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**Spiritual Communication for Social Transformation: Prayer Warriors'
Intercession as Communicative Acts in Building the Parachurch
Culture and Identity for National Development**

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Spiritual Communication for Social Transformation: Prayer Warriors' Intercession as Communicative Acts in Building the Parachurch Culture and Identity for National Development

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Acceptance Page

This paper prepared by **MAYME F. OLEGARIO** with the title: **“SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: PRAYER WARRIORS’ INTERCESSION AS COMMUNICATIVE ACTS IN BUILDING THE PARACHURCH CULTURE AND IDENTITY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT”** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Course.

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Biographical Sketch

Mayme F. Olegario is a faculty of the Communication Program of Ateneo de Davao University. She has a Master of Arts in Teaching English Language and Literature. Her interest in culture and communication started way back in college. Prompted by multicultural experiences as journalism and communication student at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, she pursued cross-cultural missions work among overseas Filipino workers at London, England in 2000. In 2003, she became a faculty of Ateneo de Davao University and joined a Singapore-based missions organization where she eventually served as website editor and varied ministry functions on one of its local churches for many years. This experience exposed her to tribal churches and missions school for the Matigusalug and other tribes in the Davao region. In 2007 up to present, she has been involved and trained in intercessory prayers ministry for the government and a founding member of a house of prayer in Davao City established in 2016. She resides in Davao City with her husband and son.

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For those who wait on the Lord will never be put to shame (Psalm 25:3).

Dedication

I dedicate this work to the people in the House of Prayer who grasped God's compassion for our nation. Eternity will reveal the transforming effects of your prayers day and night for the Philippines. I believe in what you contend for, and I am with you in the 24/7 mandate. May Jesus find us faithful.

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Spiritual Communication for Social Transformation: Prayer Warriors' Intercession as Communicative Acts in Building the Parachurch Culture and Identity for National Development

Cooperation for the shared goal of social transformation is highly aspired yet greatly challenging among Evangelical churches and partner institutions. Though parachurches function to assist churches, organizational structures and traditions threaten church-parachurch dynamics. The Davao City House of Prayer (HOP) parachurch bridges this divide by establishing its unique niche of intercessory prayers for good governance and nation-building.

The study used ethnographic field work to observe HOP members conduct the Prayer Watch, a 3-hour continuous prayer or "soaking" in God's presence. The Prayer Watch is the encompassing communicative performance where members' shared values, symbols, and meaning-making activities through intercessory prayers blend together to (co)create the parachurch culture and identity for social transformation. Communicative acts bring to life this particular culture and identity as unifying yet separating and innovative but not competitive toward the church.

The Prayer Watch demonstrates communication as the means of achieving interdependence or balance between autonomy and dependency where organizational strengths of the church and parachurch are maximized and limitations are complemented by each other.

Key words: organizational communication, spiritual communication, communicative performances, Evangelical church, parachurch, organizational culture and identity, social transformation, ethnography.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The present Covid-19 crisis is shaking the church as a social institution in unprecedented ways. These shakings go beyond external changes such as shifting to online platforms, reducing church attendance, and practicing health protocols. A compelling call for holistic health support reverberates worldwide, and an encompassing crisis intervention includes spiritual well-being (del Castillo, Biana, & Joaquin, 2020). The suffering world anticipates the church to come out as a strong force in the battle against Covid-19 through its charitable missions.

However, before the church can fully embrace and initiate such role, it has to overcome its own institutional challenges to fulfill its call in effective ways. For Pillay (2020), the Covid-19 brings a kind of “reformation” to the church akin to the so-called Great Reformation in 1517 led by Martin Luther against what reformers deemed as theological corruption. He argues that today, however, this health crisis forces the church to a transformation, not on doctrine, but a “reformation on practice”(p. 267), which calls for critical reflection on its relevance in the state of the world rather than being confined inside in its walls.

Pillay (2020) stresses that transformation of the church as a social institution means going back to community life as foundational in Christianity instead of being fixated on institutional programs such as weekly meetings inside church buildings. “The notion of community is established in the Godhead; God is community (Trinity) and the church (ekklesia) refers to a community whether it is a local church, a citywide

church or as the universal church” (p. 271). Hence, the faith community has a greater role not only during this pandemic, but in the present day fulfillment of its organizational mandate of world evangelism and missions.

Rise of Parachurches for Intercessory Prayers for Social Transformation

To create greater social impact, there is a call for improved interchurch relations that extends to other Christian organizations called parachurches. Para in Greek means “alongside”. By definition, parachurches are designed to provide ministries that local churches alone cannot fulfill in their communities (Saunders, 2015). Parachurches may work outside or across church denominations.

Among the many ministries of parachurches is intercessory prayer for social transformation. Intercession is a kind of prayer, which can be described as a spiritual battle, hence the term “prayer warrior” to refer to an intercessor. It protects and advances humane and peaceful living which God desires for people by “casting down” evil influences that go against the just, righteous, and loving nature of God (2 Corinthians 10:5 NIV). It is a deeper kind of prayer that involves “intervention, mediation, arbitration or negotiation” (Jukes, 2003). It is also selfless choice of coming alongside another’s battle (Levin, 2017), or to pray in behalf of another.

The result of personal, cultural, and social transformation or conversion enables someone to understand and connect the reality of God to life in a material society. Social transformation can be observed through good governance. Good governance is a political system founded in justice and peace that promote human rights and civil liberties (Creative Learning, 2021). Hence, a prayer parachurch for social transformation carries the mandate for intensified prayers for good governance. This

kind of prayer may not be a common priority or overlooked among the many ministries of traditional churches.

The role of intercessory prayer in social transformation of communities or nations is not new. Literatures show that intercessory prayer is a leadership and social development facet in various African countries (Obiorah, 2013; Saale, 2014; Fantini, 2016; Haynes, 2014; and Channels of Hope, 2015). In Europe, where the 24/7 prayer movement originated, and eventually spread to the United States, the concept of intercessory prayer is community life and social justice works through the 24/7 prayer movement (IHOPKC, 2021). In Asia, South Korea has Prayer Mountains for national transformation through spiritual awakening. In the Philippines, a 24/7 prayer movement for the government is spearheaded by the Intercessors for the Philippines, a 30-year-old organization of volunteer intercessors.

Interdependence of Church and Parachurch Organizational Structure

The call for unity and cooperation among church and parachurch organizations begins with a clear understanding of how their organizational structures differ and complement each other. Though the Bible is the basis of Christian beliefs and practices, factors such as organizational structure, church traditions, programs, culture, and personal callings could threaten harmonious relationship among churches and parachurches.

Unity through diversity is an ideal but very challenging pursuit in the community of Christian believers called the body of Christ. Though parachurches function to assist the church, many faith-based groups or parachurches are not accepted and supported by institutional churches. Some are even perceived as threats or competitors by church leaders.

The Lausanne Occasional Paper 24 or LOP 24 (1983) has identified four categories on hindrances to cooperation in the: dogmatism on non-major doctrines and varying scriptural interpretations, strained relationships (superior attitude, lack of dialogue, etc.), ministry rivalries, and suspicions on finances. The LOP 24 is produced by The Lausanne Commission on World Evangelization as it calls for oneness on the Evangelical mission and message of reconciliation, otherwise churches and parachurches “very quickly deteriorate into debating societies”(LOP 24, 1983, p.19).

Winter(1995) identifies two structures in the Christian community, the church society and the mission society, and that when fully supportive of each other, accomplish most effectively. He argues that this interdependent relationship between church (congregational structure) and parachurch (mission structure) is similar to the structures of government and private enterprise that hold secular society together. The structure of government is in a given territory affecting all citizens while a private enterprise involves a number of people who have special training or services to meet specific needs. The private enterprise submits to government review for common good while the government carefully monitors but does not control it. Hence, both are essential to each other(LOP 24, 1983).

Aside from distinct organizational structures that are not supportive of each other, culture can also widen church and parachurch gap. Cultural contexts may trigger debate on values and doctrines. For instance, the practice of ordaining only male pastors in some churches do not have significance in parachurch settings (Stiles, 2011).

As Biblically presented, the church is always “cross-culturally relevant and viable” because of its divine origin that transcends particular culture. On the other

hand, the parachurch is “culturally-bound”, meaning, its legitimacy is sociologically understood and evaluated. This also means that a parachurch can be modified as culture changes and can be transferred from one culture to another compatible culture, otherwise adjustments have to be made when applied in a different culture (Snyder cited in LOP 24, 1983, pp. 7-8).

Conflicts arise when there is no clear understanding on the specific function of the church and the parachurch (Stiles, 2011). Overlap, repetition, and substitution of roles between these organizations breed unhealthy relationships. The primary function of the church is to spread the Gospel, but in some cases, a parachurch may pressure the church to steer away from this main mission to its own specific ministry direction. Hence, parachurches can act to “replace” instead of “assist” the church (Saunders, 2015).

Moreover, worldwide phenomenon like increasing technology and pandemic restrictions add to the already existing tensions in church-parachurch relationships. Covid-19 has opened the Evangelical community not only to its members but also to the unchurched and peoples of other faiths through online interactions. The shift to online worship or digital sermons has also crossed denominational and geographical boundaries and church affiliations as worshippers can follow or listen to any sermon or online church they like (Pillay, 2020).

Likewise, the ministry or mission of Intercession has not been limited to the boundaries of the church organization but has gone out and flourished in parachurches or other independent prayer intercessory groups.

Parachurch members can be described as individuals who have given high commitment to Christian missions beyond the opportunities offered in their local

churches (Bauer, 1982). This does not mean, however, that they have left or neglected the church. On the contrary, they are willing volunteers of the church's works of salvation to saturate "the ends of the earth". In Mark 16:15 (NIV), Jesus said to His followers, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation". The statement is referred to as the Great Commission which is Christ's mandate to His body (followers) to spread the gospel or "good news" of salvation and reconciliation to all people. Because salvation is inclusive to everyone willing to believe and accept this "free gift" regardless of culture or religion, the Great Commission is an enormous global assignment of the body of Christ. Hence, the calling requires unity and partnership of church workers and missions (parachurch) workers.

As response to this calling, the phenomenon of a House of Prayer (HOP) for social transformation has risen. The 24/7 House of Prayer (HOP) in the Philippines is a national movement. One of its parachurch forerunners is the operated by volunteer intercessors. IFP started in 1989 with a mission to equip the Body of Christ for national revival and transformation through intercession and prophetic knowledge in this "end-time" season. Eschatology, a intercessors for the Philippines (IFP), Inc., an assembly of non-stop prayer and worship s one of IFP's focus, is a branch of Christian theology which studies end times prophecies and events of the last days (Fairchild, 2019). In the Biblical point of view, "end times" or "last days" refer to the period before the rapture or the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to get His followers on earth and bring them to His heavenly kingdom.

But before the rapture, there will be perilous worldwide events (perhaps such as Covid 19) that Jesus Christ Himself revealed in Matthew 24. In this chapter, Jesus cautions the church to watch out for these signs and pray so they can be well-

prepared, instead of fear, misinformation, and confusion as results of ignorance of Biblical knowledge and prophecy. Eschatology is a dire need in many churches today, and IFP rises to help educate believers. IFP networks and trains local churches all over the Philippines with Eschatology or end-time Biblical teachings (IFP, 2017). These IFP-affiliated HOPs are currently operating in Luzon and Visayas, while the Mindanao HOPs are still in the early stage of mobilization. The focus of this exploratory inquiry is the IFP's House of Prayer (HOP) in Mindanao.

Statement of the Problem

The HOP has become a nexus where church and lay people are developing shared values, norms, rituals, language and meanings of their mission, roles and identities. However, there has so far been no study on intercessory prayers of an Evangelical and prophetic parachurch as communicative acts for nation building.

There is a need to explore how the values, symbols, and communicative acts of intercessory prayers bridge the church-parachurch divide in social transformation. Hence, the study aims to find out the interlocked meanings in intercessory prayer as communicative acts of the parachurch in establishing its culture and identity vis-à-vis the church in nation building.

Research Questions

Specifically, the study asked the following questions:

1. What are the values shared by the members of the parachurch and how are these shaping their culture and identity?

2. What are the symbols shared by the members of the parachurch and how are these shaping their culture and identity?
3. What cultural performances in the form of communicative acts are enacted in the prayer watches that initiate the members into the culture and identity of intercession?
4. What are the transforming effects of intercessory prayers among the parachurch members?
5. How does the parachurch and the evangelical church complement each other in communication?
6. How can spiritual communication through intercessory prayers contribute to social transformation?

Significance of the Study

As earlier discussed, a better appreciation on the uniqueness as well as shared aims of two organizations may hold the key to unity and cooperation between church and parachurch workers.

For practical significance, findings can add knowledge to the study of organizational cultural communication, this time to emerging organizations such as parachurches that are created toward the formation of the church and propagation of its evangelistic missions, while balancing organizational autonomy and dependence in the church-parachurch relations.

Given its worldwide outreach, the church can show legitimate active role in cultural and social transformation through visible works of faith and justice with its

mission partners, the parachurches. This study can bring insight to the church and parachurch or any organization working for mutual cooperation with identified stakeholders.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on the communicative practices of one case parachurch and not of many parachurches or members of the church engaged in intercessory prayers.

Also, while the major question is how communication performances develop interdependence or bridge the divide between the church and parachurch members, this study only offers the perspective of parachurch members and not church members who did not join the parachurch.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter outlines researches aligned with the objectives of the study, followed by Eisenberg & Riley's (2001) classification of organizational studies to determine the constructs of the organization. These constructs are being brought to life through communication. It then presents Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) Organizational Cultural Theory under the Sociocultural tradition as theoretical underpinning to explore the phenomenon of a parachurch creating and recreating itself through members' communicative acts.

Values Shared in Churches and Prayer Groups

Pacanowsky (1989) believes that a group's moral knowledge is the source of members' values. As they interact and share knowledge, they create and recreate their organization's values (West & Turner, 2007). These values govern organizational culture. Recent developments in the study of culture and communication include moral and spiritual activities (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019).

Prayer as spiritual communication is seen as the individual or collective communicative practice that maintains contact between the everyday world and the atemporal or spiritual/non-material. For some communities, the atemporal serves as one foundation of reality, hence, it creates cohesiveness through a common understanding of the atemporal plane and its influence upon the material world (Rich, 2015).

Spiritual communication includes not only the representational but also the transactional and transformational function of language. This means that linguistic

diversity are beyond codes (representational) called languages but a plurality of alternative communication expressions such as prayers and religious rituals, mantra, and traditions (Fuentes-Calle, 2019). Transactional and transformational functions adhere to the constructionist view of language, which shapes actors' interpretations, thus shaping actions (Heracleous, 2006).

An example is when prayer practices become material manifestation of a culture's value on social justice. In an onsite observational studies of the 24/7 Prayer movements across Europe and the US, Schüller (2013) found that prayer groups establish the culture of the 'emerging church' or 'New Evangelicalism' which views holistic spirituality as key to social transformation.

For the new Evangelicals, holistic means rejecting religious fundamentalism and liberalism which often lead to "culture wars". Carving a spiritual path that is neither too extreme nor too liberal, the 24/7 Prayer groups shun both institutionalized religion and the disparage of fundamental Biblical values. Instead, they become organizing and networking avenues for works of mission and justice in the community. Here, prayers manifest the value of holistic or balanced religious attitude through active social engagements.

Another study reveals how prayers reveal the shared values among Christian conservatives and shared values among Christian liberals. This study among midlife North American Christians reveals how identity, specifically political orientation, shapes prayer narratives. The authors Hanek, Olson, & McAdams (2011) found that the first group who identified themselves as political Conservatives emphasized praise, thanksgiving, guidance, and forgiveness in their prayers more than the second

group of political Liberals. The Liberals significantly prayed more for provision of resources than the Conservatives.

These results were then connected to the participants' ideologies, life experiences, and intersection of religion and politics in their daily lives. Results showed that the Conservative prayers were rooted in a normative worldview where government and religion assure social order and protection of individuals from danger. The Liberal prayers, on the other hand, reflected a humanistic perspective of life which highlighted human goodness and potential and looked at government and religion for provision of resources in a scarce society.

As these studies show, shared values enable culture members to construct their unique organizational life. However, most organizational culture studies agree that group life is not single or unitary; rather, organizational culture is complicated and emergent because it is made up of many subcultures that may co-exist in harmonious, conflicting, or indifferent relationships. The organization has many sites where a subculture may emerge such as in a "vertical slice" (e.g., a division), a 'horizontal slice' (e.g., a particular hierarchical level), or a specific work group. The cultural sites become the 'breeding ground' for emerging shared meanings (Miller, 2009, p. 85).

An observational study of informal groups (cliques) in three medium-sized companies by Gehy (2014) reveals that individual member's values indicate the strength of an organization's culture. The study sought to discover these informal groups' views toward management. They found disuniting fallacies and presumptions, thereby disconnecting organizational and personal values. Negative views on management affect workplace motivation and cooperation, thus hampering the managers' efforts on culture change. The study concludes that informal groups can be

important to an organization because they can act as support to organizational processes due to their similar identities and form of community.

Gehy's study supports Alvesson's (2013) argument that it is important to distinguish the understanding of culture as the source of collective understanding or shared sensemaking (e.g., the term corporate culture) with the idea of culture directly affecting behavior and performance. Though corporate culture determines identity and community, there are other organizational realities that produce work behaviors and attitudes. Therefore, one cannot immediately conclude that shared values are the root cause of specific actions. Hence, there is a need to consider a wide array of circumstances such as age, qualifications, interests, and external forces that significantly shape organization-wide norms resulting to behaviors.

The point is, though culture can be the guide for collective understanding, organizational factors may result to actions that even contradict these shared values. A study on African Pentecostalism and their efforts to bring their religious values to the fore of public discourse resulted to disillusionment. Their collective understanding of "winning the nation for Christ" was marred by conflicting values. Heuser (2014) found that African Pentecostal churches have diverse political strategies for putting Pentecostalism forefront in governance and public discourses. However, this superiority in politics did not result to fruitful and actual policymaking due to differing stances on evangelism, disunity, strife, and lack of institutional structures to achieve common goals.

Symbols Shared in Churches and Prayer Groups

Verbal and non-verbal cultural elements called symbols represent and reinforce group values. A case study on a Catholic church's efforts to revolutionize the concept

of stewardship among parishioners is an example of how a church organization utilizes a community event to symbolize the value of stewardship (Sarini, 2019). This church, located in a wealthy suburb of a large American city, used to hold an annual one-weekend event called Ministry Fair that showcases opportunities for members to be volunteers and financial supporters of parish ministries. It calls for the practice of stewardship of one's blessings or resources (time, money, and talent) by being grateful, accountable, responsible, and generous stewards of these resources.

However, giving and volunteering simply became a duty or external religious "checklist" among members, thus the church stagnated for years in volunteering and financing projects. To create culture change, the church transformed the Ministry Fair into a 15-weekend festival and celebration to teach the spirituality of stewardship as way of life. The Ministry Fair now becomes "a context for interaction and an opportunity to co-create the culture that would support a new understanding of stewardship" (p. 41). In this Ministry Fair as a community gathering, public prayer becomes a scene and a language to frame and co-construct messages on stewardship.

Aside from a social event (Ministry Fair), languages in prayers and religious discourse are also used as group symbols. A study on prayer for good governance shows how a culture relates to leadership as symbol of its values and aspirations. In the article Prayer for Good Governance in Anambra State (Nigeria), Obiorah (2013) extracts the meanings of prayer petitions for leadership. With the position that authority is of divine origin, political leaders are seen as representatives of God. Thus, they are prayed to execute "just and righteous leadership", to possess "fruitful long life" to sustain and carry out their responsibilities, and to be endowed with the "marks of good

leadership” (pp. 9-12). Leaders with integrity of service to the nation are essential to peace, and prosperity, and quality life that everyone longs for in society, hence the need to petition God for such leaders.

A study by Nastiti & Ratri (2018) shows how Islamic groups use "emotive politics" through impassioned (hate) speeches as symbols of their religious convictions on governance in two case studies in Indonesia - the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election and the implementation of sharia regulations. Using the news media and campaign materials such as posters and banners, Islamist groups shape their constituents' political views by mobilizing hate against non-Muslim candidates and voters. These organizations declare Islam as their political platform, hence, the rationale on the use of impassioned language is a moral righteousness and defense of Islam.

Aside from language, organizational leaders can be viewed as representatives of their organizational culture. Lovaas et al. (2020) collected survey data from administrative leaders on congregational and multi-municipal levels of the Church of Norway, an Evangelical Lutheran church, which is the largest and oldest nationwide member organization in the country and includes 73% of Norway's population. The church used to be a state church but was configured to be a "folk-church" in 2012 with the aim for clear political, cultural, and civil engagements in the Norwegian society.

Lovaas et al. (2020) found that aspects of transformational leadership are helpful in securing creativity, volunteerism, autonomy, and task completion. These include giving inspirational motivation (The leader provides clear mission, mission, and purpose.), idealized influence (The leader serves as model for ethical behavior.), intellectual stimulation (The leader allows members to question traditions and suggest

new ways on problem solving.), and individualized consideration (The leader understands needs of members and applies strategies to solve them.) Leadership as a symbol points to members what a folk church culture is (Lovaas et al., 2020).

Communicative Performances in Religious Groups

Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) conceptualize communication in an organization as expressions or performances that brandish the organization culture, hence the term cultural performances refer to communicative activities enacted by organization members. The authors identify five types of cultural performances, namely: ritual (series of custom actions in specific situations of organizational life), passion (narratives or story-telling among members), courtesy (social acts that build rapport), politics (principles that govern power, management, and control) and enculturation (teaching and learning how to be a qualified organization member).

These five communicative performances show the multiple cultural forms that can be analyzed in the field of organizational communication. Trice & Beyer (1984), however, argue that studying these elements or performances in isolation distorts the overarching concept of culture. These cultural elements are to be woven interdependently to see how they function in the 'integration, control, and commitment' of the individuals in that culture (Pettigrew (1979) cited in Trice & Beyer (1984), p. 653).

To address the lack of coherence among discrete elements, Trice & Beyer (1984) classified these forms into rites and ceremonials. Rituals and ceremonials, which are expressions of a culture's values and beliefs, are discrete, planned, and conventionalized practices with clear beginnings and endings (Islam & Zyphur, 2008).

A rite puts together different cultural forms into a unified public performance, while a ceremonial puts together several rites into one occasion. To illustrate, the President's oath of office is a rite. Other public events which accompany the oath taking such as convocation, parade, reception, and party are also rites. All these combined constitute the inauguration ceremony (Trice & Beyer, 1984).

Among faith communities, prayer ceremonies host various kinds of cultural performances. An ethnographic study by Fuist (2015) on progressive religious groups that are highly engaged in socio-political activism reveals that group prayer is not simply a collection of individual prayers of group members but a special episode where participants construct their unique collective identity, set boundaries, and locate their position relative to other groups. These groups are involved in various social activism for LGBT rights, anti-poverty, anti-racism, homelessness, and environmentalism. Among the many kinds of prayers, Fuist (2015) focused on the ritual of collective prayers during worship as an official group meeting. The study moves away from a highly cognitive approach on organizing toward a view of religious communities in terms of settings such as physical environment, interactions, and emotions. Here, collective prayer hosts a variety of cultural performances that affectively attach members to each other, delineate boundaries, and build collective identities, such as using gender-inclusive prayer language and praying about controversial political issues to intentionally delineate themselves as a religious group.

Transforming Effects of Intercessory Prayers

Instead of locating the spiritual realm inside church walls, these studies show that churches and other faith-based groups can be strategic and innovative in

transforming society through spiritual exercises like intercessory prayer, mission work, as well as economic and political engagements.

A study on faith-based organizations (FBOs) in Cape Metropole, South Africa reveals that their religious identity dictates the manner of their organizational processes, as opposite to modernist assumptions that the spiritual and physical are separate domains (Du Toit, 2019). FBOs are described in the study as religious NGOs that view their social development work as living out the Christian faith. FBOs are driven by obligations toward God and society, transformation, justice, and reconciliation. The study reveals that religious identity is valuable in welfare and development as it is the passion that fuels FBO's services. On the other hand, the religious identity of these FBOs also blurs Western ethical context which separates development work from proselytization. For outsiders, there is tension when good works (development, welfare) spurred by faith can be used to proselyte or convert others. However, the study reveals that despite ethical question on proselytization, religious identity in these FBOs do not separate spiritual and physical activities.

Economic growth, an indication of social transformation, and its relation with Pentecostal faith in Africa have been extensively examined by scholars. The studies highlight Pentecostal ethic on hard work and messages on entrepreneurship, development, and economic prosperity to combat corruption and poverty. The Pentecostal message of spiritual and economic transformation lies on the individual's conversion from sin and disorder to self-discipline, knowledge, skills, honesty, and faith, which are all conducive for entrepreneurship, thus a shift from corrupt economic system to good governance (Fantini, 2016).

Emerging upper and middle class Pentecostal entrepreneurs and professionals are vocal in their increased role as Christians in the public sphere in Ethiopia, one of the fastest growing economies in the entire Africa. Prayer has played a vital role on how Pentecostals exert influence in the social realm. Churches engage in spiritual warfare and governmental prayer to spur national development. For them, governmental prayers result to changes in political and economic systems. Through spiritual warfare and governmental prayer paradigm, the church confronts evil spiritual forces, principles, and powers that influence government institutions. Aligned with prayer practices, churches take direct actions in economic reforms through business ventures and training of members to be exemplary business leaders and professionals (Fantini, 2016).

Zambia promotes prosperity gospel for social transformation through economic reforms. Haynes' (2014) ethnographic fieldwork looks at Pentecostals' political and economic interventions at the so-called Redemption City, which they built in Nsofu, Zambia. Redemption City has become a political statement as a 'town that works' through its stark contrast with many dull towns and cities in urban Zambia (p. 19). In Zambia, the prosperity gospel coupled with excellence model are Pentecostal religious practices that are also political engagements (Haynes, 2014). Prosperity gospel is the belief that God wills believers to be prosperous and successful while excellence model stresses the importance of doing one's best in response to faith and divine favor. The model supports human efforts springing from Christian values to combat poverty attributed to mismanagement, laziness, and misconceptions on money and wealth in the light of the scriptures.

The upscale Redemption City has clean air, water, uninterrupted electricity supply, transportation system, well-paved roads, university, schools, banks, clinic, and radio station. Other Pentecostals in other parts of Zambia are also moving in to this direction of developing their own communities as rebuke and intervention to failing government infrastructures. These political actions of Zambian Pentecostals are expressed in their prayer rites such as confessing Bible verses on prosperity as well as repeated affirmation of Zambia as a Christian nation that aligns with Biblical principles of patriotism and national development.

Faith-based activities as vehicle for social change in African countries is World Vision's framework for advocating care and prevention in HIV and AIDS, gender, maternal and child health, child protection and Ebola. Through its Channel of Hope program, World Vision partners with faith and community leaders who are key gatekeepers in mobilizing various resources for community health in Zimbabwe (World Vision, 2016).

In Europe where the 24/7 prayer movement originated, Evangelical Christians have liberated prayer as an ascetic and ancient religious practice to an everyday subjective activity for community life and social justice. The movement shifts institutionalized prayer to a 'holistic' spiritual practice of taking responsibility for the needy, environment, and daily life through civic engagement and social activism. The 24/7 prayer movement is non-stop prayer and worship gathering of like-minded Christians who cross denominational barriers and seek to transform society through direct participation. Prayer rooms are built and organized to provide creative actions and services to ease hunger, human trafficking, homelessness, and other community problems (IHOPKC,2021).

