or devotion to Mary.

Through the study and application of these prayers, one gains a deeper understanding of the essence of faith and the role that communication plays in the spiritual life. Catholics pray to Mary, who they regard as the mother of all, in order to submit their requests to have their sins forgiven. Furthermore, in contrast to the untrue charge made by non-Catholic Christians, the Diocese of Westminster Youth Ministry (2017) stressed that Catholics pray to the Virgin Mary as a bridge to God rather than worshipping her as a deity.

Furthermore, Mary was going through a personal crisis just like any other person, as Strathearn (2019) pointed out in her article. Adversity is shown to strengthen Mary's faith, just like it does for ordinary people. To name a few, these include her travels, her experiences as the mother of Jesus, and witnessing her son suffer and be mistreated.

Mary's stability is one of the things Catholic devotees can emulate to strengthen their faith and their faith in their respective religious beliefs. Many Catholics draw strength and inspiration from Mary's victories over terrible and impossibly difficult situations, and they recognize that these occasions are one of the reliable foundations for offering prayers to any object that symbolizes the feelings and attitudes of believers.

Cramer (2017) expanded on the conversation by describing how prayer affects a person's life from spiritual contexts and viewpoints. According to her, a person can raise himself against unfortunate circumstances and regain his strength from the weaknesses that control him by praying. An individual can express his conversion, repentance, and request sin forgiveness through prayer. One of the ideals that can be used to continue a life full of trials and a reflection

of reality is peace of mind and spirit, which is gained as a result.

As stated in John 12:27, "peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, nor let them be afraid." In general, this means that prayer has the ability to guide people toward peace, whether it be in their internal or external lives.

Scott (2010) expanded on this topic by saying that there is a strong correlation between a person's personality and their faith. According to him, a person's goodness is influenced by their morality and their faith in a specific religion, like Catholicism, in addition to their inherent qualities. The American educator and missionary Hugh B. Brown is quoted in the aforementioned article as saying that a person's deep and profound values are lived, fulfilled, and derived from his faith.

Prayer highlights the Lord's desire to mold each person's personality so that they can follow their chosen path and career, as stated in the article by Cramer (2017). Catholics believe that faith and their prayer practices are what lead to the desired personal advancement, as stated in the previously mentioned paragraphs.

It is undeniable that there are shifts in viewpoint and that the problem of religious inconsistencies among Filipinos is growing, despite the deeply ingrained basis for Filipino piety and the seemingly unbreakable bond between culture and Catholicism. Gradual developments in the beliefs that have long offered a challenge to theism and Christianity are occurring in the modern era.

Ye (2017) observed in his research that there are barriers to the spread of Catholicism in the present generation, as shown by the study's conclusion that the number of people engaging in religious activities related to the religion is steadily declining. According to the previously mentioned study, a major factor in this type of anxiety is the problems facing the Catholic Church, which cause trust to decline, as well as globalization, which causes various Western ideologies, including agnosticism, to spread.

Newton (2007) defined agnosticism as the belief held by individuals as to whether religious entities and their manifestations in morality and social aspects are real or merely products of their imagination. As a result, this ideology places a strong emphasis on the fact that agnostics are those who are neither convinced nor disproved that a god or gods exist. Social factors like childhood experiences, home traumas experienced by college students, and the intense pressure of academic reality are all involved in a study done in Indonesia by Wonahadidjojo et al. (2022).

According to the aforementioned study, the current generation has come to regard religion primarily as a reflection of identity and personal lifestyle rather than as a foundation for conscience. The lack of freedom of speech and the hypocrisy of many religious people, which undermines the integrity of a particular religion as is the case with Catholicism today, are a couple of the reasons mentioned in the study.

Moreover, the previously mentioned study (2017) also shared a common finding from Armstrong's research. She found that the agnostic viewpoints of young people attending colleges or universities are more shaped by external forces. The previously mentioned study indicates that one of the things causing young people to become disengaged from religious matters is society norms, such as conventional, non-radical, or progressive viewpoints on religion. This analysis is consistent with the results of an earlier one carried out by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in the early 2000s. According to Araneta (2003), nearly half of the Filipino youth surveyed in the aforementioned study said they don't frequently go to church or pray, which suggests that the youth have individualistic beliefs.