These studies challenge the notion that limits religious practices to religious art; rather they are innovative and strategic ways to influence social transformation (Saale, 2014). Religious activities, such as prayer, enable communities to understand their aspirations, paving way for cohesion and solidarity for meaningful social transformation. The church as place for religious activities is also a domain of social change, and leaders who make their policies purely secular will not bring total social change because “the church is in society and the society is in the church” (p. 119).

Organizational Constructs

To appreciate deeper how group life creates shared meanings, organizational studies are classified by Eisenberg & Riley (2001) into four cultural themes, namely: Cognitive, Climate, Identity, and Effectiveness.

In the **cognitive** lens, culture is defined as a pattern of “shared assumptions, shared frames of reference, or a shared set of values and norms”, highlighting a cognitive frame that dictates culturally appropriate behavior. Various studies on understanding a group’s way of life do not simply focus on overt behaviors but delve in their underlying assumptions that serve as rules to these behaviors (Eisenberg & Riley, 2001, pp. 305-306).

Organizational **climate** is conceptualized as both affective and cognitive in various literatures. Climate is formed through “mutual perspective taking” among members when they communicate, creating feelings and attitudes with each other. It is the “feeling” conveyed in a group based on workplace factors such as physical layout or interaction with members and outsiders. Climate is also the observable behaviors and attitudes stemming from collective underlying assumptions, beliefs, and

meanings members attach to group practices. Thus, climate is an indication how the organizational culture and its people fit well (Keyton, 2014, pp. 131-132).

Organization climate studies vary depending on theoretical orientations, measures, units of analysis, and more. One study category of organizational climate is the cognitive or psychological approach that focuses on individual perceptions of the work environment. Another is the communication dimension which looks at feelings and attitudes such as supportiveness, trust, and participation that emerge when members interact (Eisenberg & Riley, 2001). Moreover, a structuration perspective acknowledges that people belonging to different groups within the organization have different ways of showing support, hence, climate can be observed at macro and micro levels (Keyton, 2014).

Generally, organizational **identity** is a representation of how organizational members define themselves as a distinct social group in relation to their outside environment. Identity provides cognitive and emotional foundation to which members attach themselves and build coherent and meaningful relationships. Within organization studies, identity can be social, group, and self. Social identity means association of oneself with a social category (group) like organizational membership or national citizenship. Self-identity refers to how a person views oneself and what's important to him or her as an individual. Social identity such as organizational identity can provide a basis for the creation of self-identity, such as when someone introduces himself as an employee of a company or a member of a professional group. However, defining oneself may not be based on the entire organization but a group the person belongs to within that organization, thus, group identity is another variation of identities

in an organization. These three levels of identity - organization, group, and individual - are thus interrelated (Alvesson, 2013).

Eisenberg & Riley (2001) note that studies on identity have argued that self-identity is not a distinctive trait or behavior one has but a fragmented image because it is constructed from meanings present in the culture. In essence, narratives for self-identity in an organization depends on the work, choices, and opportunities found in the organization and made available to members.

The **effectiveness** of the organization or the ability to achieve desired results is analyzed through the lens of *leadership*, *innovation*, and *strategy*.

For Alvesson (2013), a good understanding of *leadership* positions leaders as organizational symbols that give clues on the organizational culture, instead of looking for facts or theoretical definitions about leadership. Alvesson (101) asks. "Cultural meanings form frameworks for the interpretation and assessment of managerial acts, and form the basis on how managers and subordinates negotiate shared meanings around the doings of leadership(p. 121).

Innovation can be defined as a process an organization undertakes to conceptualize in new ways existing products, processes, and ideas. Innovation may be a critical factor for organizations to grow, remain relevant, and differentiate themselves (Purcel, 2019). There are different approaches to innovation. Demircioglu (2016, p.1) defines organizational innovation as "a means of changing an organization, whether as a response to changes in its internal or external environment or as a preemptive action taken to influence an environment".

One framework in studying organizational innovation looks at the types of innovation adapted by an organization (Demircioglu, 2016). This study uses the three types of innovation taken from the Oslo Manual, a reference guide for collecting and using data on innovation. These are Organizational Innovation that refers to a new strategy that affects structures, practices, and relationships with stakeholders, Process Innovation which implements new production, delivery, operation, techniques, and equipment, and Product Innovation which offers improved goods or services (youmatter, 2020).

The final feature of organizational effectiveness included in this study is *strategy*. In the interpretive model, strategy is “orienting metaphors or frames of references that allow the organization and its environment to be understood by organizational stakeholders. On this basis, stakeholders are motivated to believe and act in ways that are expected to produce favorable results for the organization” (Alvesson, 2013, p.83).

Culture and strategy work hand in hand to guide meanings and actions in the environment. Aside from understanding people’s actions, they also suggest “a way of ordering the world” by providing a framework that promotes the collective’s values and standards (Alvesson, 2013, p. 83). In pursuing its overall direction, an organization may face challenges in its internal and external environments. Hence, by interpreting organizational effectiveness, one can analyze what challenges are effectively managed through realized strategies.

Theoretical Underpinnings of the Study

This research is guided by the Sociocultural tradition, which is one of the communication theoretical traditions by Craig’s (1999) in his constitutive metamodel

of communication theory. This tradition sees communication as a “symbolic process that produces and reproduces shared sociocultural patterns”, where social order is produced, sustained, and recreated in daily interactions (p. 144).

The Sociocultural tradition also views communication as the “creation and enactment of social reality” which means that when people talk and interact in various ways, they produce, maintain, or reproduce culture or social reality (Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks, 2015, p. 43). In this process, people in groups use cultural tools such as languages, cognitive customs such as beliefs, attitudes, values, cultural traditions, and roles and rules for actions to create shared representations of reality (Trenholm, 2011).

Among the socio-cultural theories that a lens to study the parachurches’ evolving culture, identity, and roles for social transformation is the Organizational Cultural Theory proposed by Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo. For them, “organizations are places where people work and do a whole lot of other things, and all of these work things and other things constitute life in that organization” (Pacanowsky & O'-Donnell-Trujillo, 1982, p. 117). This means that culture refers to how organization members live together as a group. Moreover, they argue that culture or organizational life is “constituted by communication” (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982, p. 117).

Culture as organizational life constituted in communication activities entails that cultural meaning and understanding are achieved through the interactions of members. Culture is communicatively constructed by organizational practices that are also communication activities. In other words, culture is accomplished through communication (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982).

Three assumptions guide the Organizational Culture Theory as follows (West & Turner, 2007, p. 301):

1. Organizational members create and maintain a shared sense of organizational reality, resulting in a better understanding of the values of an organization.
2. The use and interpretation of symbols are critical to an organization's culture.
3. Cultures vary across organizations, and the interpretations of actions within these cultures are diverse.

West & Turner (2007) further explain these three assumptions. For the first, people in the organization contribute to the shaping and maintaining of organizational reality through their behaviors and values. "Values are the standards and principles within a culture that have intrinsic worth to a culture" and "...inform organizational members about what is important"(pp.301-302). West & Turner (2007) notes that for Pacanowsky (1989), values are derived from their 'moral knowledge' which they display through narratives and actions. By being active participants in an organization, people share in the process of creating their organization's values.

The second assumption of the theory indicates that the culture or reality of an organization is also determined in part by the symbols members use in their interactions. Symbols are representations for meaning which members create, use, and interpret every day, hence these symbols are important in maintaining the organization's culture. As representations of meanings, symbols can be physical such as material objects, behavioral such as ceremonies and traditions, and verbal such as stories.

According to Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983), words obtain meaning in their context or situational features such as setting and participants. But situational features do not impose meaning. Instead, words, behavior, and situational features reciprocate or elaborate each other. "The setting gives meaning to the talk and behavior within it while at the same time, it exists in and through that very talk and behavior(p. 132)".

The third assumption of the theory pertains to the variety of organizational cultures. Simply put, organizational cultures vary tremendously, hence, perceptions of the actions and activities within one culture is true only within the bounds of that culture. Thus, the life of a distinct organization is a unique culture.

Communication Activities as Cultural Performances

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo believe that the Symbolic-Interpretive perspective provides a realistic picture of the culture of an organization. As such, they used in their works the primary methodology employed by the work of their predecessor, Clifford Geertz, which is ethnography.

Geertz (1973) believes that ethnography is the best way to study culture because culture must be understood from the members' points of view. Ethnography is a qualitative methodology that uncovers and interprets artifacts, stories, rituals, and practices to reveal meaning in a culture. Ethnographers sometimes call this methodology naturalistic inquiry, which involves discovering meaning. Geertz, and later Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, primarily subscribe to direct observation, interviews, and participant observation involving the processes of observation, analysis, and interpretation in finding meaning in culture. With field notes resulting to

‘thick description’, they tried to explain the intricate layers of meaning underlying a culture.

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) believe that communication practices in an organization are “cultural performances” which result in a unique organizational culture. The term Performance is a metaphor of how organizational members choose to act “in ways which reflect (or flout) the social conventions” of their group(p. 130).

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) outline five cultural performances, namely: ritual, passion, social, political, and enculturation.

Cultural Performances and their Definitions (Taken from Pacanowsky and Trujillo,1983)

Rituals	Activities that orient members, and create focus and regularity in the culture
• Personal rituals	Strategic and significant personal performances Trademark performances of individuals
• Task rituals	Practices for getting the job done Routines members perform to call themselves workers
• Social rituals	Activities that make work routine livable and fun Activities that break boredom
• Organizational rituals	Somehow “sacred” meetings (special events, general assembly)
Passions	Storytelling-heightened descriptions of organization activities Turning mundane (tiring, boring job) into passions Stories that are worthy of emulation (principles), caution, etc.
• Personal Stories	Personal stories (e.g. police and his invincibility as firefighter) that embellish organizational identities
• Collegial Stories	Stories about others in the group, amusing anecdotes, accounts showing that the organization “really works”, newcomer’s initiation
• Corporate Stories	Stories that represent management ideology, favored customs of organization life, glorified organizational experience
• Passionate Repartee	Argots and metaphors that are common or normal in the organization
Courtesies	“Bureaucratization” of the spirit, warm greetings, reciprocation, maintains organizational membership

• Pleasantries	Small talk, chatter, kill time to enjoy each other, a non-threatening way to self-disclose, “pointless conversation” (a clue into one another’s working styles)
• Sociabilities	Joking, gossiping which implies certain level of intimacy, happens in clique
• Privacies	Confessing, supporting, consoling more private in substance
Politics	Issues of power, control, and influence Recognition of subcultures and self-interests that are aimed at influencing others
• Showing Personal Strength	Displaying personal strength by demonstrating another’s dependence on them Intimidation, isolation, defamation, expulsion
• Cementing Allies	Recruitment of allies (Allies can be formed when courtesies and favors are reciprocated; testing others if they can be trusted, influencing others)
• Bargaining	Efforts to reach inconsistent goals(reciprocal argument, counter argument, proposal and counter proposal(attacking tactics, defending tactics, regressing tactics
Enculturation	Processes by which organizational members acquire the social knowledge and skills necessary to behave as competent members (occurs throughout one’s organizational life but some are particularly meant for newcomers Learning social knowledge and skills of the culture
• Learning and Teaching the Roles	Teaching the roles-orientations (job training sessions, indoctrination meetings, initiation, doing unpleasant or difficult assignments) Newcomers are expected to display their new-found knowledge of company ways and their “commitment” to the organization

Guided by the Organizational Cultural Theory, I looked for 1) key communication activities of the group which are occasions when sense-making is achieved, and 2) the sense or meaning members of a particular group have made of these communication activities (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982).

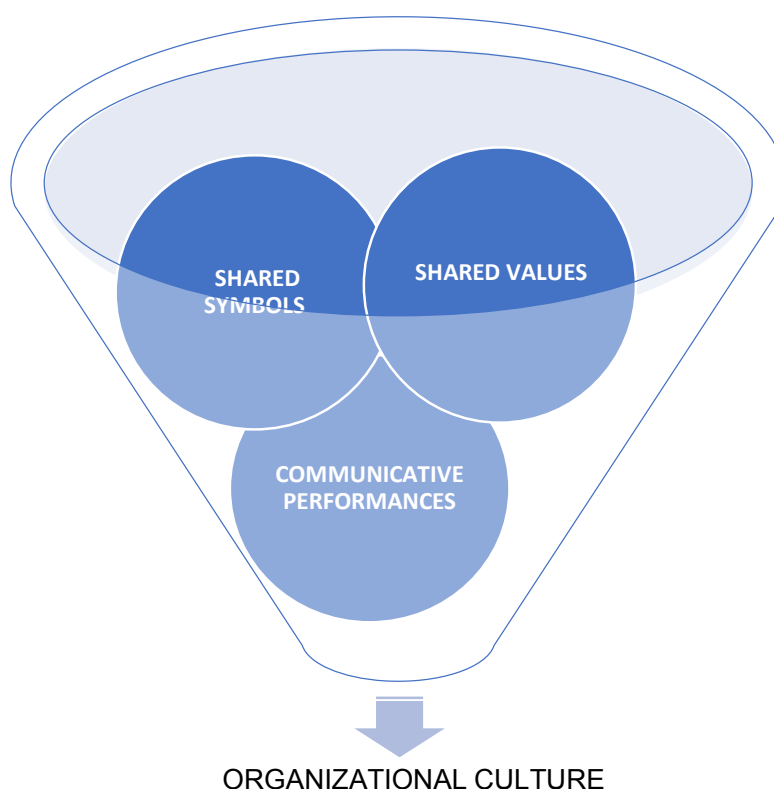
To plausibly interpret how organizational members weave together the interlocked communication activities and their meanings, Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) say it is “necessary to have recourse to instances of members communicatively making sense and recourse to the body of knowledge that members draw upon in order to make sense”(p.127). The “body of knowledge” refers to the

shared or collective organizational “constructs” on the varied aspects of their group life.

For Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982), organizational constructs build the “resultant structure” or the account of reality that is 1) used as a resource for making sense of new experiences and is 2) continuously construed through communication activities.

All the above factors (values, meaning-making symbols, and communication performances) are contributory to an emerging and transforming organizational culture. In other words, the resultant organizational structure is the “residue of communication activities” of the culture (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982). This is the unique organizational life of the organization. This means that culture or organizational life is both a structure (body of knowledge) and a process of continuous meaning construction among members (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Analytical framework of the study



The details of the research questions to elucidate the general analytical framework is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Concepts for the Analytical Framework of the Study

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING	CONCEPTS
1. What the values shared by the members of the parachurch and how are these shaping their culture and roles?	Values Organizational Cultural Theory Assumption 1	Shared values held by members as intercessors belonging to a distinct organization in the body of Christ
2. What are the symbols shared by the members of the parachurch and how are these shaping their organizational culture and roles?	Symbols Organizational Cultural Theory Assumption 2	Meaning making of shared symbols of the group

3. What cultural performances in the form of communicative acts are enacted in the prayer watches that initiate the members into the culture and role of intercession?	Types of Cultural Performances as communicative acts Organizational Cultural Theory Assumption 3	Key communication activities of the group which are occasions when sense-making is achieved <i>Ritual, Passion, Courtesy, Politics, Enculturation in the Prayer Watches</i>
4. What are the transforming effects of intercessory prayers among the parachurch members?	Resultant organizational structure as residue of communication activities	Emerging and transforming organizational culture
5. How does the parachurch and the evangelical church complement each other in communication ways?	Shared sense of organizational reality resulting in a better understanding of the values of the organization	Meanings of communicative acts that bridge the church-parachurch divide in nation-building and good governance
6. How can spiritual communication through intercessory prayers contribute to social transformation?	Interlocked communication activities and their meanings in intercessory prayer to establish parachurch members' cultural identity and role in nation building	A model that shows the emerging and transforming parachurch culture for social transformation

Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in the study:

Church refers to a congregation under the Evangelical denomination.

Parachurch is an organization that supports specific Evangelical church ministries but operates outside and across church jurisdiction; in this study, it refers to the Hope of Prayer in Davao City.

Intercessor means someone who prays in behalf of a person or entity for God's sovereign will. S/he may also be called a **prayer warrior**.

Intercessory prayers refer to prayers offered by prayer warriors in behalf of the nation to establish God's sovereign will on the country. These usually deal with national issues concerning the government.

Shared values are standards or principles of culture that unite members; these would emerge from the coded data

Shared symbols are cultural representations mutually used and understood by members; these would emerge from the coded data

Performances refers to communicative actions and behaviors of culture members conceptualized in the Organizational Cultural Theory, namely Ritual, Passion, Social, Political, and Enculturation performances to sustain and manage relationships.

Communicative acts refers to all verbal and non-verbal interactions during the Prayer Watches of the HOP that fall under any of the performances according to the Organizational Cultural Theory.

Organizational culture is the unique way of life in an organization; in this study, this includes the elicited concepts from the participants and the researcher's reflections

Social transformation means a reformation from a corrupt and morally degraded society to a culture of practical righteousness and social justice; in this study, it is used interchangeably with nation building or national transformation

Good governance means trustworthy law-making decisions and policies for local and national development, which is part of social/ national transformation

Role – refers to the responsibilities taken on by the parachurch members as part of the organization vis-à-vis the church; these would emerge from the coded data

Identity – refers to the distinct characteristics that sets someone apart from the other members of the church; these would emerge from the coded data

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

As the lens used is Organizational Culture Theory, this study is rooted in ethnography. Following qualitative inquiry, the ethnographer studies participants in their natural environment or cultural setting. Tools include observations, interviews, and documentary data to give comprehensive description of a social phenomenon (Reeves, et. al, 2013).

Research Design

A case study approach to members of a House of Prayer (HOP) was employed to understand the (co)creation of the parachurch culture. This design is useful to obtain an in-depth understanding or appreciation of a phenomenon in its real-life context and is appropriate for explanatory 'how', 'what' and 'why' questions (Crowe et al., 2011). This case study follows the interpretivist standpoint as it explores the environment that shapes shared values, symbols, and communicative practices of the group.

One consideration for using this design is the selection of the case to study. A case that is unique or exceptional, thus worth investigating, is called an intrinsic case study. Having access to the site and working cooperatively with research participants is part of careful consideration (Taber, 2019). The House of Prayer phenomenon is an intrinsic case that offers an interesting case on how a parachurch organization performs its ministry . Moreover, I investigated my own organization giving me open and reflexive approach in the inquiry process.

Research Locale and Period

The research was conducted at the premises of a House of Prayer (HOP) in Davao City. The phenomenon studied was the social system of a parachurch praying for national transformation of the country. This parachurch has distinctive prayer practices. First, the group operates independently from a church organization, but individual members remain active church members. Second, it is an affiliate of a regional (Negros Island House of Prayer) and a national (Intercessors of the Philippines, Inc.) Pentecostal parachurch movement, which place the Philippine government as the focal point of their intercession. Third, group members belong to different Evangelical and Pentecostal Christian churches in Davao City. They operate in small groups called “Watches” to daily meet in a House of Prayer (HOP) considered to be a neutral or open ground for all intercessors from different evangelical churches. The group strictly follows Biblical principles in prayer. To become a member of this parachurch is to embrace the identity and responsibilities of an intercessor.

The parachurch rents a space in a building located at Brgy. Buhangin, Davao City. I gathered data in May to October 2021. But as I happen to be a member of the parachurch, I also reflected on my past interactions with them.

Research Participants

As an independent parachurch focused on intercessory prayers for the government, the House of Prayer brings together people from different churches to take part in the ministry of a 24/7 House of Prayer. Some are considered “full-pledged” members, while others are attendees only of HOP activities.

The study’s 16 participants are the full-pledged HOP members. Full pledged members are those who completed or are currently completing the study module

Redeeming the Land. This module helps them understand the vision of the Intercessors of the Philippines, the organization that spearheaded the 24/7 prayer for the Philippines and established HOPs all over the Philippines.

The HOP members also perform the Prayer Watch, a 3-hour continuous prayer or “soaking” in God’s presence at any time or day in a week. The first hour is for intimate personal prayer and worship, the second is for reading or meditation of Scriptures, and the final hour is for intercessory prayer for the nation.

Holding a Prayer Watch is a voluntary activity of the intercessor. Full pledged members hold Prayer Watches at least once a week. The goal’s aim is to hold 24/7 Prayer Watches. To perform the watches, watch leaders (also called gatekeepers) and members have to physically go to the House of Prayer. The group adheres that Prayer Watches are to be strictly done at the HOP, not in homes, churches, other places, or even online despite this pandemic.

Research Instruments

The study used ethnographic field work as methodology. Ethnography uses the natural setting for data collection. Hence, all data were collected using the three research instruments within the premises of the HOP.

Online semi-structured personal interview were used to elicit participants’ construction of and practice of intercessory prayer leading to a parachurch culture aimed at social transformation.

Though Prayer Watches happen every day, these watches comprise a small group of intercessors (average of four persons). General assembly of all intercessors happen only once a month, thus a focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted. The

more probing questions in the FGD meant to elicit deeper insights that may have not been captured in the personal interviews.

I also employed participant-observation for periodic activities, particularly during the Prayer Watch, conducted by the HOP members. The participant-observation served to document actual communication activities that embody the cultural values, shared values, and communicative acts of the HOP.

Data Collection

I conducted personal interview on an agreed schedule with the informant. For the *in situ* FGD, I asked for the help of a technical assistant for data recording. This is to ensure that I can freely ask, probe, listen, direct, observe, and do other forms of interactions with participants.

For the participant-observation, I joined all prayer watches of the chosen participants during the data collection period. I interacted with participants as well as employed full and embodied participation during the prayer watches. I collected data through carefully-planned field notes that adhere to chronological order, notions of episodes, and transparency (Suttles, 2013).

In summary, this is how I collected my data.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESPONDENT/S	METHOD/S
Questions 1, 2, 4 & 5 Values shared, symbols shared, transforming effects of intercessory prayers,	HOP members who perform the Prayer Watch	Key Informant Interviews Focus Group Discussion Inductive analysis and coding

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESPONDENT/S	METHOD/S
complementation of the church and parachurch		
Question 3 Cultural performances or communicative acts	HOP members who perform the <i>Prayer Watch</i>	Participant observation
Question 6 Spiritual communication's contribution to social transformation	HOP members who perform the <i>Prayer Watch</i>	Inductive analysis

For participant observation, I used fill-in blank templates (Appendix 4 and Appendix 5) to determine and categorize the communication activities or communicative acts enacted by the members of the House of Prayer. These were categorized according to Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) outline of five cultural performances, namely: ritual, passion, social, political, and enculturation. In addition,

Data Analysis

All HOP members who participated in the KII and FGD are called participants, intercessors, or prayer warriors in this study. They spoke English and native languages (Bisaya and Tagalog) when they responded. For easier reading, verbatim and English translation of the participants were used in the write up. Further, to maintain their anonymity, their sexes were not identified in the discussion.

The gathered ethnographic data for research questions 1, 2, 4 and 5 were analyzed and coded inductively. For research question 3, communicative acts

gathered in the Prayer Watch were categorized according to five cultural performances, namely: ritual, passion, social, political, and enculturation.

As for research question no. 6, I developed a model to show how intercessory prayer as a communication act builds the parachurch culture towards and identity social transformation.

Researcher's Role

I am fortunate to be a researcher and researched at the same time. I was an active former member of a Filipino church pastored by English-speaking Singaporean missionaries. The church has expanded to more than 600 local churches nationwide. In the Marilog District of Davao City, the church has established tribal churches and missions school for the Matigsalug and other tribes in the region.

What fascinated me in my former church sphere was organizational communication in cross-cultural settings. Since my church was a hodgepodge of differing cultural practices, culture contacts led to subcultures. In the church context, these subcultures are different ministry groups. A distinct subgroup was our prayer and intercession ministry in which I participated in.

While being an active member of my church, I came to know friends who were passionate with their prayer lives. Wanting to grow in this spiritual discipline, I started to join prayer activities not only in my own church but also in other Christian circles.

Eventually, the prayer and intercession ministry in my church decided to thrive outside the church walls due to internal and external factors.

We remained active members of our church by fulfilling our membership responsibilities as well as expanding our services and engagement in the body of

Christ. Interestingly, we also became a parachurch. Being part of this environment has given me familiarity, curiosity, and concern on the various social relations of the church and parachurch organizations and how it is evolving to be a prayer warrior for social and national transformation.

Ensuring Trustworthiness

I realize that as a researcher studying my own organization, a number of factors may threaten the credibility of my study.

First, I may favor certain themes and actively look for evidence to support my personal interpretation stemming from personal judgments and foundational theories, as well as create favorable conclusions to my own organization as well as fellow members who are my friends (Creswell, 2014).

The second hurdle I faced was doing a reverse of the data gathering strategies of what Agar calls the 'professional stranger' since the participants consider me as an insider like them. The ethnographer as the professional stranger would have to make meanings on the strangeness of the cultural environment. Since this is not applicable to me, my anticipated challenge will be my own blind spots on the normative forces of my own organization.

Tietze (2012) and Yanow, Ybema, & van Huslt (2012) suggest that a researcher studying his or her own organization needs to balance familiarity and strangeness. Reflexivity here means being able to turn the familiar and known into strange, a process which entails inquiries on what is familiar and why to understand deeper organizational processes.

To ensure trustworthiness, I employed the following strategies (Creswell, 2013):

1. Triangulation of different data sources (participant observation mainly on prayer watches as well as other cultural forms such as visuals, objects, physical setting, etc. personal interviews and processual interviews, and FGD)
2. Use of member checking to determine the accuracy of findings. I showed the major findings to the participants and gave them opportunities to comment on the findings.
3. Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a very important research practice to counter biases. Reflexivity is the researcher's awareness of his or her role in the processes and outcomes of the study. Reflexivity starts with a good grasp of the following nature of ethnography (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019).

Reflexivity challenges the notion that a researcher is neutral to the topic and respondents because one is shaped by personal interests, presuppositions, gender, class, ethnicity, and nationality (Tietze, 2012). Haynes (2012) notes two elements of reflective practice: interpretation and reflection. The interpretation element is the researcher's awareness that his or her judgements inform the interpretation while reflection incorporates multiple and complex relationships among production of knowledge (epistemology), knowledge production processes, and the impact of the researcher (ontology).

To allow for reflexivity, I tried to follow Scott & Garner's (2013) advice to map cognitive schemata or list all of my biases in a journal or notebook, including honest judgments, positive and negative stereotypes, and all envisions I may have on the people and other components of the culture).

Second, I tried to adopt the fourfold consciousness of Relating (behave as what is appropriate to the culture members); Reflecting (being conscious on how to best interact with group members to get quality data, like recalling research questions and strategies to guide inquiry); Retaining (carefully attending to content or what people say, inflection and intonation, rhythm of speaking, and phraseology or distinctive expressions or catchphrases the participants use repeatedly); and Reducing (removing filters or blinders such as biases or personal preferences that may corrupt the data).

I also followed Hayne's (2012, p.79) strategies such as follows:

1. Write down any theoretical assumptions and pre-suppositions about the subject of the research and revisit these throughout the research process, noting how these may have shifted.
2. Consider if how or how this has revised the research question, focus or findings.
3. Keep a research diary noting down thoughts and feelings about the research process.
4. Keep fieldwork notes of observations, interactions, incidents, conversations, emotions, and responses.

5. Listen to tape recordings or watch video clips of your qualitative data gathering (interviews, focus groups, life histories, etc.) noting how your presence or interaction as the researcher affected the process.
6. Discuss and evaluate responses to the research subject, participants, and process with fellow researchers.

I also did validations throughout the research, During the interview, I asked for clarifications by rephrasing/paraphrasing what they said. Then I asked if they agreed or disagreed with what I said. Also, after I familiarized myself with the FGD data, I approached again some of the participants to further clarify their sharings. This was to ensure transparency and co-construction of meanings that would better reflect the parachurch culture.

Ethical Considerations

In view of research ethics, I wrote a letter to the HOP head disclosing the study such as its purpose and implications to the parachurch, the data collection procedures, research time frame, confidentiality of the participants (use of pseudonyms in the data discussion), and the right to know the final outcome of the study.

This letter was also given to all informants seeking for their willing and free participation in the research as well as the assurance that participation is not an HOP obligation or membership requirement.

Only those who consented to be part of the study were interviewed and/observed. They were assured anonymity and confidentiality as well as advised that they could withdraw from the study anytime if they felt uncomfortable during the data gathering.

The study used *in situ* participant observations because covert forms of participant observation have been criticized for being unethical, dishonest, disregarding human rights, and potentially putting participants at risk (Brannan & Oultram, 2012). The *in situ* observation provided clear disclosure to participants every time I interacted with them for the purpose of data gathering.

I strived to be flexible in the modes of engagement with participants as colleagues (fellow members in my case) or as research informants. For example, I placed boundaries on informal chats, which were not meant to be quoted in the research paper (Tietze, 2012). In other words, both I as the researcher and the participants knew clearly when I was gathering data from among our varied interactions.

Data Management

For data management, I encoded all data and transcriptions in a password-protected laptop and shared the data only to my adviser. I also assured my respondents that all summarized results would be used only for academic purposes and presented in some academic seminars or conferences where they will remain anonymous and protected.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the study as aligned with the research questions. The first part discusses the meanings or values of the parachurch for itself, the body of Christ, and the country. The second part expounds on the shared symbols of the parachurch. The third part documents the communicative performances enacted by the members of the HOP) in their key communication activities called Prayer Watches. The fourth part discusses the transforming results of prayers and means to sustain these results. The fifth part presents a communicational framework of intercessory prayer for social transformation.

Shared Values Among Parachurch Members

Organizational culture is defined as a pattern of “shared assumptions, shared frame of reference, or a shared set of values and norms”, highlighting cognitive frame that dictates culturally appropriate behavior.

The study found out that the HOP's values revolve on their perceived vision, mission, and role of the House of Prayer. Vision refers to the dream or aspirations of the organization; mission refers to what the group can do to fulfill an identified need in the society, and role is position and niche where the group can carry out its mission. These three provide understanding of the organizational values and their connection to group life.

The HOP can be considered to have what Gehy (2014) calls “strong culture” because high similarity in personal values are what urged members to come together

in the first place. HOP members are willfully assimilating the parachurch culture because they voluntarily join the parachurch. This means that the parachurch culture is a result of converging personal values of the members.

Shared Vision of the Parachurch

A shared vision reflects the values held by the parachurch members. Their vision is intertwined with their vision for the Philippines because their reason for being in the parachurch is actually connected with their spiritual role in the social transformation of the country.

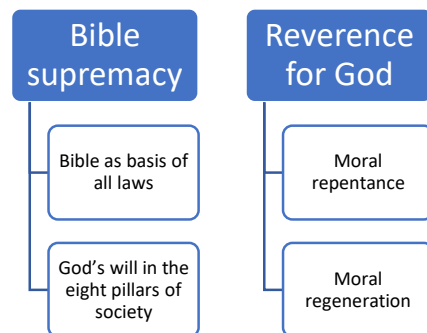
The vision of the participants was a prosperous and developed Philippines. This vision is anchored on reverence for God and the supremacy of the Bible (or considered in the Christian world as the word of God) as guide for living. Reverence for God means moral repentance and regeneration. Bible supremacy, on the other hand, means that all laws would be based on the Bible and that God's will would be implemented in the eight pillars of society, namely: 1) government, 2) education, 3) family, 4) religion/churches/faith, 5) science and technology, 6) business, 7) arts and entertainment, and 8) media. Their answers are summarized in Table 1 and Figure 2.

Table 2. *Organizational Vision for the Philippines*

OPEN CODE	AXIAL CODE	THEME	PARTICIPANTS
• Laws based on Biblical concept of just and righteous living in a sovereign nation	Bible as basis of all laws	Bible Supremacy	P2, P1
• Generally, a Christian nation. Not limited to laws of the land but generally a Christian way of living • Godly influence in the "8 pillars of society"- 1) Government, 2) Education, 3) Family, 4)Religion/Churches/Faith, 5)	God's will in the eight pillars of society		P1

Science and Technology,6) Business, 7) Arts and Entertainment, and 8) Media • God's will (ways, thoughts, wisdom) as higher and more desirable than man's will			
• No corruption (e.g. love of money, perversion of God's truth (beliefs not rooted in God's word)	Moral repentance	Reverence for God	P3, P1, OR P4
• No idolatry -devotion/ worship/dedication to anything that takes the place of God in someone's life ; idol can be a carved image which is a false God, hobby, person, work, etc.			
• Justice - fairness, rightfulness, lawfulness • God-seeking young generation - young people who love God and live according to His ways • Fear from doing evil/wickedness - pursuit of His ways by avoiding/ resisting sin, wickedness	Moral regeneration		P3, P4, P6

Figure 2. *The parachurch's vision for the Philippines*



Theme 1. Bible Supremacy

Bible as basis of all laws

Many books have been written on the connection of faith and prosperous societies. Such authors- believers and even atheists, have pointed out the Bible as the most influential book in the development of rule of law, democracy, and economic prosperity, hence the "bedrock of civilized society". In other words, society leaders and influencers who have great contribution to societies throughout the world are spurred by their Christian beliefs and upbringing. Prosperous nations like Great Britain, the United States of America, many European nations, Canada, Australia, and South Korea have shown to have historically embraced biblical Christianity (Nunn 2023).

The participants said that the HOP's vision of a transformed Philippines is Bible supremacy in all social institutions. As Participant 2 said:

“The Philippines is a sheep nation where every executive order, every law to be passed will go with word of God.” (P2, p.1)

In the quote, Participant 2 says that she envisions that Philippines as a sheep nation. The term “sheep nation” refers to a Biblical account (Matthew 25:31-46) of how nations will be marked or classified as a sheep or goat nation in the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ is a Christian doctrine that describes how Jesus Christ will return to earth as a conquering king to defeat evil and establish His righteous kingdom. Sheep nations are those who support God's chosen people (Jews) as well as disciples or followers of Jesus (the church) while Goat nations are

those who are hostile to the Jews and rejects salvation through the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ. Hence, by calling the Philippines a sheep nation, Participant 2 wants stronger political ties with Israel and all laws of the land be subject to Biblical principles.

Another HOP member, Participant 1, gives examples of laws not aligned with God's will. Hence, there is a need to awaken social conscience through prayer.

“There are laws about to be passed but are opposite to God's will. For example, divorce, same-sex (marriage), so these are clearly against God's word. We pray for these. Lord, let you will be done, not the will of man. Protect the Philippines from wrong deeds according to your will and what the Bible says.” (P1, p. 6.)

God's will in the eight pillars of society

Aside from the Bible as the basis of all laws in the nation, Bible Supremacy also means that God's will is prevalent not only in legislation but also in the so-called eight pillars of society. These include: family, religious institutions, government, media, business, arts and entertainment, science and technology, and education.

For Participant 1, this overarching transformation in all social institutions is achievable through intercessory prayer.

“Our end product is to see with our own eyes God's plan for the nation based on the Bible. Our main objective) is to see the power of God moving in our nation changing one at a time pillars in the society, groups of people, places in the government from top management down to our barangays). We cannot reach them all but one way to reach them all is through prayer.” (P1, p. 2)

Theme 2. Reverence for God

With Bible supremacy and obedience to the will of God, the participants were confident that aligned with God's will, the Filipinos would have reverence for God. And this reverence can happen if they gain spiritual freedom from undesirable social practices and become empowered to do desirable social practices.

Moral repentance

In order to revere God, the participants pointed out that Filipinos should gain freedom from the clutches of undesirable practices such as corruption and idolatry. According to Participant 3, the House of Prayer is a place where desires for the nation are birthed, and one of these is the uprooting of corruption in the heart of governance.

"We envision a corruption-free Philippines where the margin of the rich and poor is not that big and where everyone can enjoy the produce of the land, not just the rich)... We are praying for fairness and justice to prevail." (P3, p. 1)

For Participant 1, corruption, which is openly practiced by government officials, can be resolved through moral righteousness.

"White elephant projects are no secret. Just turn on the news. These are wrong. If the nation is righteous, God is glorified. This means, governance is efficient and honest." (P1, p. 2)

Given this, an intercessor therefore **"prays that officials in the government will be godly** (P4, p. 2)," says Participant 4. Being Godly means truthful and faithful to their sworn public duties.

"In the courts, ...no under-the-table bribes. (In) government offices...projects are righteously done, not selfish desire. As a group, our dream is to see our nation free from corruption." (P4, p.2)

Aside from corruption, Participant 4 also mentions the need for the Philippines to be free from Idolatry. In Christian circles, a common definition of an idol is anything or anyone that takes away God's place in a person's heart. She is referring to what she considers distractions that young people face today leaving them distant from God and His intentions and purposes for the nations.

"Our dream...is to see our youth intimate also with God. Today, our youth have many activities in the Internet. It takes their time. Our dream is to see them learn how to pray for the nation, to have the insight on the need to pray for our nation." (P4, p.1)

Moral regeneration

Because of the need for the Philippines to be liberated from corruption and idolatry, members of the House of Prayer believe that the nation should be empowered to pursue God and honor Him.

As Participant 4 mentions, the group envisions the Filipino youth to be God-seekers in order to obtain His wisdom and direction. For her, today's preoccupation with Internet-based technology leaves no more room for seeking other vital relationships, foremost being spiritual development.

Participant 3 shares the same concern:

"The vision really is to usher the next generation...to a certain place where they can meet God. Why do you build a school? Maybe you are thinking of the future of the students. In the same way, in spiritual aspect, why do we have a House of Prayer? So we will know in the spiritual aspect the future of our city, of our nation... just like a mother who graduated from a certain school. She will also enroll her child in that school). She knows that this place is where she was shaped to become "a responsible member

of our society, so for me, this is my vision that my children can inherit this house of prayer.” (P3, p. 1)

Moral regeneration can also be experienced through reverence for God or fear to do wickedness. In other words, the nation can be liberated toward a people who fear God, thus, shun evil.

Participant 4 believes that reverence of God enables someone to be freed from sinful motives and desires that result to unjust outward actions. She says that a nation that fears God pursues harmonious living among its inhabitants as well as neighboring countries. She cites communist China whose infamous behavior of snatching territories is a manifestation of its non-recognition of God.

“We do experience freedom now because we are a democratic nation, but knowing God is different. If there is fear of God, there is fear of doing what is not right or evil. This is an overall picture of freedom.” (P4, p. 2)

“Our nation knows Jesus, but that depends on the individual because there is still wickedness in our nation. But compared to China, China is very wicked because it does not fear God. They want to control other nations. They built about 90,000 dams because they want to control neighbors Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos...they can decide whether they want to restrict water supply or flood these nations.” (P4, p. 2)

In the FGD, participants were asked the following questions: *How long have you been attending this House of Prayer? What keeps you coming back?* These questions reveal their grasp of the group's vision.

Participant 6 replies that his constant fellowship in the HOP gives him insights on righteous governance. He believes that integrity in leadership is a result of fear of God or the desire to follow God's righteousness. Having the fear of God shields a leader from selfish pride. For him, righteous governance among the newly elected

leaders is a very important prayer focus. He believes that there is no guarantee that the one who sits in power has full integrity against any form of corruption.

“Wealth is not a measure whether someone steals or not. Leaders who have corruption cases now are all rich, but they all steal.”
(FGD-DP2, p. 11)

Hence, Participant 6 believes that full trust in a rich or knowledgeable politician is useless. Only when God intervenes, then there is hope for good governance.

“We already have many presidents who are knowledgeable. How about we try someone who fears God? David (King David in the Old Testament) is an ordinary man but he was given wisdom by God to be an honorable king.” (FGD, p. 11)

This hope compels Participant 6 to pray for righteous political leaders.

“I pray that God will touch the mind of our president that he may acknowledge that God is the source of what he has. The president would brag that his former classmates who were the top in his class are just now his subordinates. That is arrogance. I said, Lord, this kind of person is dangerous. I pray that he will realize that his knowledge and position come from you. If he does that, then he will act knowing that you will account him for all these.”
(FGD-DP2, pp.11-12)

For Participant 6, a person who does not revere God cannot execute justice well.

“A man who does not fear God will always run over someone. He can even sacrifice his own brother for personal gain.” (FGD-DP2, p. 12)

Shared Mission of the Parachurch

As for their mission, the participants believed that intercessory prayers answer social needs or issues for the country (Table 2 and Figure 3). These include the aspirations of the nation such as development, righteousness (removal of wicked practices), goodness (no evil influences), and integrity of the government.

They also identified the kinds of intercessory prayers needed to address these issues. To achieve the aspirations of the Philippines for development, prosperity, and unity, they declare God's blessings and good intentions as well as offer petitions. They pray for repentance against wicked practices such as violence, crime, and corruption. Against evil influences such as (e.g., laws leading to divorce, abortion, same-sex marriage, vices), they pray for protection. Lastly, they pray for righteous governance such as a government with integrity, honest leaders, and efficient LGUs. These are explained in the next section.

Table 3. *Organizational Mission and Type of Intercessory Prayer for National Needs*

MISSION	TYPE OF PRAYER	PARTICIPANTS
National development (Aspiration of a nation for prosperity, development, unity, health)	Declaration and Petition	P1, P11, P9
	Petitions	P2, P3, P11
Righteousness (removal of wicked practices like violence, crime, corruption)	Repentance	P1
Goodness (removal of evil influences like laws leading to divorce, abortion, same-sex marriage, vices)	Protection	P1, P11
Integrity (righteous governance with honest leaders, efficient LGU)	Protection	P1

Figure 3. *The parachurch's mission for the country*



National development

For Participant 1, intercession is an expression of love to the nation.

“We are praying, Lord have mercy. Lord, remember your promise on the land. We are showing (through prayer) that we love this appointed land.” (P1, p. 3)

Participant 1 uses the Filipino word "hinirang" to describe the Philippines. The English equivalent for "hinirang" is appointed or chosen. Participant 1 believes that the Philippines is a nation with a calling unique from all the other nations of the earth, and God especially chose and appointed the Philippines to carry out her calling and purpose as a nation. This “promise” stems from the group’s belief that God has a heart for every nation, as exemplified by His promise for a hopeful future for the nation of Israel stated in the Old Testament: “This is what the Lord says: ‘When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you (Israel, emphasis mine) and fulfill my

good promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:10-11(NIV))."

According to Participant 1, declaration is recalling or stating to God (as if reminding) His good intentions for the nations. Basing on His good intentions for Israel as a promise for all nations that He created, Filipino intercessors can also invoke God's blessings of prosperity, development, and unity of the Filipino people to fulfill their great destiny as a nation.

"We ask the Lord to do what He wills for the nation. May He see the Filipinos asking for forgiveness, praying, and repenting so He will accomplish His promises and intentions for the Philippines."
(P1, p. 3)

The transformational effects of praying for a city, for instance, have been witnessed by Participant 9. She believes that the noticeable development and economic growth of Davao City are results of prayers of people who faithfully believe in God's blessings for a community.

"When I was in high school, I didn't understand why our pastors would lead prayer caravans and speak blessings to these different places we drove to. It was exciting, but I didn't fully grasp the significance until Davao was labeled as Most Livable City in the Philippines, until our Mayor became President." (FGD-DP2, pp. 22-23)

"I have seen the rise of our real properties. Before what you can just buy for 1K per sq meter is now 21K. The value here is so amazing. I realized its (prayer) impact." (FGD-DP2, p. 23)

Declaration of God's blessings is not limited to big social issues but also on personal aspirations. When an intercessor does this, he or she is not simply asking for blessings but already declaring these blessings and promises that God rightfully gives

to His children. Through her prayers, Participant 11 encourages her son to have faith in God who delights to bless his dream of obtaining a law degree.

She says:

“When my son is asleep, I would pray form him. “Lord, he will be an attorney. This will make him ask, “Ma, when will you enroll me in the course?” (FGD-DP2, p. 5)

Aside from declaration, Participant 2 believes that aspirations or ideals of the nation can be met by prayers of petition, thus, Participant 3 describes the HOP as the “courtroom” where these petitions are offered.

“This is a moment when you give your petition to God and you listen to God.” (P2, p. 3)

“This is a meeting place where we submit our cares for the nation. We will submit them to the Lord of lords and the King of kings... this is a courtroom where we can present to God the petitions of the land.” (P3, p. 1)

At the HOP, a member can learn that an intercessor for social transformation does not only plead for the nation but for needs close to one’s home. During the pandemic, Participant 11 thinks of her neighbors, who like her, are struggling financially. When she prays for her own needs, she also includes theirs.

“Let my kitchen be filled with food, Lord because sometimes I run out of rice. I do not pray like this before, but now I’m not ashamed to ask God. Give my neighbors abundant food, Lord.” (FDG-DP2, pp. 4-5)

Righteousness

Intercessory prayer is also understood as a prayer of repentance for social woes that result from sinful or wayward practices that hinder God's blessings. Hence, righteousness paves the way for blessings.

“He created everything. Everything here is His, but He is a gentle God. He doesn’t push Himself to us; He doesn’t just conquer... What is pleasing to Him is when we are humble. Lord have mercy. Look upon us. We are humbling ourselves. He has to see Filipinos asking His forgiveness so His promise and will for the nation will come to pass.” (P1, p. 3)

Goodness

Aside from repentance, members also view intercession as prayers to invoke goodness or protection of the land from evil influences.

“He is looking for people who will stand on behalf of the land. What does this mean? We receive God’s mandate to stand as intercessors of the land, pray, and protect our land.” (P1, p.3)

Protection prayers can also be offensive or defensive. When Participant 11 prays offensively against evil, she gets arduous in her prayers like a warrior in a fight, driving away an enemy. Her prayer goes:

“Lust of the flesh, get out! Spirit of death, go!” (FGD-DP2, p. 5)

Other times, she gets defensive too, uttering prayers that would defend her home from evil influences. Bothered by her son and his friends constant drunken parties at her house, she prays that these friends would stop coming to her home (FGD-DP2, p. 5).

Integrity

Finally, Participant 1 believes that the ministry of intercession is the key to efficient, honest, and just government as God intends for political leaders to execute.

“Our job is to pray that the one seated in power continues to fulfill his or her God-given mandate.” (P1, p. 5.)”

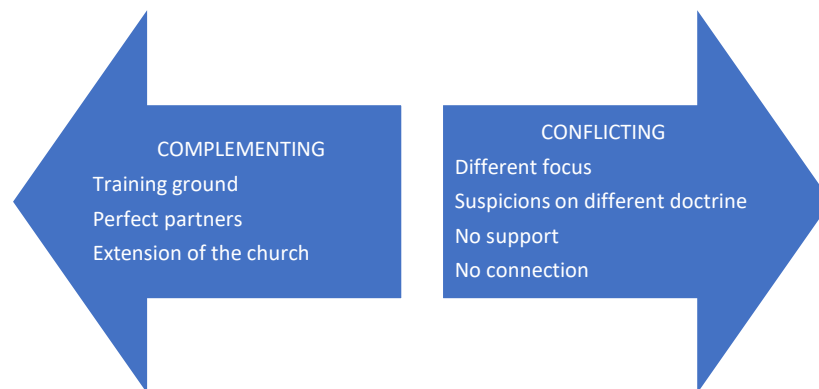
Role of the Parachurch in the Body of Christ

Table 3 presents the members' views on the role of the parachurch and the church in the Body of Christ. When asked on their experiences regarding their role as support of the Church, the participants reveal complementing and conflicting roles vis-à-vis the church.

Table 4. *Role of the Parachurch in the Body of Christ*

ROLE	PARTICIPANTS
Complementing	
Training ground	P1, P7, P13, P12
Perfect partners	P2, P7, P11, P9, P6, P8
Extension of the church	P3, P2
Conflicting	
Different focus	P1
Suspensions on different doctrine	P4
No support	P2, P4
No connection	P4

Figure 4. *Role of the parachurch as shared by the members*



Theme 1. Complementing Roles

Complementing is a concept of organizations serving each other for the fulfillment of mutual goals. This translates to a harmonious relationship between churches and parachurches like the HOP.

Training ground

The members consider the parachurch as a training ground for one organization to serve as a community of practice to another. Participant 1 shares how the church is instrumental in his journey as an intercessor.

"It (church) is a training ground. I started to learn how to pray in the church... The church has been instrumental in teaching the word of God. My pastors have taught me the word of God. I'm very thankful to my previous pastors. They taught me a lot. There are so many false teachings. Since I've been taught well, I can discern what's the truth from what is not." (P1, pp. 8-9)

Participant 7, who feels that membership at the HOP ignites passion to pray beyond herself, wants to stimulate others in her own church, especially those who join

their regular Dawn prayer. The dawn prayer is an early morning prayer on Saturdays where all members of the church, especially leaders are highly encouraged to participate.

“Our vision here needs to be imparted to the church. In our regular dawn prayer, the prayer requests are mostly personal, so the nation is not included. It’s good to pray for beyond the circle of family and friends. There are many types of prayers here that we learn that we can impart to our own church.” (FGD-DP2, p.20)

“Just like these prayers for the coming election, we learned these from here [church],” adds Participant 6. (FGD-DP2, p.20)

Participants 13 and 12 also share the same belief. Participant 13 says that the HOP equips her and churchmates with Scriptural knowledge and practices which they can contribute to their own church.

“What I learn here in worship, I bring to my church. I would share it to others. I don’t selfishly keep it for myself. If your church is cold, you carry your fire here to there.” (FGD-DP2, p. 20)

Since not all members of their church are able to attend the HOP, Participant 12 sees themselves as carriers of a prayer ministry that will inspire others more to pray.

“What we learn here, we can share to others. As a church member, I can enthuse them.” (FGD-DP2, p. 21)

For these participants, the HOP is perceived as a training ground for intercessory prayers for social transformation that can be birthed if there is none in the church or improve an already existing prayer ministry.

Perfect partner

For Participant 11, there should be no conflicting roles between the church and the HOP because despite their functions, they have the same goal. For her, rather than looking at organizational or structural differences, church and parachurch members must work in love, unity, and understanding.

“The role of the church and the parachurch is the same...one goal one vision. The pastors in the church are anointed by God, same as the HOP leaders.”(FGD-DP2, p. 21)

For Participant 9, the parachurch perfectly complements the church by pursuing its identity as a church support.

“I see that the parachurch’s role is strengthening the body of Christ.” (FGD-DP2, p.22)

By attending HOP watches, Participant 6 received insights and confidence with prayers for social transformation.

“While joining, I noticed substantial teachings. Even personal questions I don’t vocalize- Why do we need to focus on praying for the nation? I would receive answers.” (FGD-DP2, p.11)

Participant 2 explains the different roles of the parachurch and the church:

“There are activities that are similar like prayer and fasting. In the church we are taught to read (the Bible) one chapter a day during the period of prayer and fasting. We are all the more developed in the prayer house. The church is like a school, while the prayer house is the actual practice. We learn a lot in the HOP, which we do not learn if we only have church). Prayer house life and church life together are wow! Perfect (P2, pp.5-6).”

Participant 7 reveals that the ministry of intercessory prayers for social transformation builds local churches.

“We must always take care of our local church. What we learn here (HOP), we apply there (church).” (FGD-DP2, p.10)

Just like Participant 6, Participant 9 now understands the significance of intercessory prayers organized by her church in which she participated way back in her high school days.

“When I was in high school, we prayed all over Davao City in a motorcade. It was exciting for me, but I didn’t understand why we did that until Davao became the most livable city in the Philippines. And our mayor ran (and won) as president. The peace and order of Davao is very notable.” (FGD-DP2, p.22)

Meanwhile, Participant 8 believes that a reciprocal support between church and parachurch is needed.

“If you are a Filipino, you really have to pray for the Philippines. I want this realized in the church so that prayers for the government will not be left to prayer houses only. This is the duty of all churches too because this is not a petty thing. This is a big endeavor.” (FGD-DP2, p.25)

Extension of the church

Participant 3 adds that the church is her first home.

“We are not independent of the church...From the church, we learn how to propagate the Gospel, how to transform a little community...we were equipped there. Even our Christian values were formed from the church. There, we were taught how to love. We were developed. The parachurch should not be independent from the church. We need to affirm each other’s gifting and ministry.” (P3, p. 6-7)

For Participant 4, her present journey as an intercessor started way back in her former church which also had a very active intercessory ministry. This ministry included participation in interchurch prayer activities which were encouraged by her

church leaders. Hence, the church environment molded her interest with intercessory ministry.

“Back then in Bohol, I was active in intercession in the church.”
(P4, p. 5)

Moreover, Participant 1 explains that the leadership and membership in the church and HOP are different.

"There is a form of membership in a church where members are under the authority of the leaders. The members' spiritual life is under the pastoral care." (P1, p. 8)

In contrast, he adds that this is not the case with HOP due to the nature of its ministry. He means that the HOP does not function like a church nor equipped for all the ministries of the church.

"The focus of the prayer house is just prayers for the nation. Bible studies (considered basic such as salvation and discipleship), counselling, and the likes happen in the church (P1, p. 3)."

However, Participant 1 reveals that the pandemic has created some forms of isolation among church members as all gatherings in his church have gone online.

"Because of the pandemic, members in our own big church congregation have become apart. Even small group fellowships are halted. But in the prayer house, we are still intact. We pray and encourage one another (P1, p.3)."

As a result of the ministry disruptions caused by the pandemic, Participant 1 says he only gets "pulpit ministry" (P1, p.3) or just Sunday preaching from his church. However, his ministry or contribution to the body of Christ such as prayers and outreaches as well as social and emotional upliftment through physical fellowship happen in the House of Prayer. Hence, the HOP extends support to the various needs of church members, thereby living out its role as a support or extension to the church.

Theme 2. Conflicting Roles

Different focus

On the other hand, the Participants also experience conflict in their church and parachurch memberships. Participant 1 recalls how his former church was not instrumental in his journey as an intercessor in the House of Prayer, though he still considers his church membership as a training ground to his present ministry.

“They (church) have a different focus, which is church planting. So my wife and I tandem with other people who would like to pray for the nation”.

Participant 1 adds that he and his wife are now attending a new church where they are free to channel their time and effort in the HOP. They felt that they could not pursue their calling in their former church because there was no intercessory ministry, and the pastor wanted them to handle the couples’ ministry.

“Our pastors wanted us to work on a different ministry, but our hearts were not in that ministry. We felt the need to get out. We asked permission from our pastor to leave. We are not members of that church now.” (P1, p.8)

Participant 1 explains why he thinks some pastors do not support parachurches like the HOP. He says that some pastors feel that the parachurch is not aligned with the direction of their ministry.

“To be a member of a church, you need to submit to the focus of your leaders. Why do you go there? You should just support the church. So we really cannot focus on the burden that God gave us for the nation if that is the set up.” (P1, p. 8)

Suspicious on different doctrine

Moreover, Participant 4 believes that a pastor can become overly protective due to fear of wrong doctrine that a church member may get from a parachurch.

“Maybe the pastor has an experience of a member enticed by a cult. What I can say to this pastor is that if you know that you have disciplined your member well, you should not be afraid and hinder the member’s participation in a parachurch. Because that could be God’s way of developing the member’s spiritual growth.” (P4, p. 6)

No support

Both Participants 1 and 2 attended the same church which do not support and acknowledge their calling as intercessors for the nation. The whole family of Participant 2 also left this church.