Additionally, it is clear that the percentage of young Filipino Catholics who pray has been falling over time; according to articles by Cornelio (2013) and Mangahas (2011), respectively, it was 64% in 1991 and 37% in 2013.

Filipino culture, particularly Catholicism, significantly influences societal behavior and attitudes. Prayer remains a significant aspect of paying tribute to God, even in catastrophic events. However, with the rise of an agnostic view of religion, this

research explores how prayer and consulting God and Mary can help students with personal issues.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

• RESEARCH DESIGN

To provide detailed explanations based on participant observation and interpretation, the researcher employed a qualitative method for the study. A qualitative research design, according to Bhandari (2020), is utilized to characterize, look into, and evaluate specific phenomena that center on non-numerical data that is connected to the beliefs and experiences of the participants. Accordingly, the researcher used an ethnographic research design to offer more in-depth discussions and descriptions.

Ethnography is a type of qualitative research methodology wherein researchers act as observers and gain firsthand access to a particular group of people's culture or way of life. After that, the researchers will get firsthand knowledge of the impacts of a particular cultural feature, like religious acts, which was the study's main focus (Caulfield, 2023). The researchers will be able to elaborate and provide elaborate explanations about the impact of praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family on the lives of the participants with the aid of this research design.

• PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLE SIZE OF THE STUDY

Certain factors were taken into consideration when selecting the study participants. First, first-year students from Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila majoring in Filipino for their Bachelor of Secondary Education, taking the course *Interdisciplinary Reading and Writing Leading to Effective Discourse* were selected as participants. Second, since one way to conduct the investigation on the subject matter involved praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, the participants had to be members of this sector or devotees of Roman Catholicism.

Subsequently, the class consisted of 57 students and was split into four groups consisting of fourteen to fifteen members each. All four groups were selected to serve as participants in qualitative studies. The first group with 14 Catholic members served as participants and 2 non-Catholic members served as observers.

Concerning the recommended participant count, a few specialists and writers defended the figure by citing the effectiveness of qualitative research findings. As stated by Deakin University (2023), Creswell and Creswell (2018) estimate that between 10 and 50 participants is the ideal number that is sufficient for conducting qualitative research. Furthermore, Renwick (2019) referenced Crouch and McKenzie (2006), who confirmed that less than 20 participants is the ideal number for interview-based qualitative research, particularly in small groups.

• SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Purposive sampling was the method of sampling that was employed in the investigation. Purposive sampling, by definition, was applied in a number of qualitative and quantitative research projects in which the participants were not chosen at random but rather were specifically chosen (Nikolopoulou, 2022). Using this sampling technique, the respondents are selected according to standards, criteria, or other attributes that are all relevant to the particular topic of the study.

Here, the research was conducted with the participants' religious affiliations taken into account during selection. Therefore, the following participants adhere to Roman Catholic doctrines and rituals. The participants were also chosen in part because they belong to Generation Z, one of the age groups for which there aren't any particular studies on how prayer improves the lives of worshippers.

• DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

Regarding the techniques used to carry out the study, the professor first posted a video on YouTube that demonstrated how to pray the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. For a month, the student participants—Catholic ones in the class in particular—were asked to study and pray it. The researcher noticed that the participants' patterns or cycles of prayer were consistent with one another. The following are the actions that the participants undertook:

The prayer warriors recited the Apostles Creed, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and the Our Father prayer on a rosary. They then prayed for decades, reciting the appropriate prayers on each bead. The

mysteries were divided into sets, and the prayer warriors continued to pray for each decade. After completing each decade, they recited the Glory Be prayer. They then proceeded to the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, concluding with the Hail, Holy Queen, and the Sign of the Cross.

After the observation, the researcher conducted a thorough interview to analyze participants' experiences and opinions on the effectiveness of praying the Act of Consecration for a month, using the four questions: 1. *What was the state of your prayer life prior to beginning the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family?*, 2. *What was the quality of your prayer life following a month of the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family prayer?*, 3. *After a month of prayer, what personal growth or changes did you observe in yourself?* and 4. *After a month of praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, who is the Blessed Mother to you now?*

In addition, a question about the details and specific observations that the two observers in the group prayer sessions made after being fully immersed in a particular Catholic culture was posed. The only query that onlookers would have to respond to was: *When you watched the group prayer sessions, what concepts and things did you notice?*

Lastly, the researcher conducted the interview sessions using online software programs and platforms. These included open-ended questions that allowed the participants to freely share and express their experiences and made data collection simpler.