“Our previous church did not allow us or did not encourage us to go to the prayer house. There was conflict. Praise God, we are not there anymore.” (P2, p. 6)

For Participants 2 and 4, their present churches did not stop them from joining HOP activities. However, these churches also did not show any support or willingness to tandem with the HOP’s goal of 24/7 prayers for the nation.

Participant 2 says her pastor knew that her family were already members of the HOP before they become members of his church.

“If there is a simultaneous church activity, we will tell him, ‘Pastor, we cannot attend because we will be in the House of Prayer. He would not comment.” (P2, p. 4)

No connection

For Participant 4, her former church in Bohol has helped usher her love for intercession: however, her present church has no connection with her ministry in the HOP.

“The pastor does not know that I am HOP member. There are many members in our church, and I am not close with our leaders and pastor because we are a big congregation.” (P4, p. 5)

The findings on the shared values of the HOP as a distinct organization in the body of Christ adhere to most organizational culture studies, which agree that group life is not single or unitary. According Miller (2009), there are subcultures in the organization that are sites for new meanings that may harmoniously or conflictingly co-exist with each other. In relation to the HOP, the church-parachurch divide becomes the niche that foster developing shared values. As revealed in this study, these shared values pertain to the group's unique vision, mission, and role in the body of Christ.

Gehy's (2014) study on emerging values in informal groups can help explain the development of the parachurch as subgroup culture in the collective body of Christ. Parachurch members can be considered as part of the church's informal groups whose views on social transformation pave the way on how they construe themselves with both harmonious and clashing experiences with the church.

Shared Symbols Among the Parachurch Members

Among the parachurch members, there are three major symbols: the HOP; prayer as a symbolic act; and the leaders in the parachurch.

Symbol 1: House of Prayer

For the participants, the House of Prayer is a supernatural place – a sacred place, the birthing place of visions, and a shaper of generations. It is something personal like a second home; a distant place like a different place, and a revival place. It is also a place of refuge like a fortress. On a more practical level, it is a pusher for change operating as a campaign office to promote prayers (Table 4).

Sacred Place

Participant 3 perceives the House of Prayer as a “sacred place.

“It’s like a meeting place. This is a physical structure to meet God. A dedicated special house where we can meet with God.” (P3, p.1)

Asked what keeps them coming to the House of Prayer, participants consider the HOP as a sacred place where they revere the presence of God. What they call the presence of God can be emotionally interpreted as tenderness, quietness, and clarity. Participant 4 feels the sacredness of the House of Prayer too.

“This is the place where we can have intimate conversation with God. My deepest longing is to feel God’s presence. During the Watch, you converse with God. You can hear His answer through His words. Sometimes He whispers to our ears.” (P4, p.1)

Participants reveal that they consistently experience these feelings whenever they are in the HOP. Participant 10 was invited by her churchmates to attend the Saturday teaching sessions on Redeeming the Land at the HOP.

“I felt the presence of God the first time I stepped in here on that first Saturday. I keep coming back because God’s presence is a magnet.” (FGD-DP2, p.2)

For her, such delightful presence overshadowed her feelings of uneasiness over a new place or company. In fact, she even felt God's presence in the comfort room.

“Even in the comfort room here (HOP), I could say, ‘Lord, your presence is pleasant.’ (FGD-DP, p. 2)

The congenial atmosphere attributed to God's presence also draws compliments from others. Participant 13 says that her spiritual thirst is satisfied in the place.

“When I entered here, I said, wow! My intimacy with God is increasing. In our church, we also have spiritual activities, but I'm still seeking for more of His presence. I thirst for Him.” (FGD-DP2, p. 9)

For Participant 12, her tears are free to fall in adoration of God in the parachurch.

“I cry to God in worship. The HOP helps us a lot to worship nonstop, if possible.” (FGD-DP2, p.2)

Participant 11 says she once experienced being clothed with a “garment of praise”, referring to a joyful spirit (Isaiah 61:1-3 NIV) that God can bestow to a despairing heart.

“I used to ask God if it's true that the Holy Spirit can really indwell a person. I have proven that for myself here.” (FGD-DP2 p.4)

If others feel the warmth of God's presence at the HOP, Participant 8 feels mental clarity. He says he is thankful for the soaking time at the HOP where he feels the stability of entrusting himself to the Lord's leading.

“It feels good to listen to God. He will tell you what to do.” (FGD-DP2, p.8)

Birthing Place of Visions

Participant 3 credits the House of Prayer as the place where visions for the nation are conceived.

“There are so many desires that are birthed while we are in this place.” (P3, p.1)

Shaper of Generations

Participant 3 also hopes that the younger generation follows her lead.

“This is my vision that my children can inherit this House of Prayer.” (P3, p.1)

Second Home

The Watch that Participant 2 leads, together with her husband, comprises her entire immediate family and some friends from the church they attend. She describes the House of Prayer as safe, peaceful, and relaxing. She calls it a second home.

“For me and for my family, we consider the HOP as our second home where we find peace... We can relax. We are safe (P2, p.1).”

“It’s like a home away from home,” agrees Participant 3 (P3, p.1).

Participant 9 attributes the feeling of being with her own family when she is in her newfound family at the HOP. She says that her parents’ home was always a party place because of her dad’s generosity with relatives and friends. Hence, the fellowship with the other members also felt like she was with family.

“We like company all the time, so during our first meeting here, my spirit felt I was not alone. We have the same spirits that seek God.” (FGD-DP2, p.7)

Participant 9 adds that she also feels this belongingness in her own church family. However, the pandemic has limited the fellowships in churches. The pandemic has caused church members to shift working at home, and made their schedules hectic in coping with the situation. Hence, the HOP family provides what she misses in her other social circles.

“(I do have church friends who love faith fellowships but they are busy.” (FGD-DP2, p.7)

Different Place

Yet it is also more than being homely, says Participant 2.

“Every time, we do our watch, we are so excited. It’s a different feeling (P2, p.1).”

For Participant 11, the HOP does not only feel sacred but even smells pleasant. The exchanges below happen as Participant 11 talks about her experience (FGD, p.3).

“It seems every time I enter, the place smells nice.”

Revival Place

Participant 3 who considers the HOP a “secret place” also wants it to be known to others.

“This place is very personal to me, and I would like to share this sacred place to others” (P3, p.1)

Moreover, the participants feel that their experiences at the HOP are worth sharing to loved ones. Participant 12's enthusiasm for prayer and worship now reaches home. Fired up to worship at the HOP, she also revived their family prayer time that previously waned.

"I also involve my children. We set our family prayer time every 4:30 in the afternoon. We did this before but we were not consistent. This time, we are consistent." (FGD-DP2, p. 2)

Husband Participant 8 and wife Participant 9 experienced spiritual togetherness in their marriage and family life at the HOP. Before joining the HOP, Participant 9 shares that they were struggling in their prayer life.

"When we pray, we are not the only one talking. We ask the Lord what He wants to tell us. He (referring to husband) prays quite long, but there is no moment of silence, no listening to the Lord. But now we journey together. I'm so happy." (FGD-DP2, p.8)

Participant 9 finds the HOP worth sharing to her church friends as well. She and her husband noticed some new ways or ideas for the youth ministry, which they felt would benefit their own church youth too.

"My husband and I were planning what to do for our youth ministry in church. We feel that we found partners in HOP that support our vision for the church. We want to contribute further to the church. We also want to invite them to partner with the HOP so they too can experience our joy." (FGD-DP2, p.8)

Fortress

Aside from being a home, Participant 3 also considers the House of Prayer as a "fortress".

"When there are tensions or problems in the house or in the community, I come to this place just to be myself and cry to the Lord. For me, this is a secret place," (P3. P. 1)

Force for Change

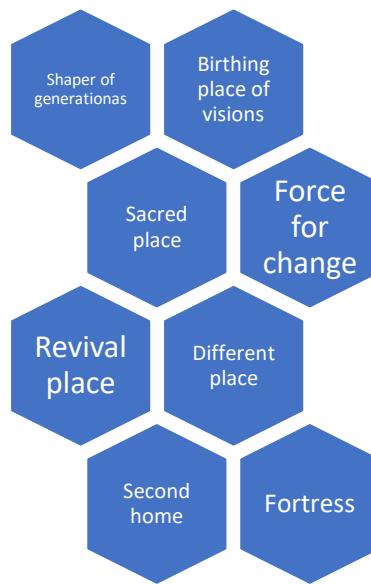
If the other participants get in touch with themselves in the House of Prayer, Participant 1 purposely sets himself aside even in his private prayers during his watch.

“For me, the prayer house is a place where I put myself aside for the nation. I understand that this is not really for me. We pray personal prayers, but majority of our prayers are for the nation. It’s a campaign area office. When you campaign, you are pushing for something. We are pushing for prayer, for change, for the destiny of the Philippines. It is not for us but for the next generation,” (P1, p.4)

Table 5. *The House of Prayer as Symbol*

CODE	PARTICIPANTS
Sacred place	P3, P4, P10, P13, P12, P11, P8
Birthing place of visions	P3
Force for change	P1
Shaper of generations	P3
Second home	P2, P3, P9
Different place	P2, P11
Revival place	P3, P12, P9
Fortress	P3

Figure 5. *Shared meanings on the symbol of House of Prayer*



Symbol 2: Intercessory Prayer

How did the participants view intercessory prayer? They viewed it as having microlevel and macrolevel scopes. Microlevel is a personal understanding of experiences or discoveries while performing intercessory prayers. It refers to introspections of the intercessor on his or her own prayer acts, whether s/he prays alone (privately) in the House of Prayer or together with other intercessors (community). These include having direct access to God, having intentionality, standing in the gap, and personal edification.

On the other hand, intercession goes beyond private and personal boundaries onward communities and the nation at the macrolevel scope (e.g., social transformation) (Table 5).

Theme 1. Microlevel

Direct access to God

Participant 1 believes that prayer brings her/ him into direct contact with the Almighty God and all His power and resources. And this is what makes intercessory prayer so significant compared to other means of influencing and mobilizing others for social change.

“Prayer is the most powerful thing because we are talking to God.” (P1, p. 3)

This “talking” to God reveals the direct and ‘bull’s eye’ process of prayer as further explained by Participant 4. She says bringing to God their concerns enables them to experience His unlimited abilities and resources.

“If we petition God, He will listen because He is not deaf. Man alone is limited in resources.” (P4, pp. 2-3)

Gap bridger between nation and God

Participants 2 and 3 experience the bridging process of intercessory prayer between the object of prayer (God) and the subject of the prayer (e.g., nation).

“This house of prayer is built on the goal of standing in the gap between the Philippines as a whole and God.” (P2, p. 1)

Participant 3 associates intercessory prayer as a faithful duty of an intercessor for the nation.

“Lord, this is my post, and I will stand in the gap between you and the nation.” P3, p. 2)

Intentional personal sacrifice

For Participant 3, intercessory prayer requires intentionality or personal sacrifice to fulfill the group’s mission. Participant 3 describes intercessory prayer as a

persistent process. Participant 7 testifies that she has to rise above or set aside business in order to focus on her calling as an intercessor.

“When I go to the HOP, it opens my heart because I intentionally go there for this purpose. Lord, I will go there because I’m carrying things I need to bring to you and settle with you. This is honoring (God). This is also sacrifice and dedication.” (P3, p. 2)

“On Saturdays, I am so busy because we have church practice, HOP Saturday watch, and our business. I have told myself I won’t go anymore (to the HOP), but I was reminded that life’s motivation is not just about money or making a living. I must put God first.” (FGD. p.37)

Her husband Participant 6 also shares the same conviction. He agrees with his wife that their Saturdays are full that HOP commitments can become challenging. But they consider prayer so important that they just make sacrifices or room for it in their busy schedules.

“Today we have morning prayer in church, then we meet our workers, and then we come here (HOP). We had to hurriedly eat lunch because our day is packed.” (FGD-DP2, p.)

Participant 6 is not complaining because praying intercessory prayer has become a calling.

“I enjoy being here... I don’t consider myself a stranger here... I have accepted this as a calling.” (FGD-DP2, p.37)

Personal edifier

For the participants, intercessory prayers edifies or builds up the intercessor in character, experiences in prayers, and relationship with God.

Participant 2 believes that an intercessor becomes the channel of God's intervention or saving acts toward the nation. In the process, the intercessor's faith is strengthened or renewed as s/he experiences answered prayers. This edifying or building up of faith enables the intercessor to persist.

“When you pray, whatever you pray for, God’s answer goes through you. For example, when I pray for the nation, God’s answer will go through me. This means, If I pray for the president, and the Lord answers my prayer through the president, I won’t be bypassed. I benefit. My soul is being edified. So I believe I really have reward when I pray for the nation.” (P2, p.1)

Edification of character also means embodiment of positive traits and attitudes that concur with the desired social transformation. According to Participant 11 and Participant 12, they have developed the diligence to pray. Participant 11 says that she used to be inconsistent in her prayer habit, but now she finds herself always the first to arrive at the prayer house during her scheduled watch. She says her ‘laziness’ to pray has slowly faded as she became persistent in her coming to the HOP.

“I would wake up early. I’m always the first here (HOP). My feet brings me here. It’s good.” (FGD-DP2, p.3)

For these Saturday Watchkeepers, intercessory prayer has built in them a strong prayer habit, says Participant 12.

“In our church, we are also intercessors who are tenacious. However, the environment changed during the pandemic. We became weak. When we joined here, we got revived. We slept and now we are awake. Now, we never want to miss the Saturday Watches again.” (FGD-DP2, p.2)

Participant 14 shares that she has continued at home the prayer habit she learned at the HOP.

“I have brought home the practice to soak during worship time here. So, the Lord wakes me up every 3:00 in the morning. I would worship and then go back to sleep.” (FGD-DP2,p. 6)

Finally, for Participant 11, intercessory prayer for social transformation has also imbued him/her humility. S/he has learned to allow God to defend her instead of aggressively defending herself, hence enhancing her Christian nature.

“It seems that God removed the hardness of my heart. Before, if somebody harangues me, I wouldn’t move an inch. I would face the person squarely. But now. I would just say, ‘Lord, fight for me. I wouldn’t argue anymore.” (FGD-DP2. p.3)

Personal edification also means that the participants experience greater or more answers to their prayers for the nation as well as for their own personal prayer requests. Hence, such answers have strengthened their own faith that prayers for the nation work. For instance, according to Participant P6, this means more of God’s “yes” to prayers they actually uttered at the HOP.

“Almost 90% of my prayers were granted by God. Not all were instantly answered, but I have seen how powerful prayer is.” (FGD-DP2, p.11)

Though the prayers offered in the House of Prayer are basically for the nation, the participants share that they have experienced answered prayers for personal concerns. Though these are prayers for social transformation, which are nationwide in scope, these do not overlook the personal conditions and needs of the intercessors.

Edification through relationship with God also means that the intercessor believes that actively pursuing God Himself, more than just answers to prayers, characterizes a developed or intimate prayer life. For Participant 12, coming to the HOP increases her fondness of God.

“You are advancing toward God. You are crying in adoration to Him.” (FGD-DP2, p.2)

Participant 8, meanwhile, says that his closeness with God gets all the more real.

“It seems that God’s presence keeps growing and growing.” (FGD-DP2, p.8)

Channel of blessings

For other participants, intercessory prayers have become channels of blessings to them, personally and to their families.

Participant 11 says that she consistently receives aid like food and sources of income during this pandemic as answers to her prayer. Working as part time accountant, she experienced more clients booking for her services. Because of these experiences, Participants 10 and 11 have developed full dependence on the Lord even for their basic needs. These material blessings have also developed a stronger childlike faith in them.

“I receive food aid like canned sardines from our barangay captain. Sometimes, I don’t have money for transport. ‘Lord, I want to go to church, but I don’t have money. Then _____ would tell me that someone wants to book (for accounting services). Thank you Lord!” (FGD-DP2, p.5)

“I receive answered prayers to heavy burdens and cries. Praying for these have become a smooth process to me. God answers them.” (FGD, p. 1)

Theme 2. Macrolevel

Experiences in the macrolevel realm of intercession are reported by the participants when their prayers go beyond self or personal needs (microlevel). Hence,

they viewed intercessory prayers as spiritual burden; complement to other ministries; cascading and collective; group travail; and community engagement.

Spiritual burden

“For me, the prayer house is a place where I put myself aside for the nation. I understand that this is not really for me. We pray personal prayers but majority are for the nation.” (P1, p. 2)

For Participant 11, the group engages her to increase prayer burden or scope.

“My prayer used to be selfish. It was all about me. I was an intercessor (in her own church), but I did not really pray for others. Well, actually I did but not consistently. Now the Lord taught me how to pray for others.” (FGD-DP2, p.9)

Going beyond self is perhaps displayed in the physical going to the House of Prayer. Though Participant 3 believes that prayer can be done anywhere, even in the comfort of one's home, she reports that actually going to the House of Prayer is stepping into a dimension bigger than her own private prayer life.

The house of prayer really developed me. Socially, it transformed me because this is not looking at my own needs. If I pray on my own, I will just pray for my own needs, about people close to me, my family, my personal needs, and the people I minister to. But when I'm in the house of prayer, I'm like in a different realm where I have a bigger heart and view for the nation. So, maybe socially, I become more mature, vigilant. I care more for the nation when I am in the HOP than in my own personal prayer time at home in my bedroom. It's a different realm. There is a different ambience when I pray in the HOP.” (P3, p.2)

As far as Participant 8 recalls, s/he has been active in his/her own church and joins activities such as family ministry and leadership trainings. However, he says that the HOP shines in its distinction in asking for “bold” intercessory prayers for the nation.

“Prayers in the church are not that bold. It's more of asking. But here [in the parachurch], we pray for a national scope. Pastors pray

for your family, but in this parachurch, you pray for the entire environment where you find yourself in.” (FGD-DP2, p.24)

Complement of other ministries

Though members of the House of Prayer recognize the uniqueness of their ministry compared to other church ministries, Participants 2 and 1 believe that prayers for social transformation is only a part of the manifold kinship in the Body of Christ. Hence, prayer for social transformation is, this time, understood as complementing or interdependent with other ministries.

“Our group focuses on prayer because it is so essential for the nation. There are those who do feeding or preaching of the gospel...but praying for the nation, there are few who do it.” (P2, p. 3)

Participant 1 likens the dynamic partnership of different ministries with the process of sowing in the field or doing household chores where each worker has a specific task to complete and balance each other.

“Just like planting, others sow and others water. At home, there are many chores. Someone washes clothes and another cooks.” (P1, p.)

“There is no competition. All of these works are complementing works for the glory of God.” (P1, p. 3)

Cascading and collective process

Participant 2 pointed out the cascading and collective process of prayer for social transformation. She believes that though her prayers are for the government and not for herself, positive changes in governance will eventually benefit her and her family.

“When you pray whatever you pray, God’s answer goes through you. For example, when I pray for the nation, God’s answer will go through me. This means, If I pray for the president, and the Lord answers my prayer through the president, I won’t be bypassed. I benefit. My soul is being edified, so I believe I really have reward when I pray for the nation.” (P2, p.1)

Group travail

In addition, intercessory prayer for social transformation demands teamwork for a group travail.

“When you are with fellow Filipinos, there is a different kind of travelling that happens...You can pray for the nation when you are with people of the same heart.” (P3, p. 2)

Finally, Participant 2 associates group travail with the concept of intercessory ministry for social transformation in community life. In this community, one encounters what she calls “references” for the development of prayer life. These references are people, learnings, and experiences one goes through as one adopts the culture of the House of Prayer.

“When I studied before, I needed to go to the library. In the library, I have many references. In the spiritual aspect, I can pray at home, but I may just have one or two references. But when I go to the HOP, it opens my heart to more references.”(P2, p.2)

Community engager

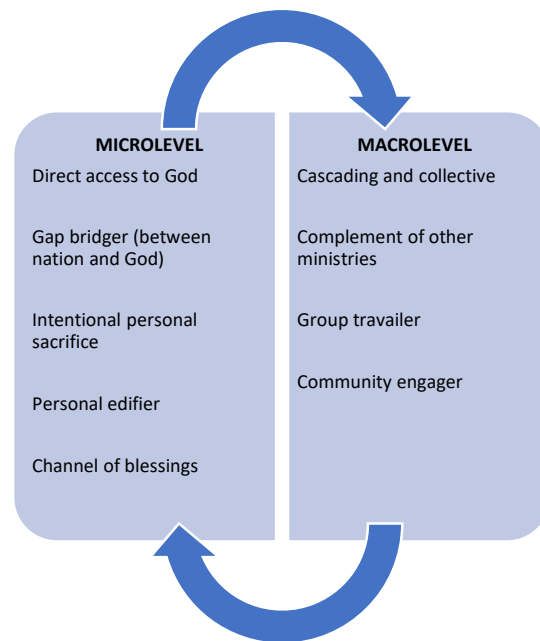
Participant 13 believes that through learning and experiencing with a new community in intercessory prayer, her fire for God had been rekindled.

“I experience God’s Spirit here [HOP] that I also experience in my church and other Christian gatherings. The same Spirit, but it’s all the more ablaze here.” (FGD-DP2, p.9)

Table 6. *Intercessory Prayer as Symbol*

SYMBOL	PARTICIPANTS
Microlevel	
Direct access to God	P1, P4
Gap bridger (between nation and God)	P2, P3
Intentional personal sacrifice	P3, P7, P6
Personal edifier	P2, P11, P12, P14, P10, P8, P9, P7, P6
Channel of blessings	P2, P11, P12, P14, P10, P8, P9, P7, P6
Macrolevel	
Cascading and collective	P2
Complement of other ministries	P2, P1, P10, P14, P11
Group travailer	P3
Community engager	P13

Figure 6. *Shared symbol for intercessory prayer*



Symbol 3: The Prayer Leader

Consistent with viewing leaders as “transmitters of culture” (Alvesson, p.121), the informants share how the parachurch leader can create and sustain the HOP’s culture.

Table 6 shows the participants' views on what is a leader – and they construed it in terms of the leader's personality traits, character, and leadership style. Personality traits pertain to natural and personal characteristics; Christian character, on other hand, can either be innate virtue or consciously worked out or pursued for personal transformation; and leadership style refers to how the leader behaves to fulfill her/his function in the group.

Intimate with God

Participant 4 adds that HOP leaders demonstrate intimacy with God as befitting the self-identity of an intercessor. The expression “at the feet of Jesus” is a description of a prayer posture of waiting upon the Lord in humility and surrender.

“I can really see their closeness with God...it's really different in the house of prayer because what they want is to be at the feet of Jesus.” (P4, p.4)."

Holy Spirit-led

The group believes that the Holy Spirit is the one who gives understanding of the Scripture making it relevant and practical to the reader. The reader can then expound the meaning for personal or for the benefit of others. Such organizational identity is communicated to members by observing how the HOP leader expounds a familiar Bible verse with a new insight. Participant 12 shares about this experience:

“She (HOP leader) shared a verse from Matthew. It is a very simple common verse, but at that moment, I was enlightened. It really hit me.” (FGD-DP2, p.18)

Meanwhile, Participant 7 shares her reactions regarding some supernatural experiences with the HOP leader. She refers to having visions which she herself has not yet experienced.

“I’m impressed with those (such as the HOP leader) whom God communicates with through visions. God only talks to me through impressions (notions, thoughts, ideas).” (FGD-DP2, p. 38)

Participant hungers for more of God by growing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which is necessary to equip or empower a Christian involved in a ministry. By observing this in the life and actions of the HOP leader, Participant 7 is reminded that the HOP as an organization longs to be identified with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

“S/he (HOP leader) said that hearing God is not always easy. There is a price to pay.” (FGD-DP2, p. 38)

Moreover, saying that “there is a price to pay” to reach such spiritual capacity indicates intentionality to be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit and His transforming process to anyone whose life is dedicated to knowing God.

Participant 9’s awareness of the HOP’s identity as a Holy Spirit-led ministry is deepened as she witnesses how the HOP leader shares insights, which Participant 9 views as Spirit-inspired. For her, Spirit-inspired discussions are not merely personal or intellectual ideas but are enlightened conversations that strengthen her inner being. One time, the HOP leader elaborated what it means to “call” on the Lord when praying.

Participant 9 learned in this particular experience that sometimes, calling on the Lord is not a demure gesture of asking help. A persistent call of faith can be loud, bold, and persuasive. While the HOP leader was still discussing this, Participant 9 was reminded of her recent experience. She was very sick and felt she was about to collapse inside the bathroom, so she called her son to help her. However, her son was inside his room and could not hear her, so she frantically shouted until she was heard.

“When I prayed before, I prayed quietly. God is powerful and He can hear me so why pray loudly? But God worked amazingly for me to understand what intercession is. He would give me an

experience, and then that experience would help me grasp His words that we discuss in the parachurch.” (FGD-DP2, p. 23)

Participant 9 refers to her experience when she called her son loudly for help. As a result of that, she understands another way of praying, such as when it is most fitting to pray loudly and incessantly. She says that she is amazed at how the Holy Spirit teaches her this through a personal experience and through the words of the HOP leader (The leader did not know of this bathroom experience when she discussed the lesson on bold intercessory prayers).

Administrator-overseer

The participants' observations on the HOP leader's personality trait or character and leadership style point to various features of the HOP culture. Participant 10 shares a conversation she had with the HOP head:

“She told me that the HOP has no plan to snatch away members of the church. The calling is not to have a church but to gather people to pray. That is the only instruction of God. The HOP will not go beyond that instruction.” (FGD-DP2, p. 26)

This statement by the HOP leader helps members like Participant 10 understand more deeply the vision, mission, and role of the organization. Such understanding helps them grasp the concept of a parachurch. Hence, the HOP leader's statement clarifies that a parachurch is not “just another church” wanting to “steal” members, more so, highly valued leaders of another church.

Participant 12 shares that she has witnessed how the HOP leader and assistant leader personally visited the home of her church pastor during the time when a number of their church leaders started attending the HOP. The purpose of the visit was to personally meet the pastors and explain to them the ministry of the HOP under the

IFP ministry and the partnership it seeks with churches . Participant 12 was the one who accompanied them to their pastors' house because they did not know the place.

"I appreciate you both. You visited our pastors to inform them about HOP and personally asked for their permission. I know your group has respect for our pastor." (FGD-DP2, p. 27)

Such respect of the HOP leaders to the church pastors informs Participant 12 as an HOP member that a parachurch exists to stand alongside the ministries of the church for social transformation, hence it pursues harmonious relationships with church pastors.

Servant-leader/ Apprentice

Calling herself an administrator, Participant 3 believes that her duty is simply to "facilitate".

"They are my equal. How can I lead? I am not greater; that's why I ask for opinions. I need them to validate things...I am not self-sufficient." (P3, pp.4-5)

Participant 9 observed how the HOP leadership circle supports each other.

"I really appreciate how they lead here. Recognition or fame is not what matters. One simply serves because we all have one goal." (FGD-DP2, p. 24)

What Participant 9 observes can be described as servant-leadership where duties are done without behaving powerful, dominant, or coercive with others but simply voluntarily serving for the group's goal. Such action informs members that the HOP is an organization that values humility in service and perhaps bodily expressed in the bending of knees and bowing of head in prayer.

Participant 7 has observed the same.

“There are many teachings here, but I have really seen the humility. This is in contrast to many pastors who focus too much on teaching about prosperity.” (FGD-DP2, p. 36)

In addition, Participant 9 describes servant leadership as pertaining to the leadership circle, meaning, there are some members of the group who act as assistant leaders because their skills complement each other. The deliberate giving of time and service among members can be attributed to the leadership style which allows participation, teamwork, and consensual decision-making. Such leadership style affects the emotional environment of the group. Members feel free to mutually benefit each other in a caring environment.

Participant 1 also says that everyone offers what personal resources they have to meet goals.

“It’s cool because we have different set of skills. I can be the driver. My work schedule is flexible so the HOP can call me. I am a handy man...we have different skills. We all jive. The needs in the group are met.” (P1, p. 6)

Moreover, Participant 10 shares a conversation she had with the HOP head.

“She told me that the HOP has no plan to snatch away members of the church. The calling is not to have a church but to gather people to pray. That is the only instruction of God. The HOP will not go beyond that instruction.” (FGD-DP2, p. 26)

The emphasis of the HOP leader that s/he will not go beyond what God instructs portrays her characters as someone fully dependent on God, and not on her personal abilities or judgment of issues. Acting like an “apprentice”, her/his leadership style communicates to members that the HOP values complete dependence on God.

Vision keeper

Being a 'vision keeper' is another observable trait of the leader recognized by the members. Participant 3 explains that s/he keeps focused on the young generation to keep herself/ himself on track.

"This is a big responsibility and this is beyond myself. This is for the next generation. If I blunder now, they have no one to look up to as an example. Because of this desire for the next generation, I have continued...I cannot afford to fail for the younger ones." (P3, p.5).

Participant 4 acknowledges that the HOP leadership indeed lives out this vision.

"I see their passion for the youth." (P4, p.4)

For Participant 1, the group leader "spreads fire" on the group's vision.

"S/he spreads fire. S/he urges the opening of our eyes," (P1, p.6)

Democratic

Participants say that the leader's democratic way enables them to pitch their personal resources such as time, talents or abilities, and financial contributions to the group.

Participant 2 says that the group considers Participant 3 as the group leader, but there are others who are assisting in the latter's responsibilities.

"In our prayer, s/he is really the one leading us. But in the HOP, we also consider Sister _____ and Brother _____. There are three of them. If you have concerns about the prayer house, you can call these three." (P2, p. 4)

Participant 1 observes how their group leader fosters group decision-making.

"We are all united in the belief that s/he is our leader, though each one of us is necessary in the group. We didn't have formal talks about who we will assign as leader, but we all acknowledge that

s/he is the one. S/he is open...we discuss everything...s/he is not the only who decides.” (P1, p.6)

Aside from democratic decision-making, Participant 1 also that the group leader encourages complementing relationships which encourages volunteerism to meet goals.

“It’s cool because we have different set of skills...We all jive. The needs in the group are met.” (P1, p. 6)

Open

For Participant 3, openness or being transparent to one another promotes good personal relationships. She believes that a leader must not be concerned with creating a perfect image. Rather, a leader must pursue authenticity and acceptance with one another.

“I cannot expect openness from them if I'm not open. I want to be an authentic Christian. I want you to know that I am not perfect. I am like you. I have struggles. I'm not better than you. We are in this together...I don't want many masks. To be a leader, you don't need to have a perfect life... I want to be relatable, ” she says (P3, p. 4).

Also, openness with one another in the HOP enables them to partner successfully with ministry partners. According to the participants, the leaders show the HOP’s organizational identity as a group that goes beyond church routine, program, or any limitation.

Participant 4 refers to how some church leaders strictly do not allow their members to participate in ministries outside the jurisdiction of their own churches or partner with ministries that belong to other denominations. For some, this would seem to lead to segregation instead of promoting unity in the Body of Christ. Participant 4 says that this is not the scenario in the House of Prayer, which is more welcoming.

“I notice that HOP leaders do not place barriers. Whatever congregation you are from, you are welcome.” (P4, p.4)

Affirmer

Another characteristic of a leader is having sensitive eye and understanding heart to the conditions of the group members. According to Participant 3, most members have full time jobs, thus there are struggles and limitations on their commitments to the HOP despite their willingness. Thus, she believes that her being a full-time housewife gives her more flexibility and time for the ministry compared to others in the group.

“God gave me a bigger leisure time, so I just stepped up...I can give more time (to the ministry).” (P3, p. 4)

Participant 3 believes that affirming others also contribute to a positive climate in the parachurch. She says she keeps looking for opportunities to demonstrate this.

“There are some things I want to do. I want the HOP to be holistic. I just don’t want people to pray and pray all the time. Jesus is not like that. Jesus cares for all of us, so I always think how to add value to these people. I always think of going out for other kinds of activities. I always ask God, ‘Lord, how can I add value to these people’, and God gives me glimpses on some ideas.” (P3, p. 5)

Table 7. The Prayer Leader as a Symbol

SYMBOL	MEANING	PARTICIPANTS
Intimate with God	relationship first followed by ministry; assured as child of God and called by God	P4
Holy Spirit-led	receives divine instructions and revelations, operates in divine wisdom	P12, P7, P9
Administrator-overseer	oversees the Watches and other operations of the HOP for organizational effectiveness pertaining to tasks completion and goals achievement	P3, P10, P12
Servant leader/ Apprentice	dependent on God for wisdom and direction, servant-leadership	P3 P7, P9

Vision keeper	upholds the values (goals, identity, etc.) of the culture	P4, P2 P3, P4, P1, P10
Democratic	seeks others' judgments, seeks participation from group, team work	P2, P1
Open	authentic, relatable, no mask no congregation barrier; go beyond church routine or program; partnering with other HOPs)	P3, P4, P12
Affirmer	value others; provides services/activities that enhance/empowers others	P1 P3

Figure 7. *Shared meaning of parachurch leader as a symbol*

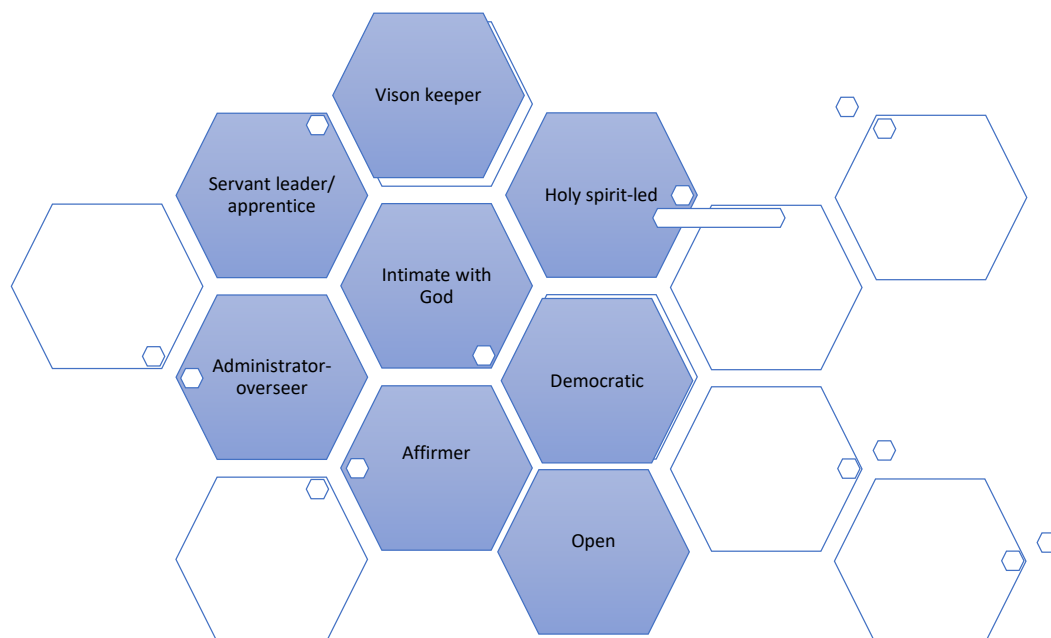


Table 6 and Figure 7 show that the HOP leader is seen as a symbol of someone intimate with God; Holy Spirit-led; administrator/overseer; servant leader/ apprentice; vision keeper; democratic; open; and an affirmer. These leadership qualities and personality traits point members to HOP values.

In summary, the house of prayer (HOP), intercessory prayer, and the HOP leader are shared symbols of the parachurch group. The HOP and intercessory prayer symbolize the emotional climate of the group. The members' descriptions of the HOP as a sacred place, second home, different place, revival place, fortress, birthing place of visions, force for change, shaper of generations) symbolize the affective appeal of the HOP on members' spiritual, physical, and mental health. In the same way, intercessory prayer represents the personal (micro) and communal (macro) relationships in the HOP, as members revealed finding intimacy or closeness with God and others as they interceded.

A study by Nastiti & Ratri (2018) shows how religious groups in Indonesia harness "emotional resources" to create group solidarity and political leverage. Islamic groups use "emotive politics" through impassioned (hate) speeches to mobilize public outrage toward a non-Muslim leader as well as fear and threat to their supporters. In contrast, the HOP members did not show any aggressive stances against the church because they perceive the HOP's role as a church support. The study of Nastiti & Ratri (2018) highlights how the crucial mechanism of emotive appeals diffused in daily and religious practices leading to shared feelings that bridge social divides. This helps explain how shared feelings on prayer and social transformation of HOP members (from different churches) bridged any divides among them.

Organizations are formed for particular purposes, and those which have the ability to achieve desired results are considered effective organizations. Leaders play a vital role in the effectiveness of the organization. As Lovaas et al. (2020) found in a study on leadership managers in the Church of Norway, transformational leadership is a major factor in stimulating the creativity of employees. This kind of leadership fulfills

the church's goal of helping members think "'outside the box' on how to adapt the old traditional rituals of the Church to a fast changing society (p. 581)". This study also shows the HOP leader as symbol of organizational effectiveness through her personality trait, character, and leadership style that enable members construe HOP goals.

In summary, members participate in the interactional process by creating, volunteering, and contributing to values development of the HOP. These symbols which are continuously shared, constructed, and reconstructed among the parachurch members are the HOP, intercessory prayer, and the HOP leader.

Communicative Performances in the Prayer Watches

The Davao City House of Prayer (HOP) used to gather every Saturday morning as a big group (parents, children, teenagers) to fellowship and pray and study together. The Redeeming the Land study module was used to help them understand the vision of the Intercessors of the Philippines, the organization that helped spearhead the 24/7 prayer for the Philippines through the establishment of HOPs all over the Philippines.

The present gatekeepers or those who lead watches are the ones who have completed the said module. Now, they have assigned daily Prayer Watches on various schedules. A Prayer Watch is a 3-hour group engagement where members conduct intercessory prayers for social transformation. To perform the watches, gatekeepers and members have to physically go to the House of Prayer. The group adheres to the parachurch's guideline that Prayer Watches are to be strictly done at the HOP, not in homes, churches, other places, or even online despite the pandemic.

This section studies the cultural performances enacted through key communication activities in the Prayer Watches. These cultural performances happen in various portions of the watch called segments. They can be classified as rituals, passions, courtesies, politics, and enculturation (from Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 1983).

Rituals

Pacanowsky and Trujillo (1983) define rituals as activities that orient members, create focus, and regularity in the culture. They classify rituals into four types: personal, task, social and organizational rituals. Such activities reflect and reinforce shared values and beliefs.

As shown in Table 7, all types of rituals are observed by the HOP members. The most common type enacted is Task ritual while Personal, Social, and Organizational rituals also happened in some instances. The constant occurrence of Task ritual can be attributed to the kind of communication activity observed. In terms of organizational mission, the HOP believes that intercessory prayer is their strategy for social transformation. Among the many communication activities of the group, the Prayer Watch is the exact event where intercessory prayers are conducted. Hence, though other forms of cultural performances are also observed, the Prayer Watch is primarily a Task Ritual.

Concerning the manifestation of these rituals, the study showed that a segment can be wholly dedicated to one type of ritual or overlapping rituals in one segment. For instance, a segment on members' arrival at the HOP concentrates on task rituals (e.g., signing of logbook for attendance, grouping, etc.). On the other hand, a "soaking" segment shows communicative acts that are a personal ritual (individual prayer language and posture) done simultaneously with task ritual (group intercession).

Engaging in a personal ritual, members enact their own prayer postures based on what the present situation beckons them to do. There are those who sit comfortably on the floor, kneel, stand, pray silently or loudly, raise hands in worship, sing, or silently read the Bible. Moreover, some situational features such as the background soft worship music drowns other sounds or noise in the room, enabling each member to focus on his or her own personal praying time. The music enables the group to accomplish their group intercession for the nation(task ritual) without stifling personal prayers (personal ritual). Hence, the communicative acts in "soaking" reveals overlapping of ritual types.

Ritual as a cultural performance also ushers in other cultural performances. The social rituals in Table 7 pave the way for courtesy and passion performances. For example, a birthday celebration planning (social ritual) naturally includes courtesies (pleasantry, sociability) and stories (personal, etc.).

Table 8. *Summary of the communicative acts in the Prayer Watches: Rituals*

COMMUNICATIVE ACTS	RITUALS	PRAYER WATCH
Personal rituals Strategic and significant personal performances ("trademark" of individuals, "manager's style" - e.g., company executives doing memo deliveries, occasional lunches with employees	-Different prayer postures (closed eyes, bent knees, arms raised, sitting on the floor, standing) for about 15 minutes -Different or individual prayer postures -Prayer based on personal reflection	September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 1: "Soaking" Segment 2: Intercession for a Church Segment 4: Intercession
Task rituals Practices for getting the job done Routines members perform to call themselves workers	-Signing of log book for attendance and monthly monitoring sheet -Physically going to the HOP despite pandemic restrictions	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/ settling down

	-Grouping of new members (husband and wife) with other married couples -Doing watches in small groups -Giving updates/reports -Closing prayer at the end of the watch -Responding to prayer requests -Music playing in the background while praying -Different or individual prayer postures (personal ritual) done simultaneously in a group task -Praying Bible verses -Participant 3 leads the intercession for a pastor and church members. -Interceding for a church pastor -Crying while interceding -Praying in tongues -Praying for specific individuals -Prayer of declaration -Using Bible verses for prayer and meditation, alternate reading of Bible verses and praying	September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) Segment 5: Closing Prayer/Wrap up September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 1: Soaking Segment 2: Intercession for a Church Segment 4: Intercession October 12, 2021 AM Segment 1: Reading of Scriptures Segment 3: Deeper Discussion of the Word
Social rituals Performances that make work routine livable/fun-break boredom (e.g., joke time-reveal cliques)	-Conversation focusing on P9's son -Talking about other family issues -Conversations on birthday celebration and upcoming youth camp	September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) Segment 3: Extended <i>Kumustahan</i> (Updates/Reports) Segment 3: Extended <i>Kumustahan</i> (Updates/Reports)

	-Snack time	September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 5: Snacks/Fellowship
Organizational rituals Somehow “sacred” events (official meetings, special events, general assembly)	-SwSS (solemn online national assembly of houses of prayers under IFP) - SwSS (solemn online national assembly of houses of prayers under IFP) -The Lord's Supper	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 3: Word September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3: <i>Kumustahan</i> /Word and Discussion October 12, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: Communion Service

Passions

Passions or storytelling are heightened descriptions of organization activities. Passion is classified into stories that embellish organizational identities (personal story), glorify situations and colleagues worthy of emulation (collegial stories), promote group ideology and customs (corporate stories) and normalize or manage meanings (passionate repartee) in the organization. As shown in Table 8, all the Watches displayed all types of passion performances. Various segments of the Watches are rife of discussions, reflections, study, and sharing in a group setting.

A notable observation is how members combine different types of passion in one communication act to make sense of various aspects of group life. In Segment 2 of the August 14, 2021 (PM) watch (see Table 8), Participant 15 shares her personal story about the impacts of Covid 19 in her workplace. She informs everyone of the charitable outreaches they do to help the needy in the pandemic. In response, Participant 5 expresses her amazement at how the company, where Participant 15 works, gives out messages that direct people to get their assurance and rest in God

in these very stressful times. Participant 5 refers to a TV ad sponsored by Participant 15's employer, a coffee company which promotes physical, emotional, and spiritual health to combat Covid 19. The ad features the antioxidant ingredients of its product, positive communication with isolated family members, and ends with a slogan "*Ipanatag ang loob sa Diyos* (Find rest in the Lord.)".

The exchange between Participants 15 and 5 gives a glimpse of one value of the group, particularly its mission of social transformation through intercessory prayer. This talk bridges the principle of Participant 9's company and the HOP's belief that intercessory prayer overrides manmade solutions and limitations in the pandemic. Basically, the ad means that peace of mind cannot be totally achieved by just following health protocols. Rather, faith in God is another (and more important) avenue for fighting fears associated with Covid 19 because the group believes that God is miraculous and supreme above any social woe. This segment illustrates how passions (personal story and corporate stories) boost personal and organizational principles upheld by HOP members.

Moreover, members also use Passion to reinforce other cultural performances. For instance, in the same discussion during the August 14, 2021 (PM) watch, a personal story becomes a teaching (enculturation) opportunity. In this session on love languages, the group leader encourages everyone to show love to family members in a language or way they can feel truly loved.

Participant 14, who previously communicated to the group her deeply strained relationship with her husband and grown children, shares that her daughter is the one financially supporting the family in this pandemic, especially with Participant 14's maintenance medicines. To express her gratitude, she says that she will send a "thank

you" text message to her daughter. After hearing her personal story, the group leader challenges her:

“How about telling her directly instead of texting? Maybe she would appreciate to hear you say that to her face to face. Let’s try to do even little things so we can bring change in our families. We have to remove our pride with the assumption that they are the ones who need to change, instead of us.” (Aug14PMTrans, pp. 8-9)

The leader’s response is an Enculturation performance (Learning and Teaching the Ropes) which coaches Participant 14 and everyone else in that session that intercessory prayers for social transformation does not bypass personal transformation. In other words, intercessory prayers do not only positively affect society but must produce character maturity on the part of the intercessor. Thus, learning the love languages of family members is an important skill or discernment an intercessor needs to have.

Table 9. Summary of the Communicative Acts in the Prayer Watches: Passions

COMMUNICATIVE ACTS	PASSION	PRAYER WATCH
Personal Stories Personal stories that embellish organizational identities (e.g. police and his invincibility as firefighter)	-Testimony/Sharing on personal issues -Group leader arrives, takes over the facilitation, and explains her/his lateness due to emergency family duty. -Conversation between Participant 15 and Participant 5 -Sharing of Participant 14 and Participant 3's replies -Facilitator gives a topic question and members state their responses 	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down
		August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 2: Word/Discussion
		September 11, 2021 (AM)

	-Participant 9 shares about her plan to invite her young professional circle to the HOP -Participant 3 introduces a video for the group to watch -Participant 5 shares her reflection on how to be a "sheep". -Greetings ensued. Chitchat topic: Watch members and church mates who are sick; also pleasantries ..."but I have truly seen breakthroughs in prayer." (Sept11PMTrans, p. 36)	Segment 2: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) Segment 3: Extended <i>Kumustahan</i> September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) and Word/Discussion
Collegial Stories Stories about others, amusing anecdotes, (the organization "really works", newcomer's initiation)	-Conversation focusing on P9's son - "Are they still doing the watch?" (Sept11PMTrans, p.33) - Greetings ensued. Chitchat topic: Watch members and church mates who are sick.-also pleasantries -Testimony of a family who keeps the midnight watch	September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) September 11, 2021 (PM) Watch Segment 3: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greeting)/Word and Discussion
Corporate Stories Represent management ideology, favored customs of organizational life, glorify organizational experience	Use of expressions such as "mountain" and "spring of living water" Sharing of the Biblical account of the Promised Land "We will educate them with prayers for the nation." -Conversation between Participant 15 and Participant 5	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: Updates August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 2: Word/Discussion

	-Chitchat between Participants 3 and 5 before others arrive - "Our prayer is that the people will know that you love them." - "The IPs are the gatekeepers of the City." - "If we will open our eyes, we can do much for the Lord." - Participant 3's report on Malabog pastors' feedback on the HOP's community feeding outreach - Conversation on the Goshen Project - Conversation on tribal missions and houses of prayers among the IPs - Conversation on how the nation of Hungary has removed the LGBTQ+ agenda in their public school - Conversation on how to build discernment among children - Conversation on tribal missions and houses of prayers among the IPs - "The Christians will speak against One World Order." - Participant 3: "God has a different standard on justice. There are countries that promote abortion as if it's their right to do so." (Sept11Trans, p. 18) - "The ministry of prayer for social transformation is difficult because its success is hard to account." (Sept11PMTrans, p. 35)	September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Chitchat/Waiting for Others to Arrive Segment 2: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) Segment 3: Extended <i>Kumustahan</i> September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greeting)/ Word and Discussion
Passionate Repartee Argots and metaphors that are normal or common in the organization	Use of expressions such as "mountain" and "spring of living water" "Mountain is a strategic place to fight. The NPA (rebel group) goes there."	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: Updates

	-Participant 5 shares her reflection on how to be a "sheep".	September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 3: Extended <i>Kumustahan</i>
	-Participant 3: "Wow, we are back to our prayer schedule now because we passed the test." (Sept11PMTrans, p.17) -"...remain a clay..." (Sept11PMTrans, p. 31)	September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3 <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greeting)/Word and Discussion

Courtesies

Courtesies are communicative performances that can be described as "bureaucratization of the spirit" (Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 1983). Examples of these are warm greetings and reciprocation of civility with one another. Courtesy maintains organizational membership by helping create positive group climate. All the types of courtesy which are pleasantry, sociability, and privacy are observed in the prayer watches of the HOP.

As presented in Table 9, courtesies, particularly, pleasantry and sociability all appear in the beginning part of the Watches. These are segments that are *kumustahan* (e.g.. greetings upon arrival, welcoming of one another). These courtesies are also common during snack and fellowship time at the end of the watches.

Pleasantry and sociability seem to always go hand in hand with personal and collegial stories which belong to passions, another cultural performance. When members share their personal situations such as family and work (passions), they are always reciprocated with kind, attentive, or jovial feedback from others (pleasantry and sociability). On the other hand, though privacy may also appear together with

pleasantry and sociability, manifestations of privacy such as confessing and other conversations that are more private in nature happen more during another segment where Bible reading and application are the topic (see August 14, 2021 (PM) and September 11, 2021 (PM) watches). Discussion segments trigger deeper personal sharing and revelations which do not appear in *kumustahan* segments.

Privacy performances captured in these watches demonstrate leadership and climate conditions of the group. Notable is segment 1 of the September 11, 2021 (AM) watch. Unlike other informal conversations that are more of chitchats or small talk during arrival and waiting time, this talk is about personal matters that the leader and assistant leader decide to share with one another while others are not yet around. The private air of this talk can be evidenced by the immediate shift of topic when others start to arrive. These behaviors point to the factors that create and sustain HOP relationships.

First, the leader is usually present and actually participates in most prayer watches. This enables her/him to oversee, notice, and address issues that could be happening in various Watches and in the personal lives of the members. Hence, while waiting for others to arrive, both take the chance to update each other on what's happening in their own personal journeys. Since Watches do not allow all members to constantly see each other, feelings of isolation happen now and then. Therefore, the leader's presence in most Watches provides comfort and stability to others. This is similar to the pastoral care that a church member receives from the pastor.

Also, the emotion in this conversation can be described as grim. The assistant leader (P5) discusses the serious health condition (cancer) of someone in her bible study group. The group leader (P3) also shares about her conversation with a friend

whose husband's health condition (cancer also) has deteriorated. Both invited these friends to come to the HOP and offered to accompany them in prayers for healing. Both seem to feel the heaviness of the “personal tribulation” their friends are undergoing. This behavior is an evidence of group climate which describes how a member feels regarding the HOP. In this case, both regard the HOP as a place where they can find solace from distress or troubles. Talking to God and to a friend who is going through the same experience provides comfort to one another.

Table 10. *Summary of the Communicative Acts in the Prayer Watches: Courtesies (from Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 1983)*

COMMUNICATIVE ACTS	COURTESIES	PRAYER WATCH
Pleasantry Small talk, chatter, kill time to enjoy each other, a non-threatening way to self-disclose, “pointless conversation” can be a clue into one another’s working styles.	-Kumustahan (How are you?, greetings) -Testimony/sharing on personal issues -Waiting for others, preparation of topic materials, one participant showing the food she brings during snack time, participants giving compliments to someone's new hairstyle, etc. -Participant 14 arrives. Greetings ensued. Chitchat topic: Watch members and church mates who are sick. -Chitchat (expressions of gratitude to Participant 14 for the snacks)	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 1: Arrival/Greeting September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3: Kumustahan (Greeting) and Word/Discussion Segment 5: Snacks/Fellowship
Sociability Joking, gossiping which implies certain level of intimacy, happens in clique	-Waiting for others, preparation of topic materials, one participant showing the food she brings during snack time, participants giving compliments to someone's new hairstyle, etc.	August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 1: Arrival/Greeting September 11, 2021 (AM)

	-Attendance and grouping -Conversation on birthday celebration and upcoming youth camp -Chitchat (expressions of gratitude to Participant 14 for the snacks	Segment 1: Chitchat/Waiting for others to arrive Segment 3: Extended <i>Kumustahan</i> September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 5: Snacks/Fellowship
Privacy Confessing, supporting, consoling more private in substance	-<i>Kumustahan</i> (How are you?, greetings) -Testimony/sharing on personal issues -Facilitator gives a topic question and members state their responses, one shares about personal failures and someone's comforting response -Participant 3's testimony of restored relationship with her mother -Manner of conversation between the leader and assistant leader -Chitchat between Participants 3 and 5 -Participant 14 talks about her husband who makes fun of her faith.	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 2: Word/Discussion September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Chitchat/Waiting for others to arrive September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greeting) and Word/Discussion

Politics

Politics performances demonstrate issues of power, control, and influence, as well as recognition of subcultures and self-interests that are aimed at influencing others. Regarding these performances (Showing Personal Strength, Cementing Allies,

and Bargaining), only Cementing Allies and Showing Personal Strength are observed. This could be attributed to the status of the HOP as a relatively young organization, hence, efforts on building partnerships or “recruiting” members are prevalent during Watches. In essence, anyone is welcome to the HOP and it’s up to this person to discover if he or she belongs, and thus wholeheartedly commits to the ministry.

Four out of the five Watches reveal the politics of cementing allies. An example of this is segment 5 of September 11, 2021 (AM) watch. One family is informed that they will be given their own key to the HOP for their watch commitment. This privilege is not given to all members but only to the Watch leaders called gatekeepers. The gatekeepers are those who lead the Watches, and open and close the prayer sanctuary, hence, the privilege to keep HOP door keys. This performance communicate to the family that they are trusted allies. Also, in keeping the Watch, the HOP ensures gatekeepers and members that they can freely choose their most convenient watch schedule so that they can happily do their tasks. Like allies, they are shown support in their voluntary assignments.

The same segment also shows the HOP leader offering help to a member’s initiative to invite her/his church friends to the HOP ministry. Aside from affirmation and support, the HOP performs cementing allies by offering help to members’ personal initiatives to meet the goals of the HOP. This act of cementing allies by the HOP leader emphasizes to members their role as partners and supporters of the local church. By opening its services (education and training in intercessory prayer) to church members so they can further be of service to their local church missions, HOP cements its organization role.

Finally, showing personal strength is also observed in two Watches. Showing personal strength may manifest as intimidation, defamation, and expulsion to display power and control (Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 983). However, in the two separate watches, this particular performance manifests in using one's talent, ability, skill, or resources to help one another.