• DATA ANALYSIS METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

A thematic analysis was conducted on the interview questions in order to interpret the study's findings. The said technique is applied in a variety of qualitative research projects, wherein related concepts, ideas, and data obtained from interviews and other qualitative research tools are combined and grouped together (Villegas, 2023).

With this approach, the participants' questionnaire responses were closely examined by the researcher,

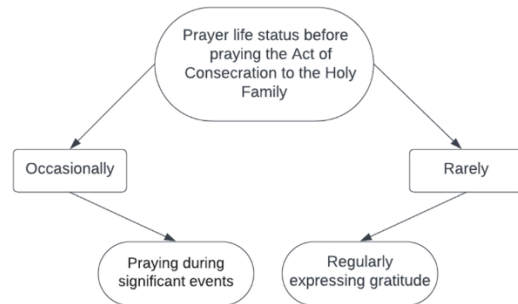
who then categorized the responses into groups based on the themes that were identified from the statements.

• PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

After conducting the interview session with the chosen participants, the researcher arranged the solicited answers regarding the categories or themes to which they belonged.

Prayer life status of the participants before praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family

Figure 2. Prayer life status of the participants before praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family



Before praying the Act of Consecration of the Holy Family, the participants answered the first question about their status in terms of their prayer life. They began by admitting that they occasionally prayed. They acknowledged that their sporadic prayers were a result of a lack of faith, time, and interest.

Prayer life status of the participants after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family

Figure 3. Prayer life status of the participants after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family

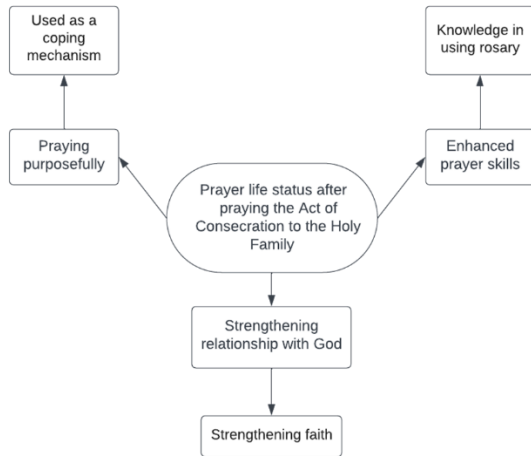
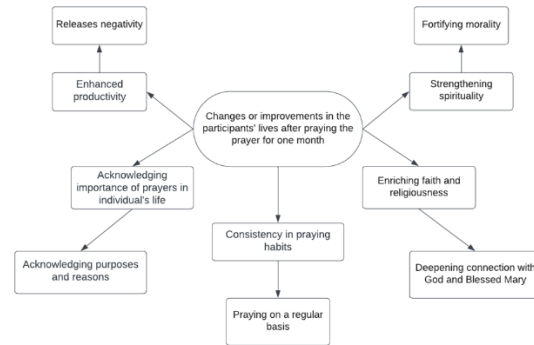


Figure 4. Changes or improvements in the participants' lives after praying the prayer for one month



The second question asked the participants to describe how praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family had improved or changed their status in terms of their prayer life. Initially, a few of the attendees were proficient in intentional prayer. They saw the chance to use prayers as coping strategies to let go of negativity and lessen emotional burdens and baggage.

Second, a few participants mentioned that they were able to strengthen their relationship with God through praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, which had a positive impact on their prayer life. They claimed that praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family aided in their reunion and rediscovery of their connection to Blessed Mary, Jesus Christ, and God. They also mentioned that after saying the aforementioned prayer, they were able to communicate with the Holy Family again.

Third, after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, a few participants said that their ability to pray had improved. Based on their personal experiences, the participants reported that attending group and structured prayer sessions enhanced and expanded their understanding of rosary use for venerating and consecrating.

Changes or improvements in the participants' lives after praying the prayer for one month

The third question asked the participants to describe the enhancements and changes they had after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. First, a few participants mentioned that after praying the specified prayer, their productivity had increased because they had been using the prayer sessions as a coping mechanism or a way to let go of their negative emotions.