Table 11. *Summary of the Communicative Acts in the Prayer Watches: Politics*

COMMUNICATIVE ACTS	POLITICS	PRAYER WATCH
Cementing Allies Recruitment of allies; allies can be formed when courtesies and favors are reciprocated; testing others if they can be trusted; influencing others	-Group leader telling a member that s/he(member) is already "ripe" for ministry	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: Updates
	-Conversation between Participant 15 and Participant 5 -Watches done in small groups -Participant 3's testimony of restored relationship with her mother	August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 2: Word/Discussion
	- "Just let us know what your plans are for the professionals group so we can help each other." (Sept, 11AMTrans, p. 6). -Participant 3 to Participants 8 and 9: "When you set your prayer watch schedule, you will be given your own keys here." (Sept11AMTrans, p. 19).	September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 5: Closing Prayer/ Wrap-up
	-Friendly greeting to a late member -Members leaving the Watch at different times -Participant 16 helping Participant 17 locate her/his assigned verse	October 12, 2021 AM Segment Segment 1: Reading of Scriptures Segment 3: Deeper Discussion of the Word
Showing Personal Strength		August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down

	-Assistant leader voluntarily facilitates the Watch because the leader is late -Participant 14 brings out her special <i>lumpia</i> (spring rolls) for everyone.	September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 5: Snacks/Fellowship
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Enculturations

Enculturations are teaching and learning processes by which organizational members acquire the social knowledge and skills necessary to behave as competent members. These occur throughout one's organizational life but some are particularly meant for newcomers to learn social knowledge and skills of the culture.

All enculturation types (Learning and Teaching the Role, Learning and Teaching the Rope) are enacted by the group. These performances can be observed in all the five Watches. As distinguished by Pacanowsky and Trujillo (1983), Learning and Teaching the Role are clearly stated rules and instructions while Learning and Teaching the Rope are subtle in nature.

This distinction is observed in the Watches (see for instance September 11, 2021 (PM) watch). "Formal" enculturation (Role) is indeed notable in segments where principles in prayer are directly studied from Bible passages and from the Redeeming the Land module, which are the primary teaching materials for the establishment of 24/7 houses of prayers. A question *"How do we pray for (against) the Talibans?"* reflects a member's direct seeking for guidance in a task s/he does not yet know how to accomplish. Another example of Role is when members are required to sign for attendance and physically go to the HOP instead of praying at their homes or churches.

Learning and Teaching the Rope (subtle or informal ways), on the other hand, occurs during actual praying. In Segment 2 of the same Watch, crying, “lifting”(saying or uttering) names to God in prayer, sitting, standing, kneeling, and lifting hands in prayer depict a picture of people traveling together as a community united in the work of intercessory prayer. This segment of the Watch is all about a group laboring unitedly for God’s blessings and physical healing for a church pastor.

One notable expression of this group travail is when one utters a prayer or verse, others silently listen, nod or say “amen” until the first person is finished praying, and then pick up the same prayer item to continuously uphold it in prayer. This “overlapping” prayer happens spontaneously anytime among members who are closely positioned near each other since they can easily hear each other’s prayers. This particular intercession is a sample of a "rope" that demonstrates to members how to pray in a united manner as a community as well as fulfill the HOP mission and role of the HOP toward the church.

Finally, both Role and Rope can happen simultaneously when, for instance, formal teachings (role) are coupled with personal reflections or applications (rope). During the group sharing in segment 2 of the August 14, 2021 (PM) Watch, the group leader advises Participant 14 that an intercessor must remove pride in the heart with the assumption that family members are the ones to transform or adjust to one’s preferences, instead of using and allowing family conflicts to soften one’s heart in humility toward others. Her words inform others that though intercessory ministry for national transformation is the task of the group, an intercessor is not just defined by work or task. Identity is also rooted in the recognition of self as a child of God, thus, becoming an intercessor is an inward process of self-transformation. Personal

applications of the word are forms of ‘learning the ropes’ because they are contextual and may be modified, unlike clearly stated rules. Hence, both roles and ropes are prevalent in all prayer watches, and can also occur simultaneously in one communicative act.

Table 12. *Summary of the Communicative Acts in the Prayer Watches: Enculturation (from Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 1983)*

COMMUNICATIVE ACTS	ENCULTURATION	PRAYER WATCH
Learning and Teaching the Roles What particular activities are to be done, how, why Teaching the roles-Orientations (job training sessions, indoctrination meetings (newcomers are expected to display their new-found knowledge of company ways and their “commitment” to the organization Initiation-like in frats, doing unpleasant assignment	-Signing of log book for attendance and monthly monitoring sheet -Physically going to the HOP despite pandemic restrictions -Participant 5 telling Participant 3 to explain to Participant 9 the spiritual significance/meaning of "mountain" -Actual going to the House of Prayer -"We will educate them with prayer for the nation." _____ -Sharing of Participant 14 and Participant 3's reply (also a rope) _____ -Conversation on tribal missions and houses of prayers among the IPs -Conversation on a symbol-mountain -"We can pray at home but this place is different. This is different. This is sacrifice. It's really a time that you offer to the Lord, and the Lord will also meet you here (House of Prayer)." _____ -Participant 3:"...but murder can be figurative-slander, gossip shame to others...can cause the blood to be removed from the face so it's like murder." (Sept11PMTrans, p. 20.)	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down Segment 2: Updates _____ August 14, 2021 (PM), Segment 2: Word/discussion _____ September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 3: Extended Kumustahan Segment 5: Closing prayer/ wrap up _____ September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 3: Kumustahan (Greeting)/Word and Discussion

	-Participant 10: "How do we pray for the Talibans?" -Participant 5: "We don't need to defend ourselves, do we? Rather, we bow down before God and humble ourselves." (Sept11PMTrans, pp. 24-25) - "For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband." (1 Corinthians 7:14 NIV) - "You post Godly messages and you post that too (referring to an inappropriate FB post). The world has seen it. They lose their respect on your testimony." (Sept11PMTrans, p. 28) -Discussion of Psalm 9:2-3	October 12, 2021 (AM) Segment 3: Going back to the Reading of the Scripture
Learning and Teaching the Ropes Roles are clearly stated but ropes are subtle(You are to observe for you to know.) "Let me tell you the way things really are around here" in the form of commentary or previous performance	-Testimony/sharing on personal issues -Conversation between Participant 15 and Participant 5 -Sharing of Participant 14 and Participant 3's reply-also a Role -Conversations among Participants 3, 5, and 9 -Intercessory prayer for a church pastor	August 14, 2021 (AM) Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down August 14, 2021 (PM) Segment 2: Word/Discussion September 11, 2021 (AM) Segment 2: <i>Kumustahan</i> (Greetings) September 11, 2021 (PM) Segment 2: Intercession for a church

An exemplar of all cultural performances enacted by the HOP members in all segments of a Prayer Watch dated August 14, 2021 is in Appendix 7.

The five communicative performances (ritual, passion, social, politics, and enculturation) and their specific examples in this study show the multiple cultural forms that can be analyzed in the field of organizational communication. Trice & Beyer (1984) argue that other cultural forms (or communicative performances) are usually included when performing a rite or ceremonial. This claim is supported in the findings that though communicative performances are distinct from each other, they are overlapping or interlocking, such as when a ritual functions simultaneously as courtesy and then turns into a story. In other words, the prayer watch can be what Trice & Beyer describe as a rite, hence, made up of various communicative performances such as ritual, story, courtesy, and so on that all work together to shape the parachurch culture.

In an ethnographic study by Fuist (2015), three politically progressive religious groups in Chicago and Seattle use collective or public prayer ritual as times and spaces to shape their group identity and particular faith as well as delineate themselves from other types of faith communities. These specific groups emphasize social justice and advocate radical-left political and religious beliefs. Though these groups' meanings on social justice are not similar to the concept of social transformation espoused in this study's HOP, what is common in both studies is the finding that prayer or "talking to God" is a communicative practice that engages performers with traditions, ideologies, and many other fields of meaning in their group life.

Transformation from Intercessory Prayers

The shared values, symbols, and communicative acts of the parachurch members are transforming both their culture and identity as individuals and as an

organization. This section discusses the transforming effects of intercession at the HOP on the participants' culture and identities for social transformation.

Transformed Organizational Culture

The transformation is manifested both on the intercessor himself/ herself and on the nation.

Theme 1. Transformation of the Nation

God's kingdom overriding the kingdoms of the world

Regarding the effects of Intercessory prayer on the nation, Participant 3 describes the House of Prayer as the place where one can invite God's intervention on government affairs.

"It is a place where we allow God and the kingdom of God to override the kingdom of the world. It's a meeting place where we submit the cares we have, our cares for the nation. We submit it to the Lord of Lords, to the king of kings so he can override. It's like a meeting place (P3, p. 1)."

To override means to nullify the limitations of social transformation. Participant 1 believes that this kind of prayer can penetrate and impact immense obstacles for change.

"Our main goal is to see the power of God moving in our nation changing one pillars in the society at a time. Groups of people, places in the government from top management to our president down to our barangay, etc. We cannot reach them all. But one way to reach them all is through prayer (P1, p. 2)."

Theme 2. Transformation of the Intercessor

Intercessory prayer has a transforming effect on the intercessor and on the nation. Intercessory prayers for social transformation change not only the subject of the prayer (e.g., the society or individual) but also the one who prays.

Accesses visions for the nation

Participant 3 reveals how intercession for social transformation enables her to see HOP as a **“birthing place of visions, birthing place of desires for the nation (P3, p.1).”** As she is considered a leader, she likewise encourages others to pursue their calling as intercessors.

Participant 4, for instance, sees the vision as producing God-seeking young generation. She says: **“I see their passion for our young people. I see their heart for the nation (P4, p.4).**

Participant 2 is grateful for the guidance of the leader, which enables her to visualize her prayers and its impacts on the nation. According to her, answers to prayers for social transformation can be quite difficult to pinpoint or monitor because of how broad the subject is. To help her persevere, she says that her/his leader consistently provides insights on how prayers are being answered.

Can understand the destiny and purpose of a nation

The participants are given Biblical accounts on the significance of nations when God finally ends evil and reigns in complete righteous governance on His appointed time on earth. As Participant 3 attests: **“When we say desire for the nation, this is**

also education where we will know our God-given destiny for the Philippines
(p. 1).”

Participant 14 who is attending the Redeeming the Land module, says that her **“knowledge grows in the parachurch”** (FGD-DP2, p. 6).” Her churchmate and fellow attendee on the module study, Participant 13, agrees: **“I learned much here, and what I already know, has further increased”** (FGD-DP2, p.9).

Receives prayerful insight on social issues

For Participant 8, staying focused longer in God’s presence gave him courage to effectively pray for personal hardships. He says that his family underwent challenges with his eldest son. As he prayed, he received God’s impression that he is fathering someone (his son) who belongs to God. He says that this impression made him realize how to relationally deal better with his son. He testified: **“There is a realization that when you look at your son, you also look at God. God seems to be saying your son belongs to me. I put him under your care”** (FGD-DP2, p.8).

Stands in the gap

Participant 11 finds herself interceding not only for her needs but for her neighbors as well. She says she doesn’t feel ashamed going to her rooftop and praying loudly for God’s provision. She said she owes this to the parachurch: **“I was taught here (HOP) how to ask in prayer”** (FGD-DP2, p.5). Moreover, she does not only pray for blessings for others, but also for God’s intervention to what she sees as wayward behavior of her children, such as drinking. She would utter in prayer: **“Let no drunkard enter this gate, Lord”** (FGD-DP2, p.5).

Receives special mission

Having a vision for the nation begins with a passion that can only be given by God Himself who loves people, says Participant 2. She calls this desire a “burden” or a kind of disturbance that awakens apathy or indifference to the plight of the nation.

“Not all will pray for the nation, and not all will pray for the president. Not all will pray for the Senate and House of Representatives and Executive Secretaries, but I believe that it’s God’s burden that He placed in a person’s heart. I’m so blessed that my family has availed of that... it’s a privilege to become a prayer warrior for the nation (P2, p. 2).”

Participant 1 also believes that the group’s passion to pray can only come from God. He considers this passion a “mystery” because though the group members do not know each other from the very start, they have the “same spirit”.

That’s the mystery. We don’t know each other from the start but we have the same spirit. We are serving one God. He is giving out one desire and burden to different people. These people with the same burden tend to gather. We have this church where some members are really looking for a house of prayer. Coincidence? No. It’s God who moves us. We really want to soak in prayer. Others really want to pray specifically for the nation, not just general prayers (P1, p. 7).

Another example of this transformation is becoming passionate in the group’s mission. Participant 11 says that she used to have a “lukewarm” prayer life or was apathetic in prayer, but since she became a member of the group, she has developed consistency and excitement to pray every day. This is why she keeps coming to the HOP. She shares:

“Before, I just prayed if I had a need...it was okay for me to pray and it was also okay not to... But I really did grow in church. There is growth when there is God’s presence. Hence, when I was invited here (HOP), I got excited. I longed for more and something deeper.

There is really a difference here. It's my habit now to pray always.)
(FGD-DP2, p. 5)."

Aside from being able to develop the habit of 3'oclock morning prayer at home, Participant 14 also looks forward for her weekend watch. She takes about an hour-and-a-half jeepney ride from her home to the prayer house. Being on medication, she also adjusts her lunch and medicine intake time to be able to arrive punctually for her 1 pm watch with her churchmates at the HOP. **"I eagerly look forward to every Saturday prayer here,"** she says (FGD-DP2, p. 5).

Like Participant 14 who is a senior citizen, Participant 6 also feels some physical weakness associated with age. Hence, doing his watch can sometimes feel like a struggle. So, he asks God for passion for his calling as an intercessor. He says: **"While I'm here, I pray for love for this ministry. 'Lord, you see my heart. I long for this, Lord)** (FGD-DP2, p. 5)."

Understands collective and deductive nature of intercessory prayer

According to Participant 2, an intercessor values the collective and deductive nature of intercessory prayer. Collective and deductive means that social transformation is not only a national issue but trickles down to the personal circumstances of the intercessor.

"It's so easy to pray for myself, my loved ones, my needs. It's so common... everybody prays for themselves, but praying for the nation is different because you don't pray for your needs. When you are praying for the nation, you supplicate that the Lord will bless not only your own surroundings but the people surrounding you, all the islands surrounding your city, and the nation as a whole. When you pray, whatever you pray, God's answer goes through you...If I pray for the president, and the Lord answers my

prayer through the president, I get benefits.)...I believe that I really have reward when I pray for the nation (P2, p.1)."

Participant 2 further believes that laws following Godly principles bring blessings to the nation while ungodly laws bring about punishment.

"The saying goes that the pain of the little finger is felt by the whole body. (P2, p. 2). Even if only one law goes against (God's standard), punishment will not only be reaped by them (political leaders) but by the entire Philippines. Even my daughters will experience it too). That is why I feel so burdened, and I believe that I have this duty to pray for this nation" (P2, p.1).

Participant 1 also reveals that his being a member of the group transformed his apathy in politics.

"I have my own life and problems. Should I still worry about the problems of the Philippines? [The parachurch] slowly changed my view. I could not anymore live just for myself because we are all connected. Whatever happens to our president, our government, will definitely fall on me as an ordinary citizen. Whatever law is in place, we are all affected." (P1, pp. 2-3)

Connects with fellow intercessors

The question *What helps you adjust here (HOP)?* draws out the intercessors' awareness of being with others of the same mission. **"This is a place where we can just join hearts with other intercessors,"** says Participant 3 (P3, p. 1)." This awareness of deep connection brings out spontaneity and renewal. For Participant 12, she felt immediately at home during her first meeting with the group and initiated connection with others. **"We have one purpose..."** (FGD-DP2, p.35). Meanwhile, engagements with fellow intercessors revived Participant 7's passion to pray. S/he acknowledges that even before membership with HOP, s/he already engages in prayer and fasting in her/his church and even in her/his private prayer practices. S/he

says that she experienced much difficulty in their family business that triggered her/his pursuit for God's help and direction.

“Before, I fasted for a week and prayed for 3 hours straight...I prayed so hard because our situation was very difficult. There was a time when I hid in a streetlight post so someone who was looking for me because of my financial debts would not find me. I really pursued God then, but the fire died...When we started attending here [HOP], I slowly felt that fire again. I became active again because I got revived. When we gather as one, the presence of God dwells among us.” (FGD-DP2, p.36)

Becomes hidden and unassuming

Participant 1 reveals that though intercession can be likened to an aggressive struggle or fight, an intercessor actually becomes “hidden,” unassuming in what he or she thinks is the best for the nation. Rather, the intercessor becomes very dependent on God who knows every piece of the puzzle in the process of change. S/he pointed out:

“We ourselves do not have any point of reference what exactly to change. The changes we want to see align with what God wants. In the process of social change, we play behind the scene. Nobody will see us. Nothing will be credited to us because all glory will be to our Lord and Savior.” (P1, p.2).

However, an intercessor may see response to prayers by monitoring reports, says Participant 1.

Participant 3 who is considered to be a leader is quick to disabuse such authority. Instead, she shuns the limelight and pursues humility so that all glory goes to God. Becoming hidden also means that the intercessor does not depend on logical

understanding of issues but strives to fully depend on God for wisdom and strength needed for the tasks. As she says:

“I don’t see myself as the leader. I see myself just an administrator...I will not tell someone what to do if I cannot do it myself. When I say throw the garbage, that means I have done it too. When I say bring water to the prayer house, I did that many times myself. Cleaning, I did that many times. If I tell you this, that means I have done it many times before. I am a servant. I throw trash. I am a servant of everyone. I’m the first to come and the last to leave” (P3, p.4).

“I’m always like, ‘Lord, I don’t have a ready-made program. Every meeting, I have to depend on the Lord (P3, p. 4).”

Table 13. *Transforming Effects of Intercessory Prayers*

TRANSFORMATION	PARTICIPANTS
<i>On the nation</i>	
God’s kingdom overriding the kingdoms of the world	P3, P1
<i>On the intercessor</i>	
Can access visions for the nation	P3
Can understand the destiny and purpose of a nation	P3, P14, P13
Receives prayerful insight on social issues	P8
Can stand in the gap	P11
Receives special mission	P2, P1, P11, P14, P6
Understands collective and deductive nature of intercessory prayer	P2, P1
Connects with fellow intercessors	P3, P12, P7
Becomes hidden/unassuming	P1

Figure 8. *Transforming effects of intercessory prayers*

Transformed Identity as Intercessors

Identity helps members make sense of themselves and their relationships. The study reveals that HOP is a venue that hosts different levels of identity among members, thus their various representations in the HOP. There emerged three levels of identity of the intercessors in HOP – from the self to their work and to the nature of the organization. Intercessors do not simply see intercessory prayers for social transformation as a Christian duty or ministry (work identity) but foundational to one's existence and purpose (self identity) and meaningful connection with others (organizational identity).

For their self-identity, they see being intercessors as a personal assignment, they were chosen/called by God, and they are intimate with God. For work identity, they pray strategically, pray arduous and fastidious prayers, pleads to God for justice, continuously educate themselves about social and spiritual issues, discern spiritual

things, and wait and receive instructions from the Lord on what and how to pray. For organizational identity, they look at HOP as carrying increased prayer burden, connecting and learning with one another, going beyond church routine, and being led by the Holy Spirit (Table 17).

Self-Identity

Intercession as personal assignment

The participants consider intercession as a personal assignment and not just related to the group. As revealed by the informants, self-identity is a process of self-discovery. Hence, even if someone is already praying for social transformation, this person needs assurance that s/he is truly called in the ministry of intercession.

“When you do something you don’t understand, it does not have bearing on you. You don’t have the heart.” (P1, p.4)

Participant 3 shares that though s/he had been in the church ministries as early as 10 years old, s/he still was not assured of her/his personal assignment in the body of Christ. In essence, a church member is not merely a face among the crowd congregating for Sunday sermon. As the Christian matures in faith, s/he finds meaning in discovering his/her personal assignment in the body of Christ.

“There was a time in my life that I needed to choose because I wanted to serve God, but I did not know my personal assignment in the body of Christ. I asked, ‘Lord, what is really my purpose?’ It was a long journey before I understood my purpose in the church.” (P3, p. 3)

“I thought if you serve in whatever area in your capacity, it’s already service to God. But I was praying...what is the platform for me...God did many things in my life to bring me to this position,” Gatekeeper 3 recalls. “You have to get that understanding of your purpose. If you don’t understand that, you cannot pray. The understanding of

**God's assignment is the basic requirement to be an intercessor.”
(P3, p. 3)**

Participant 6 realizes that being an intercessor is more than just a name or being an attendee in prayer activities. As s/he keeps coming to the HOP, s/he feels that personal commitment is essential. S/he related that s/he is not really an intercessor in his/her church, and that s/he used to dismiss invitations to prayer activities. S/he asked:

“Why would I go if my heart is not ready? Other times, I just go with the flow because I am the church driver. I have no choice...But now, I really consider this as a ministry.” (FGD-DP2, p.10; FGD-DP2, p. 37).”

Now, he is very willing to commit to the ministry. He does not just see the gathering as a church activity but as his personal mission.

Chosen/called by God

Participants 2 and 4 identify themselves as called or handpicked by God to carry out the tasks of being intercessors.

“I believe it's God who put that in someone's heart...it's not for all, not for everybody, but for the chosen heart. (P2, p. 2).”

For Participant 4, to be called as an intercessor, God puts a “burden” in one's heart regarding the plight of the nation. So how does one know that he or she has that burden? When one can see a social problem and wonders why can the government not see it, says Participant 4. Then the intercessor does not just dismiss the burden; rather, it becomes the fuel to pray for the government.

“We are not required to pray for too long. An intercessor just needs that concern on what he or she sees around. When we can ask why

is this happening? Why is the government not doing something about this?" (P4, p. 2)

Intimate with God

"Ample time to soak in the presence of the Lord", or being close or intimate with God, is Participant 2's self-description as an intercessor. This intimacy or longing for God's presence may not be seen but is always "being unleashed" in the intercessor's heart (P2, p. 6).

Participant 11 identifies herself/himself as an intercessor because s/he belongs to the prayer ministry in her/his church: however, s/he realizes that the label "intercessor" can be loosely used without deeper significance. This means that someone can be very active in church gatherings, but the heart may only be focused on activities and not really on God Himself. S/he admits that s/he **"was an intercessor only by name. Praying was not a lifestyle."** (FGD-DP2, p. 3). Her church and many other interchurch fellowships she joined in the past have helped her grow in faith, but the HOP has significantly ushered her to intimacy with God.

"I have been to many churches. I always joined gatherings. I grew even in our own church, and I am thankful for that. But honestly, my heart truly learned to seek Him here [HOP]."(FGD-DP2, p. 6)

Being intimate with God enabled Participant 11 to grow deeper in seeing herself/himself as a child of God. S/he believes that God is a generous Father who delights to bless His children. So when s/he prays for her/his children, s/he asks without hesitance; s/he prays that God will give them jobs, give them fund for rent, and give them even food. She invokes: **"Lord, don't put me to shame. I am your child."** (FGD-DP2, p. 5)

Work Identity

Prays strategically for political/social issues

Foremost, the participants define an intercessor for the nation as someone who prays strategically for social and political issues. For Participant 4, being strategic means making sure that social and political concerns are heeded by those in power for social change to be achieved. However, she believes that to be heard requires power or influence which ordinary or marginalized people may not have. Hence, prayer becomes the tool for political change.

“As ordinary people who do not have power to be heard by political leaders, we appeal to God.” (P4, p. 2)

For Participant 2, strategic prayers means finding a vantage point.

“I internalize how can I tackle the issue in prayer. Shall I pray for whom? What to pray for this person with issues that need God’s intervention? I learned to watch what was happening around the country.” (P2,.p. 2)

Resorts/pleads to God’s justice instead of man’s

Second, an intercessor resorts or pleads for God’s justice rather than man’s. As Participants 4 pointed out earlier, God’s justice is not exclusive for those who have power or influence. Instead, one can “overstep” limitations and delays in the justice system by going straight to God who is a righteous judge.

Participant 1 agrees. S/he says that an intercessor may not have a direct or physical connection or legal involvement in the fight against social injustices, yet, he or she can enforce a just outcome. Participant 1 knows this to happen when his/her prayer group made a certain government office racked with scandal the subject of their

intercession. S/he monitored the issue and learned that the Commission on Audit or COA penalized the culprits.

“We hear the news that COA found out [about the anomaly of the government office we have been praying for]. We do not have contact with the COA. We were just praying...But we are happy that as we pray, we can see that God is moving.” (P1, p.5)

Educates oneself or with others on social and spiritual issues

Aside from seeking and relying on God’s justice more than our justice system, another duty of an intercessor is educating one’s self or with others on social issues in a Biblical perspective, as shared by Participant 11. **“It’s like doing doctorate...you continue to study.”** (FGD-DP2, p. 16)

Participant 2 reveals that s/he did not really pay much attention to political news but because s/he believes that God places a burden in her/his heart for the nation, s/he has motivation now to do so. **“I learn to watch news and learn relevant information such as laws.”** (P2, p.2)

Participant 1 shares that history and the Word of God provide insights on what or who to pray for. **“The Bible tells us to pray for the king. For us, that’s the president.”** (P1, p. 4).

Moreover, Participant 1 says that one can “educate” his or her intercession through social studies. S/he cites the creation of the nation of Israel in 1947 through a critical vote of support by the Philippines.

“Why aren’t Filipinos required to have visa in Israel? This is because of what former President Manuel L. Quezon did [Philippines sheltered some Jews during Hitler’s time]. Is it not

prophesied in the Bible that Israel will again be one nation? We are part of that. History and the word of God are inseparable.” (P1, p. 5)

Participant 1 also points out that current events, not only history, are witnesses to how God moves in the nation by frustrating wicked deeds such as corruption.

According to Participant 14, though she has not yet uttered bold prayers like others do in the group, she already improved since she started to attend. She claims: **“I become more knowledgeable in the HOP).”**

Participant 6 says that the HOP has provided answers to his question why we need to pray for the Philippines.

“While I am part of this group, I really pray that God will give me love for this ministry. I really consider this (HOP) as a ministry.”
(FGD-DP2, p. 10)

Discerns spiritual aspect, not just rely on physical or material

Another task of an intercessor is discerning the spiritual aspect of the issue, and not just rely on the material or what can be physically seen. For instance, an intercessor needs to pray for the president of the nation whether or not the intercessor voted for that president. Also, the intercessor must not immediately judge a political leader based on his or her (intercessor) personal preferences.

For Participant 1, God can even turn evil for good. In other words, God’s good purposes in a nation will prevail despite flaws of political leaders.

“The Bible says that no one can sit in authority without God’s consent. God has a purpose in everything. He is Almighty. He brought up kings. He can put down kings. That’s God’s job. Our job

is to pray that the person in authority continues to enact what God mandates through him.” (P1,p. 5)

To counter criminal activities, law officers rely on valuable information called “police intelligence”. Such confidential information is unknown to the public. Participant 3 equates the intercessor’s discernment to such kind of intelligence. She compares the task of the prayer ministry for social transformation as the “AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines)” or “PNP (Philippine National Police)” in the spiritual sense. An intercessor has that “police intelligence” regarding what strategies to deploy to capture and defeat the enemy. Hence, an intercessor asks for this discernment from God.

“The body of Christ has many parts. This prayer ministry is one of the parts of this body. In government, we have many departments. AFP, PNP. They are called the watchmen, the soldier in our land. In the spiritual aspect, we are the watchmen. In the nation there are needs. For example, in this pandemic, it’s so easy to just receive all the news, but to really ask the Lord what is behind what we see... Lord, what is behind this? ...What can we do as your servant just like a policeman. If you are a civilian, you can go anywhere, but a policeman has a special eye – oh, this is dangerous. This person looks suspicious. Because a policeman has trained eyes to really see the particular need. There is something different in this situation, so we sit down and ask the Lord what are the specifics.”
(P3, p. 3)

Waits and receives instruction from the Lord on what and how to pray

Participant 3 also explains the difference in prayer, for instance, between someone who will just pray general or common sense prayers regarding today’s pandemic and someone who is really an intercessor.