Second, a few participants observed that their spirituality had grown stronger and better after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. They claimed that the shifts in how they saw spirituality enabled them to become more deeply moral decision-makers in their everyday lives and to be more actively involved in their faith in God. Additionally, they saw that these advancements enabled them to grow and refine their attitudes and behaviors. The following statements attest to the participants' assertions regarding the impact of praying the aforementioned prayer on a person's spirituality.

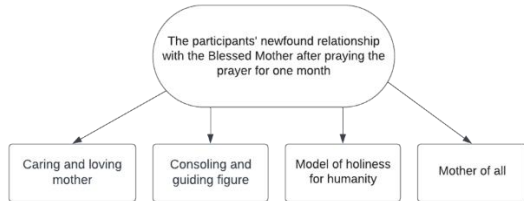
Third, a few attendees mentioned that they have realized the significance of prayer in a person's life. Their assertions that they knew the value of prayer and its influence on a person's life also served as justification for these improvements in their viewpoints. Additionally, they mentioned how these prayers have allowed them to learn more about their religion and how important it is to a person's spiritual, social, and emotional development.

Fourth, after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, a few participants saw an improvement and enrichment in their faith and religiousness. They said that through praying, they were able to better practice their faith and comprehend the significance of honoring God, Mary, and Jesus. Additionally, these advancements helped them to become more spiritual and to recognize and honor their religion.

Finally, a few participants mentioned that after attending group prayer sessions and praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, they also developed consistent prayer habits. They claimed that it made it easier for them to see how spending time in prayer and consistent communication with God was not a waste of time but rather a means of meeting their spiritual needs.

The participants' newfound relationship with the Blessed Mother after praying the prayer for one month

Figure 5. The participants' newfound relationship with the Blessed Mother after praying the prayer for one month



The participants acknowledged and shared new information that enabled them to highlight the significance of the Blessed Mother in the lives of various people. The participants' increased understanding of the Blessed Mother's role in their spiritual nature has led to a more complex and expansive understanding of their spiritual path.

Initially, a few attendees expressed their perception of the Blessed Mother as a comforting and guiding figure who would assist people on their path to a fruitful life. According to these participants, the Blessed Mother has been a significant factor in fostering people's spirituality and fortifying their Christian beliefs. Moreover, they consider the Blessed Mother to be an intercessor who has helped them learn and get past obstacles in life.

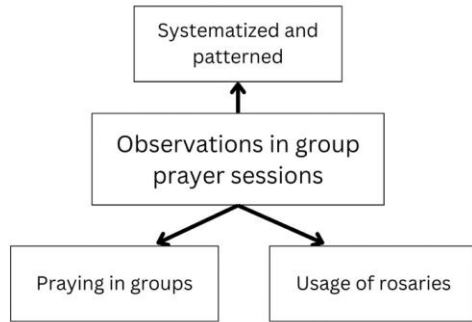
Secondly, a few attendees expressed their belief that the Blessed Mother is the mother of humanity and the mother of everything. Their sentiments led them to refer to the Virgin Mary as the Mother of all because she showed humanity her unwavering love. They added that the notion that the Blessed Mother was constantly willing to help and encouraged people to persevere and have hope served as evidence for these assertions. They also asserted that the Blessed Mother is the mother of all, claiming that she is their comfort, strength, and savior.

Third, a few participants expressed their belief that the Blessed Mother is a tender and loving mother who never misses an opportunity to lavish her children with her undying love. They held that the Blessed Mother, like a devoted mother, was ready to shield her offspring from unforeseen events and uncertainties that would cause suffering for the populace. They also said that the Blessed Mother had been a nurturing force in their spiritual development. Because of this, people view the Blessed Mother as a calming and guiding force.

Finally, a few participants mentioned that the Blessed Mother's inspiration and influence indicated that she is a role model for humanity and holiness. Her idea that she was a suitable role model for righteousness in society was reinforced by her generosity, selflessness, and unwavering love for her children. They further asserted that her holiness inspired them to live a disciplined life in order to live a more moral life. The participants said that under her direction, they became more motivated to seek devotion and a closer relationship with God.