“If you a Christian, you just pray about Covid and healing. But as intercessor, you have to sit and ask the Lord, ‘What is behind this?’

What is really happening? What is your heart in this issue? How do we address this?” (P3, p. 7)

“For social transformation, this is a spiritual journey that intercessors have to go through...as intercessors we want to lay it down on the table before the Lord...cry to the Lord to expose the hidden agenda behind these things” (P3, p. 3).”

An intercessor is, therefore, willing to wait on the Lord's response so he or she receives instructions on what to do next in prayer. Participant 3 explains what “waiting in prayer” means.

“We sit down (a prayer posture characterized by staying, patience and humility, emphasis mine) and ask the Lord what are the specifics. It's really giving time for a particular issue...to look into it in the spiritual aspect so we can carry it to the Lord and have answers.” (P3, p.3)

Prays arduous and fastidious prayers

Finally, taking time in prayer also means going into the details of the social or political issue. Hence, the intercessor becomes arduous and fastidious when praying.

“Here in the prayer house, we scrutinize. We are not just praying for leaders in general...we call out their names, their positions, their work, their stand, their beliefs.” (P1, p.4)

To intercede, one has to learn fastidiousness in prayer when necessary. Participant 11 says s/he would go to their rooftop terrace and rebuke alcoholism. S/he believes that addiction is not only physical or psychological but also spiritual due to its damaging effect contrary to God's will.” (FGD-DP2, p. 5)

Organizational Identity

Increased prayer burden

Participant 1 discloses that s/he learns how to pray for the nation by observing other intercessors and learning their ways.

“Why do they pray that way? They really dissect the issue. Of course you hear that often. It gets cultivated in your mind. You get influenced.” (P1, p. 5)

Participant 3 also discloses that this prayer community offers opportunities to expand prayer muscles. To be an intercessor for social transformation, s/he started praying for one person until the prayer burden increased. This person s/he interceded for was someone with whom s/he has shared the Gospel. Eventually, s/he continued praying for more family members and friends until given the “responsibility to pray for the nation” (P3, p. 6). S/he says that the group stretches her/his prayer capacity.

“To be an intercessor to a large scope, you start small. I started praying for one.” (P3, p.2) **“The House of Prayer developed me socially...I am like in a different realm where I have a bigger heart and view for the nation.”** (P3, p. 2)

Participant 13 says that s/he used to pray only for herself/himself and family. S/he says that the Lord has given her/him now a bigger capacity to pray since the HOP prays for national issues.

“My prayers used to be selfish. I was an intercessor, but I didn’t pray for others, not consistently. Now the Lord is teaching me to pray for others, not just for my family.” (FGD-DP2, p.9)

Connecting and learning with one another

Aside from acts of prayer with the group, Participant 1 says that his/her group studies and affiliates with other prayer groups.

“We have discussions and studies. We have affiliations with IFP and intercessory groups. They have prayed for decades for the Philippines. That’s how God holds the Philippines.” (P1, p.)

For Participant 3, prayer for social transformation takes a community. S/he reveals that when s/he was fully convinced that s/he was called for the ministry, s/he prayed that s/he would have connections with others.

“I said to the Lord to bring me to people who have the same calling. Where did you put them in the body so I can connect to them?” (P3, p. 9)

Participant 13, who is part of the intercessory ministry in her/his church, is not new to Christian gatherings outside her/his local church, which have played a big part in her/his spiritual growth. S/he attends prayer groups not only in her own church but also in other churches, and now in a parachurch.

“We also have prayer activities like these here, but I continue to seek for more of God..” (FGD-DP2, P. 9)

Going beyond church routine/program

The third transformation an intercessor experiences in his or her parachurch group is to go beyond the Sunday church routine.

“Without the prayer house, our activity that makes us closer to God is only Sunday. The Sunday service is so hollow. It’s just the worship and the word, but in the prayer house, you have ample time to soak in the presence of the Lord,” (P2, p.6) she explains.

Participant 11 perceives the HOP as an organization that goes beyond or above church routine or program. For her/him, the parachurch offers opportunity to serve others instead of passively attending church services or being content with just listening to sermons. S/he agrees that a parachurch member shows an above-average expression of his/her Christian faith by committing to a lifestyle or ministry beyond church life.

“Yes, a parachurch member is above average. You don’t only attend church and listen, and already get contented with that.” (FGD-DP2, p. 16).

Holy Spirit-led

Moreover, the HOP identifies the group as Holy Spirit-led. Participant 3 shares about her/his spiritual experience which happened on a 21-day prayer and fasting where s/he was waiting on God to confirm to her/his calling.

“I was asking where am I in Your body? Then my spiritual eyes were opened, and I saw the feet of Jesus with holes and veins protruding. When you are at the feet of Jesus, you are ministering to Him.” (P3, p.)

According to Participant 3, the same vision of the feet of Jesus happened a few years later in another prayer and fasting gathering. This time, s/he was also given a Bible verse connected to the vision. S/he says that the spiritual experience caused her/him to fully realize that s/he is to bow down at the feet of Jesus in prayer as her/his service to her/his Lord.

“I learned in my spirit I’m called to pray, to intercede. So that was my confirmation.” (P3, p.8)

The participants recognize that the HOP is not only a product of personal passions or commitments. They acknowledge that God's Spirit directs them and that they only partner with Him by obeying His instructions.

Participant 6 recalls a particular instance when s/he didn't feel like attending his/her watch because s/he was tired. S/he only drove his spouse to the HOP and went home. On his/her way, s/he felt as if someone was manipulating the steering wheel to go back to the HOP and whispering in his/her ear telling him/her to go back. S/he was about to go back, but s/he still drove home. When s/he reached the house, s/he couldn't shake off the feeling of wanting to go back. "I wanted something in the prayer house. s/he said" (FGD-DP2, p.)

The members observe that Eschatology or end-times teaching makes HOP membership very relevant to their Christian walk. However, for Participant 9, HOP is not limited to its specialized teachings but more important is the presence of the Holy Spirit. S/he observes that there are times when Christian gatherings have become more conscious with tasks or programs but does not give true emphasis to God's presence. S/he identifies the Holy Spirit as the main ingredient or substance in the HOP.

"We don't just come here for end-times teaching. Even our church teaches us that. But in our churches, we are focused on 'what to do'. Here, we focus on connecting with the Holy Spirit."(FGD-DP2, p. 17).

Deductive and collective view of prayer

For his/her part, Participant 1 says that being with the group enables him/her to identify with prayer as deductive and collective.

“As I continue to join in the prayers, my view started to slowly change. I cannot just be concerned with myself because we are all connected. Whatever happens to our president, our nation, will definitely impact an ordinary citizen like me. Whatever law is in place, we are all affected.” (P1, p. 3).

Small and hidden

Finally, an intercessor seeks to identify with the humility of Jesus by not being flashy or ostentatious, says Participant 1.

“We play beyond the scene. Nobody will see us. Nothing will be credited to us.” (P1, p.2)

Table 14. *Transformed Identity of an Intercessor*

DESCRIPTION	IDENTITY	PARTICIPANTS
Intercessor as personal assignment	Self-Identity “Who I am”	P1, P3, P6
Chosen/called by God		P2, P4
Intimate with God		P2, P11
Prays strategically for political/social issues	Work Identity “What I and we do”	P4, P2
Pleads to God for justice instead of man’s		P1
Educates oneself on social and spiritual issues		P11, P2, P1, P14, P6
Discerns spiritual things, not just rely on physical or material things		P1, P3
Waits and receives instruction from the Lord on what and how to pray		P3
Prays arduous and fastidious prayers		P1, P11
Carries increased prayer burden	Organizational Identity (Davao City HOP) “What I have become as a group member” “What we have become as a group”	P1, P3, P13
Connects and learns with one another		P1, P3, P13
Goes beyond church routine/program		P2, P11
Holy spirit-led		P3, P6, P9
Conducts deductive and collective view of prayer		P1
Remains humble		P1

Figure 9. *Transformed identity of an intercessor*

Self identity

Findings show that social transformation through intercessory prayer significantly transforms on a personal level up to the national level. The group believes that intercessory prayer is the key to what they envision the Philippines to be. However, intercession has requirements to become fruitful, as expressed in the Bible verse particularly associated with effectual prayers for the nation, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

As an example, an intercessor becomes "hidden and unassuming" means that the virtue of humility attracts God's blessing for the individual and society. Evident personal transformation is therefore what HOP members use to measure or track the transforming effects of intercession on the nation. This can be explained by their belief

on the sovereignty of the all-powerful God to the nation. Hence, the challenge in social transformation is not on God's ability to bless a nation but on the ability of His people to follow or walk on His ways.

Another effect of intercessory prayer that surfaced in this study is the development of three levels of identities of the intercessor- self (Who I am), work, and organization. Though work (What I and we do) and organization (What I have become as a group member) identities seem to be focused on task and group affiliation, they are still very much infused with reflections on personal significance. Therefore, prayer as a communicative performance for social transformation does not only produce group identity and solidarity but also an individual grasp of what efficacious prayer is.

An ethnography of the private performance of *salat* or five daily prayers of Islam among a group of middle class, educated women in Tehran reveals that repetitions in prayer do not adhere to the notion that repetition makes a prayer ritual meaningless (Haeri, 2021). The study found that individual conditions such as length of time the women decide to pray, age, reading literacy, and critical thinking are elements that make a prayer session satisfactory for the reciter who conducts *salat* at her own chosen private place and without the presence of other reciters and a prayer leader who are present in public or community *salat*. Hence personal understanding on the ritual, variations in Islam, and prayer language determine the satisfaction one gains in a private prayer experience.

Though the private *salat* is done without any fellow reciter, the HOP's prayer watch on the other hand, is a group ritual. However, the prayer watch has a portion (first hour) where intercessors pray on their own. The private *salat* ethnography,

therefore, helps explain this study's findings on personal transformation and identity as dominant meanings among HOP members' perception of social transformation.

Moreover, the study on private salat proves the efficacy and satisfaction one gains as he or she prays alone. This sheds light on why an HOP member can still conduct alone the supposedly public prayer watch in cases when group mates or the prayer leader is absent.

Complementation of the Church and the HOP

In Table 18, I summarize the difference or the distinctions and yet complementation of the House of Prayer and the Evangelical church organization. Being distinct, these could also be considered to be complementary with each other. Based on their answers, I categorized their complementation in terms of process, setting, teaching, and organizational structure.

Process

Process means series of actions carried out to get a specific result (Collins Dictionary, 2020), hence, this refers to how a parachurch conducts the ministry of intercessory prayers to achieve social transformation.

Participant 14 calls “basic” (another term for general issues) of the Christian life as the focus of church teachings and services, while the HOP offers specialized teachings and practices of intercessory prayers for the nation.

Participant 2 describes the church as a “training ground” and a “school” and the HOP as where the “application” happens (P2, pp. 5-6). Participant 2 reckons that the

church acknowledges that prayers for the nation are important, but actually doing so is the specialization or strength of the HOP.

“We learned a lot in the HOP which we did not learn in the church.”
(P2, p. 5-6)

Participant 1 attests to the specialized Bible teachings in the HOP.

“We have discussions and studies...we pray and we study also...we have Redeeming the Land lessons. We are enlightened on how God holds a nation.” (P1, p. 5)

First, the HOP develops a learning process aimed to steer intercessors to pray particularly for governance. The informants view HOP’s teachings as specialized when it comes to how Christians should relate to politics.

Participant 4 shares her view that the church should advance its basic teaching on evangelism for personal transformation to social transformation.

“I learned only here in the House of Prayer that we need to have a heart for the nation...in the church, we are only fed spiritually, but we don’t give much emphasis to the nation...the church focuses on evangelism.” (P4, p. 3)

According to Participant 4, teachings in the HOP could enlighten Christians how to show love and compassion to the nation.

“Many churches do not know that we can repent in behalf of the nation because they are not taught to have a burden for the nation. There are OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) who would demean our nation when they compare us to where they are now...In the HOP, we learn that evangelism is not the only work of the church. We have to love our country. It’s not enough that we just evangelize the people to know God, but we need to have insights on the conditions of the nation.” (P4, p3.)

“Most of those I know belittle our nation when they go abroad. That’s what I learned that we should not do as Filipinos.” (P4,p.3)

Participant 6 who previously served as a barangay leader for 17 years commended the HOP's specialized teachings on prayers for the government. As s/he keeps joining the HOP lessons, s/he says that s/he is getting more insights to his/her questions and concerns about integrity in governance.

Participants 10 and 7 agreed that active church members who also support parachurches offer above-average commitment and service to the body of Christ compared to active church members without parachurch engagements.

"I love being a member of both our church and the HOP. I get basic teaching from my church, and I get end-time teaching at the HOP. I see and need that end-times teaching at the HOP." (FGD-DP2, p. 14)

"I learn much here...I learn to have above-average praise and worship."(FGD-DP2, p. 18)

As to the distinct roles of the church and the HOP in accomplishing social transformation, Participant 6 says that the church helps Christians deal with wide-ranging (general) life issues in the light of the Scripture and the guidance of a shepherd (pastor).

"The main reason why we need the church is because there is a pastor who can guide us. My background is different from yours. Maybe you all grew up as Christians, but I did not." (FGD-DP2, p.19)

"There should be someone who holds or keeps account of us even if we have been Christians for long." (FGD-DP2, p. 20)

In Participant 6's case, his/her pastor helped him/her overcome a personal burden concerning his/her parents who died poor before they could achieve a relatively comfortable and financially stable life. Their pastor helped him/her look at the situation at a different perspective. The kind and wise words of the pastor removed the guilt and heaviness of his/her heart.

“Don’t be guilty brother because their poverty is not your fault. You had nothing then. What is sin is if you have plenty of money now and you never extend help to them.” (FGD-DP2, p. 20)

On the other hand, Participant 6 says that the HOP stands out for making political issues a very crucial expression of Christianity.

“I have big respect for the church and our spiritual leaders. But here (HOP), I have learned much...just like our prayer for the coming election. We have learned it only here.” (FGD-DP2, p. 20).

Meanwhile, Participant 10 considers the church as the family where s/he is loved and supported, while the HOP provides a clear direction for her/his present life.

“When my spouse died, the number one who helped me was my church. That’s what I like about our bond in the church.” (FGD-DP2, p.21)

On the other hand, s/he believes that a Christian should not remain only in the comfort zone of the basic teachings of the church but must have open eyes to the realities of the greater society.

“As a Christian, you should not be dumb with what’s happening around you especially that we are now in the end times. The role of the IFP is to awaken sleeping Christians.” (FGD-DP2, p.22)

Setting

Setting refers to the niche or the strategic place of organizations in the Evangelical Christian community. The parachurch is a unique place of support to the church congregation. Being holistic in the Word means that the group emphasizes personal relationship with God above ministry or service. Being an extremist means that only a portion of a word is given emphasis while ignoring other important principles in the Christian faith such as loving God and others. This shows that the HOP aims for

holistic spiritual and personal growth of its members rather than focusing only on intercessory prayers for the nation. The group believes that the key to spiritual and personal growth is intimacy with God, not just service or ministry. Service (such as the ministry of intercessory prayers) is only an overflow of that inner transformation brought about by a vibrant relationship with God Himself.

Christians believe that ministry or works are different from personal relationship with God. This is rooted in the major Evangelical doctrine that salvation (newness of life and redemption from sins) cannot be obtained by good work or religious deeds, but by faith in Jesus Christ coupled with a repentant heart (Ephesians 2:8-9). This salvation results to good works.

But good works alone do not equate with salvation or relationship with the Savior Jesus Christ. Christian churches emphasize personal relationship that result to good works (not the other way around) as the framework to a transformed life. The Christian, therefore, has to grow both in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ (other times referred to as “intimacy with God”) as well as in ministry or service to others.

In this lens, doing the ministry of intercessory prayer for social transformation does not necessarily mean that the intercessor is “intimate” or “close” with God. Just as personal relationships flourish when given quality time, so is the case in nourishing one’s relationship with the Savior. In fact, one can be busy working for the Savior, yet such busyness can also stunt closeness with Him. The Biblical account of Jesus and the sisters Mary and Martha supports this view. Both sisters follow and serve Jesus. When Jesus came to visit them, the older sister Martha was busy preparing the house for the visitor, but Mary “sat at His feet” to listen to Him. Martha became indignant with her sister because Mary left her alone with the tasks in order to converse with their

honored guest. When Martha complained to Jesus about her sister's behavior, Jesus gently reminded her that Mary's action was commendable.

This story informs readers of the character of God as a lover who loves freely. If you are His child, you do not have to earn His love through service. You are loved even if you are doing nothing. You are loved just for who you are. Based on this account, God loves people not for what they can do for him (Martha serving Jesus) but for who they are (Mary presenting herself to Jesus by sitting close to Him). Hence, the intercessors believe that ministries are only secondary in spiritual growth. Accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and growing in intimacy with Him is primary.

Participant 3 said: **"When you are at the feet of Jesus, you are ministering to Him."**(P3, p.4)

Moreover, informants reveal that this ministry actually paved the way for more of God's presence in their lives.

"...in the church, your outlook is what's going on in your church...I am connected with the people and the activities of the church. But in the HOP, you are there because you are connected with God. (P2, p. 3)."

As a Council member in her/his church, Participant 2 supports the pastor, thus s/he has duties on Sunday services as well as midweek gatherings.

"Church is different. It's more of a Sunday thing, helping the pastor and helping the people, but in the prayer house,"you are there to commune with God, to worship God, to listen to God (P2, p.3)."

"In the church, you are with a big group of people...because the church is a big location. Many people are there. Same is true with virtual gatherings...but in the prayer house, it's family only (P2,p.3)."

Participant 4 shares the same experience.

“When we are in the church, we are busy in our ministry. We are after fellowships in the church, see our friends, and do our tasks. But focused communion with God is quite challenging because the church is busy.” (P4, p. 4).”

“My deepest longing is to feel God’s presence. In the church, we are just dependent on what the pastor will preach to us, but in the HOP, especially during Watches, we converse with God. Sometimes He whispers to our ears (P4, p.1).”

Asked how s/he adjusts to the HOP parachurch environment, Participant 7 says that the HOP offers two advantages. First, it is all about service to the nation but at the same time enables inner renewal process to the ministry worker. Participant 7 explains that church ministries can be very exhausting. One can be very active serving in church yet drained mentally, physically, and spiritually.

“I think God is reminding me. There are times when my heart is empty...the book of Matthew says blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty because they will see the kingdom of God. In the church, we can get so busy praying for others and even the nation, but we do not know our own spiritual needs) (FGD-DP2, p. 36).”

For Participant 7, what attracted her to the HOP is the very act of prayer which is lifegiving both to the subject of prayer (e.g. others, and nation) as well as to the one who prays (self). The HOP’s personal “soaking” has cultivated the prayer life not only as a ministry or service to others but also inward connection between the intercessor and God, thus, making prayer a process of rest and healing.

“When we gather in God’s presence, He increases intimacy with Him) (FGD-DP2, p. 37).”

Hence, members perceive the Watch as a setting to grow in relationship to both God and people.

Teaching

Organizations teach or transmit knowledge and skills to members so that organizational values and goals are realized and fulfilled. This study found that the Prayer House focused on knowledge transfer and application of intercessory prayers for the nation.

Prayers: General prayer vis-a-vis prayer for the nation

In the parachurch, intercessory prayer can be considered as either a product or service of the group for social transformation.

For the members, the group advocates the craft of intercessory prayers for church members who already know the basics of prayer.

“In the church, there are so many to pray for - the church itself, the members, the sick, the whole world, all. But the focus of the prayer house is the government of the Philippines,” explains Participant 1 (P1, p. 6).

Asked if the church cannot do this task for the government, Participant 1 replies:

“The church can [do this task for the government], but it already has many responsibilities. There are also churches that are themselves prayer houses, but they already have many other projects and responsibilities. We don’t have those because we are not a church. Our focus is only intercession for the nation.” (P1, p. 6)

General Christian life issues vs. political issues

Aside from specific prayers, the HOP discourses are also very specific compared with the church, says Participant 1.

“This is a specific ministry where your heart is called by God to pray specifically for the nation. The church covers many aspects of life’s needs. Here, we are only interceding for the nation. The caring of the whole life is the church’s responsibility (P1, p. 7).”

Basic doctrines on prayer vs. rigorous application

On the doctrine of prayer, Participant 2 clarifies that the HOP does not deviate from the Biblical teachings of the church on prayer. Rather, it seeks to make these teachings practical and resolute. According to her, prayer and fasting are both taught in her church and the HOP, but the HOP offers a bigger opportunity for them to actually engage in this spiritual discipline.

“In the church, we are taught to read one chapter a day during the period of prayer and fasting. The prayer house all the more developed this practice in us. (P2, p. 5).”

For Participant 1, though prayer is very important in churches, he noticed that some Christians do not give serious attention on prayer activities such as midweek prayer meetings. Asked if all church members actively support prayer meetings, Participant 1 replies:

"Just a few percentage. Even less than 50% attend prayer meetings. Most attend Sunday services only." (P1. p.4).

Participant 2 also agrees that prayer items or topics in the HOP are different from that of the church. **“Prayer requests in the church are different,”** he clarifies (P2, p. 3). What Participant 2 means is that prayers in the HOP are consistently intended for prayers for the government and other pillars of society (societal institutions like education, media, business, etc.) while most church prayers are focused on personal and congregational prayer concerns.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure generally refers to how the conduct of tasks and activities are aligned to organization realities. The church follows the congregational structure while the parachurch imbibes the mission structure (LOP 24, 1983). The participants in this study differentiated the uniqueness of their organizational structure from that of the church.

Unique identity

First, Participant 3 believes that continuous self-discovery will help HOP succeed in its vision and values.

“When the church feels that the parachurch copies them...there is competition. The beauty of parachurch is it has a different purpose. It has different gifting and assignment. Your assignment is not the assignment of the church.” (P3, p.).

“For example...if the campus ministry will go to the community and build a church, then it is not a campus ministry anymore. If you know your definition, you remain there. You are really important in the body of Christ. A person who wears lots of ornaments cannot be recognized anymore. If he remains who he is, then he can be recognized. So we make sure that we are not a duplicate of the church).” (P3, p.7)

The longer quality time of prayer is what the group calls “soaking”. According to Participant 3, HOP cuts teaching time on discipleship, Christian living, evangelism, and other basic Christianity doctrines because these are main equipping activities of the church. Doing so allows HOP to focus on “soaking” which is the primary activity of the HOP.

“We give more time to soaking because there is not enough time for this practice in the church. We really need to define who we are and remain as that.) (P3, p. 7).”

Asked what keeps her coming to the House of Prayer, Participant 14 points out the distinct identity of the HOP as an added value on to one's experience as a church member. Church support as the organization's distinct identity also includes support to church members.

Every Saturday morning, Participant 14's church has a prayer activity called dawn prayer where members gather at the church to pray. However, s/he lives far from the church, and her/his Saturday mornings are filled with household chores, so s/he could not attend dawn prayers. Hence, her/his Saturday afternoon watch at the HOP perfectly fits her/his schedule. The HOP schedule enables her/him to do family responsibilities as well as experience Saturday prayer fellowship that s/he misses out in her/his own church family.

Viewing the discourses on prayers and social transformation, Participant 10 also recognizes the mission and role of the HOP as innovative and distinct from that of the church, though both organizations share the same vision of social transformation.

Our church is anointed with basic teachings while the HOP is anointed with higher level teachings.)FGD-DP2, p.26)."

Participant 10 considers church leaders as spiritually mature, therefore, they have the capacity to go beyond the basic teachings generally taught in the church. She is also aware that the HOP, on the other hand, does not repeat the church's role on the propagation of these basic teachings and usual ministries in churches. Rather, it focuses only on intercessory prayers for the nation.

Going beyond church walls

Finally, HOP goes beyond church routine, program, or limitations. Participant 4 sees denominational strife and the tendency of some churches to be busy with works in expense or substitute for God's presence as wrong practices. For her/him, the HOP breaks through these flaws.

“We are commanded to love each other. I really want the removal of this congregational barrier so I joined this group. It is possible to be united as one body...in the HOP, brotherhood and sisterhood can be seen (P4, p.3).”

Table 15. *Complementation of the Evangelical church and the Parachurch (Olegario, 2023)*

INTERPHASE	COMPLEMENTATION		PARTICIPANTS
	Church	Parachurch	
Process	Focus on evangelism for personal transformation	Focus on intercessory prayers for social transformation	P3, P2, P1, P6, P10, P7 P14
Setting	Serves many communities and offers diverse ministries.	Serves as a venue for a church worker to physically rest and rejuvenate (through focused prayer) in God's presence.	P3, P2, P4, P7
Teaching	General prayers (personal needs, church needs)	Prayers for the government and other pillars of society	P1, P2
	General Christian life issues	Political issues	P1
	Basic doctrines on prayer	Rigorous intercessory national prayers	P2
Organizational structure	identified as body of followers of Jesus Christ	a prayer and support arm of and for the body of followers (HOP's unique identity)	P3, P14, P10
	Committed to the Great Commission (salvation and discipleship)	Committed to enhance church missions, not compete with the church	P3, P10

	Can be congregational or denominational in mindset	Strives for interdependence with the church (going beyond church walls)	P4

Factors of Good Relations Between the Church and the Parachurch

Table 16 presents what the parachurch members consider as factors that foster complementation between the church and the parachurch.

Before and Upon Entry

Same spirit

The participants believe that having the “same spirit” motivates them to gather as one group. Participant 1 shares that the HOP is a result of that camaraderie.

“It started from a desire of different people to pray. Because of that common desire, we were drawn to each other. We were just open to people who have the same passion to pray for the nation. If you have that, then you are welcome to join and pray.” (P1, p.7)

When asked why people from other churches start joining them, Participant 1 replies:

“That’s the mystery. We didn’t know each other from the start, but we have the same spirit.” (P1, p. 7)

The pandemic, which prohibits all members to be together as well as different church backgrounds have not hampered the members from getting close to each other.

Participant 2 feels assured with the group’s unity.

“You know that the spirit and the goal are the same. You have the same direction.” (P2, p. 5)

Participant 9 adds that the HOP provides that kindred spirit s/he misses with her/his own church family. With the pandemic, the HOP family provides what s/he misses in her /his Christian circles (FGD-DP, p. 31). Participant 9 is a trusted leader in her/his own church. Her/his entire family is actively involved in their local church’s ministries. However, upon joining for the first time at the HOP, s/he immediately felt affinity with the new faces.

“When I get here, I notice my companions are “soldiers”. If I am a soldier, and so are they. I am strengthened. Many of our church members are senior citizens (Participant 9 is in her/his mid-40s), so I was looking where to place myself.” (FGD, p. 16)

Having the same spirit immediately bonds Participant 11 to the rest of the HOP members.

“I automatically adjusted here. Those with the same feather flock together. I really know that this is a Christian group even if nobody speaks. It’s just natural. That’s what it means by same spirit.” (FGD, p. 5)

Participant 8 also feels at home. He doesn’t feel the need to try hard to belong.

“Not much adjustment. They are God’s children and so am I. The hesitation went away the first time we met.” (FGD, p. 6)

Membership and Participation in the HOP

Assimilation

This same spirit, which attracts convergence, continues to be nurtured while being in the group. For Participant 1, even if there are moments of adjustments or conflicts, eventually everyone assimilates or adapts.