The observations in group prayer sessions

Figure 6. Observers' observations in group prayer sessions



The observers discussed their observations in this particular question after being exposed to and submerged in the group prayer sessions of a chosen group of Catholic students from the Philippines who were praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. Initially, the observers reported observing that in order for the members of the group to fully express, adhere to, and practice their Catholic beliefs and traditions, they were following a systematized and patterned prayer during the group prayer sessions.

Second, the observers mentioned that they always observed that the significance of rosaries and their role in group prayer sessions. According to their viewpoints, wearing rosaries is a major way for Filipino Catholics to express their faith.

Finally, the observers noted that the collectivist approach to prayer was also favored by Filipino Catholics. They noticed that the chosen Catholic students from the Philippines felt more at ease during group prayer sessions because it allowed them to talk more freely and offer prayers for others in addition to themselves.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the accounts shared by the participants demonstrated the significance of prayer in everyday life. It was found through data collection and discussion of experiences following a month of praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family that prayer was helpful in meeting some personal needs and in reviving participants' devotion to the

Lord. The participants' month-long immersion in the aforementioned consecration prayer highlighted the part that religion—especially Catholicism—plays in offering individual adherents of these beliefs systems of support, direction, and guidance.

First, participants reported a significant difference in their prayer life status after praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family for a month. Factors affecting their interest included lack of time to express spirituality. Gradually, these changes led to personal improvements. The study suggests addressing the decline in interest in Catholicism through encouraging activities and plans.

Second, participants in a study shared their experiences with practicing traditional Catholic beliefs, highlighting the importance of prayer in personal lives. They found that consistent prayer strengthens spirituality and cultivates faith, leading to positive impacts. This research highlights the significant role of prayer in promoting positive aspects in the personal context of Catholicism adherents.

Third, the study explores participants' understanding of the Blessed Mother's role in Catholicism. Participants recognize her as a model of holiness, a nurturing mother, and a consoling figure. They also believe prayer strengthens connections with the Lord and builds relationships with other important Catholic figures, such as Jesus Christ and the Blessed Mother. Despite differing descriptions, participants recognize her importance and respect.

Fourth, the two observers reported what they saw in the way the research participants prayed. Due to the observers' non-Catholic religious affiliation, the results of their interviews regarding the existence of disparities in cultural customs and beliefs were relevant. The observers noted a few things, including the use of the rosary in prayer, adhering to structured, methodical, and patterned prayer, and the act of congregating in devotion. These observers' opinions demonstrated the growth of inclusivity, the affirmation of the value of religious freedom in society, and the diversity of beliefs. Despite the differences in denominations, these results can also be used to draw conclusions about civility and respect for various religious customs and beliefs.

Overall, this study found that praying the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family, like other traditional prayers, was a useful way to help people grow in their faith and their relationship with God. This study highlighted the value of prayer in producing favorable effects on a range of needs and facets of the individual. Through this research, the importance of religion's role in offering guidance, direction, and a means of expressing one's freedom of expression was emphasized. Additionally, this study expressed gratitude and highlighted the importance of actions that embodied and demonstrated the positive influence of Catholic practices, beliefs, and actions.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As an illustration of qualitative research, this study has a number of advantages. First of all, it provided a thorough grasp by presenting specific instances, first-hand accounts from the study participants, and a month-long period of in-depth analysis regarding the efficacy of praying the Act of Consecration. These answers have demonstrated accuracy and dependability in the findings, which are corroborated by the research. Furthermore, the descriptive data enables a more thorough analysis of the results.

Reaching a balance between acknowledging these advantages and resolving these drawbacks was necessary to promote a comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of the research. This study offers insights into how participants would engage in spiritual practices because it examines the status of the chosen participants' prayer lives in the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family. It illuminated the complexities of their prayer lives as well. Additionally, compiling information on the prayer experiences of the participants helped to highlight the goal of the study and provided unique insights into the spiritual aspect that influences their lives.

Furthermore, the statement above was connected since this spiritual practice served as a means of accessing deeper levels of understanding. In addition, people embarked on a contemplative path that led to a deep comprehension of the Blessed Mary's pivotal function within the Catholic Church. By doing this, they take

into account Mary's importance as Jesus' mother as well as her role as a mentor and intercessory figure in a person's spiritual journey. Ultimately, the research produced a comprehensive explanation for strengthening one's comprehension and bond with the Blessed Virgin Mary. This spiritual practice had a significant impact on addressing concerns about religiosity because it not only improved respondents' relationship with God and the Holy Family but also helped them understand Mary's role in the Catholic faith on a deeper level.

However, it was also crucial to understand the constraints that set the limits of this study's knowledge. Throughout the investigation, concerns were raised about the study's ability to provide a thorough and authentic representation of the participants' prayer habits, considering that it relied on references to other studies and surveys in lieu of direct data collection in certain areas. Furthermore, the temporal dimension has not been thoroughly investigated, which raises questions about the long-term viability of reported changes. The potential influence of social desirability bias must also be considered, as participants may be more inclined to provide responses that align with cultural or religious norms.

Additionally, there may be variations in the way that people perceive and perform the act of consecration due to the subjectivity of the participants in the prayer, which often relies on their unique interpretation and comprehension. The participants in the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family may be viewed differently in different cultures and religions, and what was considered a proper act in one tradition may not align with the beliefs of another. This was another point raised. Events or other factors outside of one's control may have an impact on the efficacy of prayer for the act of consecration. During the prayer, interruptions, doubts, or lack of focus could keep it from accomplishing its goal. Finally, the communal aspect of consecration can be influenced by the dynamics within a religious community. Conflicts, disagreements, or varying levels of commitment among community members may have an impact on the acts of consecration's overall efficacy.

A further limitation that surfaced during the study was a lack of comprehension or connection that masked the

prayer's profound core. This problem resulted from not being familiar with the mysteries being contemplated, which made the prayers monotonous and spiritually meaningless. Reciting the prayers over and over again without understanding highlighted their lack of personal significance. Disparities in language or culture could intensify this conflict and provide obstacles that would make it difficult to concentrate on the spiritual significance of the prayer.

CONTRIBUTION AND RELEVANCE TO THE FIELD

The study found that a month of prayer significantly improved students' mental capacity, leading to improved academic performance. Prayers like the Act of Consecration to the Holy Family can influence focus, motivation, and discipline. This research could also highlight the benefits of praying in various settings, such as academics. It emphasizes the importance of respecting diverse religious perspectives and can guide initiatives to encourage students to pray.

This study's findings are crucial for education, as they can enhance students' understanding of diverse cultures and traditions, particularly religious aspects. It can help educators incorporate a multicultural perspective into teaching methods and address issues related to religious communities, such as decreased prayer and participation in religious activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are given to the beneficiaries of this research endeavor.

For Catholic students to ensure inclusive practices, observe mindfulness about religious beliefs, highlight common values, engage in sincere discussions, foster unity despite diverse spiritual backgrounds, and participate in personal prayers or group gatherings that focus on agnostic people's spiritual paths. Using inclusive language and incorporating intentions in personal prayers or group gatherings to promote love, inclusivity, and faith is also suggested.

For educators to create an inclusive environment for open discussions on religious topics, emphasize

critical thinking skills, and respect diverse religious choices. This encourages mutual learning and understanding, enables students to analyze religious practices objectively, and promotes an atmosphere that values individual autonomy and religious diversity.

For academicians to incorporate religious studies into academic curricula to understand the complex effects of religious practices on people and communities. Integrating courses on cultural and spiritual aspects of religious practices can provide students with a comprehensive understanding. Promoting interdisciplinary research collaborations can enhance understanding of religious practices, improve university procedures, and create a welcoming campus environment.

For university officials to implement policies for students and employees to respect religious practices, and collaborate with other universities and experts to ensure proper implementation. This will ensure respect for students, employees, and people with other religions within the university.

For Filipino Catholics to foster understanding of individual reasons for inactivity in Filipino Catholics, promoting an inclusive atmosphere, examining engaging strategies, and learning about the advantages of prayer in the Catholic context. These recommendations aim to improve community involvement, appeal to diverse audiences, and promote social initiatives.

For Filipino families to foster prayer habits in their respective family to improve family dynamics, mental health, and home cohesiveness. Likewise, open communication about religious beliefs and integrating prayer into daily routines to support emotional resilience, family values, and bonding should be improved.

For future researchers to explore new strategies and provide insights into different religious practices for their generation's situation. They should have an in-depth understanding of others' religious beliefs and be objective in their studies.

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