“Churches have their own cultures. Surely there is culture shock. But after a while, we feel at ease with each other. So unity, harmony, and openness with one another will be more realized.” (P1, p.7)

For Participant 13 and 14, experiencing family bonding in their own church helps them feel at ease with the HOP environment.

“I consider us as one body and one spirit. We are a family in our church, so it was not hard for me to adjust here,” (FGD-DP2, p. 37) says Participant 13.

“People from my own church help me feel at ease here [HOP] because I’m the reserved type,” FGD, p. 35) says Participant 14.

Finally, Participant 6 shares about how s/he assimilated with the group as s/he got more and more involved with the others.

“I haven’t come across attitudes that are offensive. No one is arrogant. Participant 8 and I have just met, and we already click. I am friendly. I don’t have worries with these kinds of gathering.” (FGD-DP, p. 37)

Socialization

Before or while socializing, the members also assess each others’ personalities first. For an observant type like Participant 10, s/he usually does not initiate conversations with new faces but simply observes first. S/he says that by doing so, s/he can gauge the group better and her/his feelings toward others. Consequently, s/he finds herself feeling more and more comfortable. This experience goes for the other participants.

Participant 3 admits that the group is still growing in the area of relationships. Personal differences, schedules, and logistics pose as challenges.

“Our fellowship time is very limited,” she says. “Our relationships vary. I am very personal to each one, but how they treat me and how they treat others vary.” (P3, p.6)

Participant 3 also notices how some members feel some awkwardness or hesitations when joining a Watch that they are not accustomed to. For instance, a member may not be able to join his or her own Watch due to conflict in schedule, hence, the member may decide to join another Watch.

“There are different watches. Though we are very close, one may join a group the person is not accustomed to, so trust and adjustment issues are there.” (P3, p. 6)

Complementation

Aside from assimilation, Participant 1 also believes that differences are complementing strength.

“That’s the good thing about the group. We come from different churches; we have the same goal and different skills. I can be the driver. I am a handy man. We have different skills that meet our needs.” (P1, p.6)

Leadership

The HOP leader’s presence in most of the Watches serves as a bridge or a point of rapport among members belonging to different Watches or cliques.

Table 16. *Factors of Good Relations between the Church and the Parachurch*

FACTORS	STAGE	PARTICIPANTS
Same spirit	Before and upon entry to the HOP	P1, P4, P2, P9, P12, P11, P8
Assimilation	Membership and participation in the HOP	P1, P13, P14, P6
Socialization		P3
Complementation		P1
Leadership		P3

There is indeed a legitimate role of parachurch groups in the body of Christ. However, just as the church is challenged by internal institutional decays like ego, politics, and corruption, the parachurch organization is not immune to such. Hence, Trueman (2014) argues that distinctions on meanings and structures of parachurch must be clarified because there are parachurch organizations that are 'truly parachurch', in the sense that they are to serve and be subservient to the church.

A parachurch has a clear narrow ministerial or ecclesiastical function that they cannot be confused with the church. Otherwise, when their limit and role supplant the church, they become "quasi-church". Hence, issues of influence, accountability, vulnerability to cults of personality, unclear doctrinal commitments, and eccentricity arise. To prevent these problems, parachurch leaders need to clearly demonstrate the understanding to their members, churches, and other ministry partners that they are to serve the church (Trueman, 2014). This study revealed that the HOP manifests what a parachurch is as evidenced by its complementation, not replacement of the church.

Framework on how Spiritual Communication through Intercessory Prayers Contribute to Social Transformation

Based on my own insights as a parachurch member and co-learning from the participants, I propose a framework on how spiritual communication through intercessory prayers contributes to social transformation (Figure 10).

The figure's funnel shape symbolizes the Prayer Watch, which is the encompassing communicative activity where values, symbols, and meaning-making

(through performance acts in intercessory prayers) blend together to create the parachurch culture and identity for social transformation.

To recall, Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo's (1983) Organizational Cultural Theory posits that communicative activities continuously create the organization. In addition to the Organizational Cultural Theory as lens, this study elicited the following unique concepts on how intercession as communicative acts build the culture of parachurch members and their identities as prayer warriors for social transformation:

Culture is defined as a pattern of “shared assumptions, shared frames of reference, or a shared set of values and norms”, highlighting a cognitive frame that dictates culturally appropriate behavior. Various studies on understanding a group's way of life do not simply focus on overt behaviors but delve in their underlying assumptions that serve as rules to these behaviors (Eisenberg & Riley, 2001, pp. 305-306).

A parachurch culture and identity can be formed through shared values, shared symbols, and communicative performances.

Shared Values

When the parachurch members share a common vision, mission, and role, the members gradually imbibe who they are, who they are supposed to be, and what they are supposed to do. These are the intangible things that members must learn by heart and embrace in their life and lifestyle.

1. Vision for the country is focused on divine reverence and biblical governance.

Vision refers to the dream or aspirations of the organization. This vision is rooted in reverence to God and His laws lived out by the people and supported by the government. The group's vision centers on a righteous and prosperous country free to fully adhere to Biblical standards of governance. Hence, the vision is a nation liberated from social practices that go against the values of God towards a desirable state of the nation that can be blessed by God.

This vision believes that the church and the entire body of Christ can have Godly influence on the nation through a Godly government, which is the seat of power or authority in the nation. Political leaders have so much impact on what it calls the eight pillars of society (family, government, education, science and technology, arts and entertainment, religion, media, and business) based on the direction they are taking the country. For instance, a law that aims to improve economic condition of laborers is pleasing to God because His intentions are for people to show mercy and compassion to one another, thus such law attracts His blessings, resources, and guidance in its implementation for the benefit of the whole nation. Hence, the parachurch can fulfill this vision through intercessory prayers for social transformation, specifically, prayers for the government.

In essence, while discipleship is the evangelistic purpose of the church or Jesus' command to bring the gospel "to the ends of the earth" (discipleship), the parachurch must carve its own deductive view of social transformation through intensive prayers at the spiritual realm believing that a just and humane governance lead citizens to the saving ways of God.

2. Mission pursues greater social needs

When one becomes a Christian, what follows is an invitation to be part of the mission of Jesus in building God's kingdom of love on earth. The church mission begins with individuals undergoing personal transformation so that like Jesus Christ, they can influence society. The church focuses on nurturing the individual and his or her ways as a disciple or follower of Jesus Christ, thus influencing society.

Mission is defined as the group's way or strategy to meet a social need. And intercessory prayers come in different forms to answer these social needs for righteous governance. These missions include 1) Aspiring for a prosperous nation through two types of intercessory prayers, *Declaration and Petition*; 2) Revoking wicked practices (e.g., corruption) by prayers of *Repentance*, 3) Thwarting evil influences (e.g., law promoting divorce) by prayers of *Protection*, and 4) Ushering integrity of government (e.g., honest political leaders) through intercessions for *righteous governance*.

3. Role balances autonomy and dependency (Interdependent) on the church

Role is the position or niche where the group feel they carry out its mission. True to its name as parachurch, the participants are aware of its organizational role as a support to the church. In legitimizing this role, the members acknowledge their organization's autonomy from and dependence on the church despite some conflicts.

For instance, the church is recognized as the "birthing place", "training ground" or the primary teacher on the importance of prayer for personal and social transformation. In this aspect, both the church and parachurch teach

prayers as vital spiritual disciplines. However, there are also conflicting realities in these two organizations such as unmatched ministry directions that hamper partnership opportunities. Hence, a balance of autonomy and dependency (interdependence) must be promoted for the parachurch to walk harmoniously with the church.

Shared Symbols

When the parachurch members share a common symbols, these represent cultural meanings that are vital in forming and maintaining the organization's culture and life. Some of the symbols that can be shared are about the prayer house itself, the intercessory prayer, and the parachurch or prayer leader.

1. Prayer house

The House of Prayer can be likened to a museum which houses significant objects like sculpture, inventions, art, and all sorts of artifacts that depict way of life. As the interested visitor enters the museum, he or she may be awed by what can be seen. However, deeper understanding and appreciation happen only when the visitor experiences a well-guided tour, especially by an expert curator. Such is the case of an outsider who joins for the first time a prayer watch. The visitor sees unfamiliar objects (menorah - Hebrew lamp with seven candles), shofar (ram's horn-trumpet used in ancient battles), and maybe strange practices (praying in tongues, seeing visions, deep revelation of Scriptures) led by someone exuding wisdom and trustworthiness.

The prayer house is to be seen as a fortress and refuge during storms of personal life of the intercessors. When the group feels distressed by what they

perceive as onslaught of evil influences on the nation, they can take their "position" and "shelter" at the house of prayer as the meeting place with God Himself, the one who judges to bless and protect as well as punish and discipline.

The parachurch is seen as not competing, replacing, or devaluing the church: rather, it complements or supports the church. Though it may signify a physical separation from the church, it is still very much tied to the church spiritually.

First, the parachurch aims to be the prayer arm in the church's social missions. Second, it offers rest to those actively serving in the church. Rest pertains to break from ministry or works to "sit at the feet of Jesus" and listen to Him. This posture depicts prayer and Word (Bible) spirituality, which are keys in developing strong personal relationship with God.

2. Intercessory prayer

The shared symbol for intercessory prayer then should encompass its personal and communal nature; its forceful advances yet foregrounding; and its transforming power for the prayed and the praying person.

First, intercessory prayer must be understood as both personal and communal. Intercessory prayers initiate one into a journey of self, his or her neighbor or close circles, and reaching even distant people who may be different or conflicting. Jesus' teaching to love enemies by doing good to them (Matthew 5:43–44) supports this.

When Jesus Christ commissioned his Body to proclaim the good news "to the uttermost part of the earth", He also promised to empower them with the Holy Spirit in this great task. He told them,.." ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all

Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8, KJV)". Jerusalem could be the hometown of the disciples and the very place where they encountered rabbi Jesus. Judaea and Samaria were neighboring towns where Jesus and his disciples also ministered (healing the sick, feeding the hungry, etc.). After Jesus' death, these disciples in Jerusalem were persecuted for their faith, hence they fled and were scattered all over Asia and surrounding regions where they continued to be His witnesses, thus fulfilling the Great Commission.

As recorded in the early Christian church history, the apostles in Jerusalem found out that many Gentiles (non-Jews) also believed in Jesus and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit by faith. Hence, they realized that Jesus' death on the cross as salvation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are not only for the Jews or the so-called chosen people but for all people made in the image and likeness of God (the account of Cornelius in Acts chapters 10 and 11, NIV). Hence, even to this day, the parachurch can pray for all people and nations.

Second, intercessory prayer is forceful yet humbling. While parachurch members see themselves as having special "power" (e.g., can see vision, purpose and destiny of nations) and responsibility (e.g., being "watchmen" or "keepers of the land"), they have to imbibe the culture of humility by becoming hidden or unassuming behind the scenes of such great national burden. They are at the forefront of the spiritual war, yet they are at the foreground of the church halls.

Third, being an intercessor is a transformation of seeing self, significant others, and distant others. Intercessory prayers for social transformation do not bypass personal transformation. In other words, intercessory prayers do not only positively affect society but must produce character maturity on the part of the intercessor.

3. Prayer leader

The lead prayer warrior considers himself/herself as a servant and an "apprentice" who has to fully depend on God, not on experience, ability, or achievement, to carry out the task of intercession for the nation. Hence, his/her leadership, personality, and character are "cultural transmitters" of what the parachurch is all about - at the forefront in the battle for social transformation, yet hidden and unassuming support (servant, helper) of the church.

The prayer leaders is largely focused on "sitting at the feet of Jesus". When others pray for greater things to happen (in their ministries or churches), the prayer leader believes that "prayer is the greater thing".

To ensure that gatekeepers are actually maintaining their "posts" as watchers of the land at "the feet of Jesus", posting a monthly monitoring sheet as well as signing an attendance logbook during watches are always enforced by HOP leaders.

The prayer leader and potential leaders sustain the group culture. First, they share their values such as the vision and mission of the parachurch to the members. Second, they promote good relationships among the members. Third, they inform the members of both their self and organizational *identities*. Fourth, they help the members understand better the innovative *nature* of the parachurch when compared and contrasted with the church organization. Fifth, they identify internal and external stakeholders, their specific needs and issues, and solutions to support or meet these issues and counter challenges to the parachurch.

Communicative Performances

Communicative performances are the language and non-verbal forms of communicative acts performed during prayer watches that orient members, and eventually imbibe the culture of the parachurch. These include Ritual, Passion, Social, Political, and Enculturation performances to sustain and manage relationships.

Although cultural performances are distinct from each other, they can also be overlapping or interlocking (e.g., a ritual functions simultaneously as courtesy) and fluid as they evolve from one form to another (e.g., an organizational ritual ushers in or turns into a corporate story).

Second, communicative performances can be compounding. One communicative act is a type of one cultural performance and can also be a combination of the types of one cultural performance. For instance, a prayer posture is a personal ritual but can also be simultaneously personal and task rituals.

Finally, one cultural performance may point to one or more of the parachurch's value, symbol, or identity. As an example, a ritual embodies the parachurch's vision while simultaneously reflecting self-identity of the intercessor.

Church-parachurch Dynamics

The shared values, symbols, and communicative performances continuously shape the culture and identity of the parachurch. These are influenced by the church-parachurch dynamics that include climate, innovation, and strategy.

Climate. Aside from complementing each other's strengths as partner organizations, emotional bonding of members determine the church-parachurch

climate. The combined perceptions and feelings of group members regarding their duties as intercessors and relationships with one's self and others are vital. Positive emotions brought about by praying as well as constructive conceptions on the House of Prayer sustain the members' commitment to the group. The climate becomes more positive as the members get to know each other and bond for common vision and mission of the parachurch and assume their roles as prayer warriors.

Innovation. An innovative organization can be effective in achieving goals. Innovation can be defined as a process an organization undertakes to conceptualize in new ways existing products, processes, and ideas. Innovation may be critical factor for organizations to grow, remain relevant, and differentiate themselves (Purcel, 2019). It can also be "a means of changing an organization, whether as a response to changes in its internal or external environment or as a preemptive action taken to influence an environment" (Demircioglu (2016, p.1).

An organizational innovation refers to a new strategy that affects structures, practices, and relationships with stakeholders, Process innovation implements new production, delivery, operation, techniques, and equipment. And product innovation offers improved goods or services (youmatter, 2020).

In a sense, the role of the parachurch is an innovation in the church system. Instead of basic doctrines on prayer and Christian living as always emphasized in the church, the parachurch offers teachings on political issues and actual rigorous intercessory national prayers. It provides a prayer sanctuary where these teachings are practically demonstrated or applied. As an organization, it presents itself not as a duplicate or competitor of the church but as a prayer arm committed to expand the

church's Great Commission (social transformation through evangelism and discipleship) beyond church walls.

Strategy. This focuses on how the parachurch can effectively maintain complementation of roles and niches as well as navigate through conflicts in the church-parachurch dynamics. The church pastors are considered external stakeholders, reflecting the autonomy of the parachurch with the church. The members, on the other hand, are internal stakeholders who are also church members but do not experience conflict regarding their membership in the parachurch.

Finally, internal-external stakeholders are parachurch members who are also lay leaders in their local churches. This third type of stakeholder may experience conflicts with church and parachurch responsibilities or church leaders who have negative views on parachurch membership. Navigation and negotiation to enhance the complementation of the church-parachurch and avoid conflicts on overlapping membership, roles, and identities will sustain the parachurch.

Some of these strategies have been named by the parachurch members (see Appendix 6) to complement or build good relations with the church. In dealing with internal-external stakeholders, the parachurch can prioritize the church and respect ministry limits and uniqueness. For external stakeholders, such as pastors who are not interested in partnering with the parachurch, it is advisable for the parachurch not to force connections with them. Instead, the parachurch can open membership to church members and encourage them to talk. The parachurch can ask permission or get advice from their pastors regarding parachurch membership and possible issues that may arise. Finally, for internal stakeholders or parachurch members who are free to fully participate in the parachurch ministry without experiencing resistance from

church leaders, they can practice volunteerism, partner with other prayer houses, conduct youth training, and practice flexibility to sustain the parachurch ministry.

Transformational Outcomes

The study delved on how intercessory prayers communicate social transformation. These transformations are found in the organizational culture (parachurch life) and identity.

Culture or changes to a praying parachurch

Transformations in culture or parachurch life can be observed in how the intercessors perceive the changes intercessory prayers brought on themselves (new knowledge, skills, attitudes, and character) and on the nation. These transforming effects are vital in developing a culture that is distinct yet complementing with the church as its partner institution through a process, setting, teaching, and organizational place. First is the process on how and where actions are to be directed or how to carry out its responsibility.

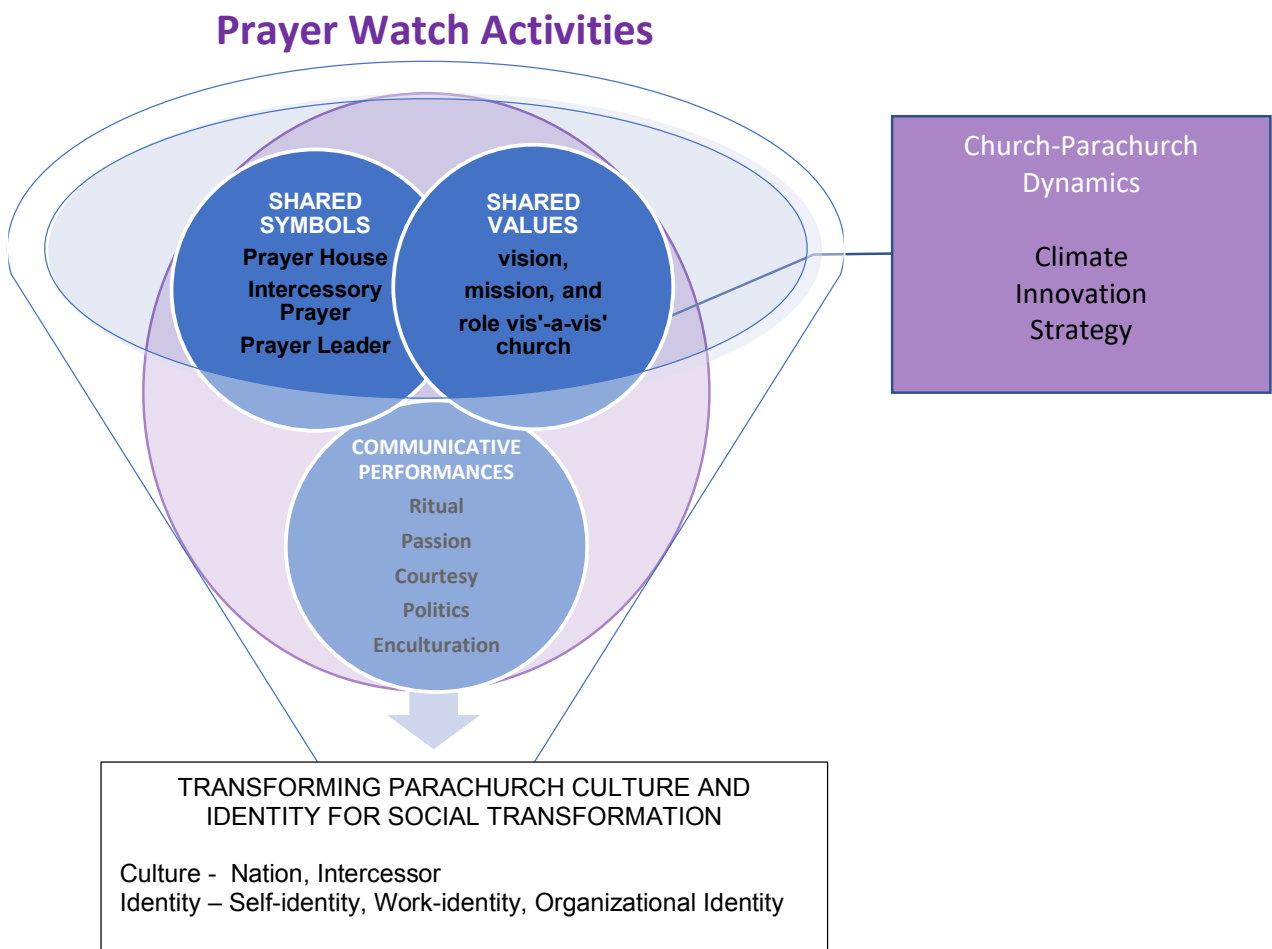
For the parachurch, actions are focused on intercessory prayers so that the church can fully attend to its main mission of evangelism and discipleship. Second is setting or service areas and niche of the organization which is the physical house of prayer, a sanctuary for a harried church worker who wants undisturbed rest and rejuvenation in God's presence. Next is teaching or the focus of intervention which is national prayers for social transformation such as prayers for government and other pillars of society, and political issues. And last is the organizational place of the parachurch in the spiritual map that promotes its unique calling alongside the church.

This is the commitment to pray for the success of the church in fulfilling the Great Commission, and going beyond church walls to advance social transformation

Identity or changes to a praying warrior

The information, skills, attitudes, and character developed in the parachurch life bring about a new holistic understanding on how self, work, and organization intertwine to define or construe a prayer warrior for social transformation.

Figure 10. *Intercessory prayers as communication that build the parachurch culture and identity for social transformation (Olegario, 2023)*



Chapter V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study used ethnography to explore the interlocked meanings in intercessory prayer as a communicative act of the parachurch in establishing its cultural identity and identity vis-à-vis the church in nation building. Specifically, it asked the following questions:

1. What are the values shared by the members of the parachurch and how are these shaping their culture and identity?
2. What are the symbols shared by the members of the parachurch and how are these shaping their organizational culture and identity?
3. What cultural performances in the form of communicative acts are enacted in the prayer watches that initiate the members into the culture and identity of intercession?
4. What are the transforming effects of intercessory prayers among the parachurch members?
5. How does the parachurch and the evangelical church complement each other in communication?
6. How can spiritual communication through intercessory prayers contribute to social transformation?

The study is inspired by the Organizational Culture Theory by from Pacanowsky and Trujillo (1983), but the qualitative methods elicited concepts beyond the theory or concepts that are culturally applicable in the country.

The participants are 16 HOP members in the Dayspring Parachurch in Davao City who perform the **Prayer Watch**, a 3-hour continuous prayer or “soaking” in God’s presence any time or day in a week.

I used ethnographic field work as methodology. An online semi-structured personal interview was used to elicit participants’ construction of and practice of intercessory prayer leading to a parachurch culture aimed at social transformation. FGDs and participant observation were done during the prayer watches. Prayer Watches comprise an average of four intercessors who pray on their chosen watch schedule of the day. A day is divided into 8 watches (12-3AM, 3-6AM, 6- 9AM, 9AM-12PM, 12-3PM, 3-6PM, 6-9PM, 9PM-12 AM).

I gathered the data were on May to October 2021 and analyzed these using inductive coding of the narratives of the parachurch members.

These are some of the highlights of the findings:

Shared Values Among Parachurch Members

The values focus on the vision, mission, and perceived role of the House of Prayer. In terms of **vision**, the HOP contends for a righteous and prosperous Philippines rooted in Biblical christian values on governance. This vision is anchored on the supremacy of the Bible and reverence for God. In the Christian world, the Bible is the Word of God, hence, the guide for living as individuals and societies.

Bible supremacy means that all laws would be based on the Bible and that God's will would be implemented in the eight pillars of society, namely: 1) government, 2) education, 3) family, 4) religion/churches/faith, 5) science and technology, 6) business, 7) arts and entertainment, and 8) media. Reverence for God means moral repentance and regeneration. This reverence leads to spiritual freedom from undesirable social practices and empowerment for nation-building and good governance.

The HOP believes that political leaders have so much impact on these eight pillars of society based on the direction they are taking the country. For instance, a law that aims to improve economic condition of laborers is pleasing to God because His intentions are for people to show mercy and compassion to one another, thus such law attracts His blessings, resources, and guidance in its implementation for the benefit of the whole nation.

Hence, for its **mission**, HOP performs intercessory prayers for social transformation, specifically prayers for the government. The participants believe that intercessory prayers answer social needs or issues for the country. These include the aspirations of the nation such as development, righteousness (removal of wicked practices), goodness (no evil influences), and integrity of the government.

They also identified the kinds of intercessory prayers needed to address these issues. To achieve the aspirations of the Philippines for development, prosperity, and unity, they declare God's blessings and good intentions as well as offer petitions. They pray for repentance against wicked practices such as violence, crime, and corruption. And they pray for protection against evil influences such as (e.g., laws

leading to divorce, abortion, same-sex marriage, vices). Lastly, they pray for righteous governance such as a government with integrity, honest leaders, and efficient

As for their **roles**, they saw themselves as complementing the church as training ground, partners, and extension of the church. This is despite their seemingly conflicting roles because of different ministry focus, suspicions such as different doctrines, and either no support or connection with the church.

This does not suggest, however, that the church is separated, passive, or has left out the government in its discipleship activities. This does not also mean that the HOP has neglected Jesus' command to bring the gospel "to the ends of the earth" (evangelism and discipleship) in its ministry. So both the church and the Davao City HOP converge in their goal of social transformation but the HOP is carving its own vision, mission, and role to fulfill such.

In a nutshell, the shared values of the HOP are the following: The HOP envisions a transformed Philippines through governance and nation-building firmly rooted in Biblical values. Its mission is to establish a righteous and prosperous society through prayers for social transformation. As a parachurch, it embraces its role as a major prayer support to the functions of the church to the individual and the society, thus, having to deal with complementing and even conflicting relationships with the church institution.

Shared Symbols Among the Parachurch Members

Among the parachurch members, there are three major symbols: the House of Prayers; prayer as a symbolic act; and the leaders of the House of Prayer.

For the participants, the **House of Prayer** is a supernatural place – a sacred place, the birthing place of visions, and a shaper of generations. It is something personal like a second home; a different place like a pleasant sanctuary, and a revival place. It is also a place of refuge like a fortress. On a more practical level, it is a pusher for change operating as a campaign office. The HOP provides a unique and ideal setting for satisfying prayer experiences, hence, enabling the group to accomplish their duties as intercessors.

The participants viewed **intercessory prayer** as having microlevel and macrolevel scopes. Microlevel refers to introspections of the intercessor on his or her own prayer acts, whether s/he prays alone (privately) in the House of Prayer or together (community) with other intercessors. These include having direct access to God, having intentionality, standing in the gap, personal edification, and a channel of blessings. On the other hand, intercession goes beyond private and personal boundaries and toward communities and the nation at the macrolevel scope (e.g., social transformation).

Experiences in the macrolevel realm of intercession are reported by the participants when their prayers go beyond self or personal needs. This realm could be understood as critical engagements an intercessor goes through to receive the desired effects of social transformation for the nation or self. For example, an intercessor has to connect to a praying community to become insightful on how to pray for political issues. In the microlevel scope, they viewed intercessory prayers as spiritual burden; complement to other ministries, cascading and collective, group travail, and community engagement.

The **HOP or prayer leader** also serves as symbol and they construed him/her in terms of the leader's personality traits. Personality traits pertain to natural and personal characteristics; Christian character can either be innate or consciously worked out or pursued for personal transformation; and leadership style refers to how the leader behaves to fulfill her function in the group. The HOP leader is seen as a symbol of someone intimate with God; Holy Spirit-led; administrator-leader; servant leader/ apprentice; vision keeper; democratic; open; and an affirmer. These character traits and leadership style symbolize or communicate to the group what the HOP is as a whole.

Communicative Performances in the Watches

During the 3-hour Watch (intercession), communicative performances happen in various portions called segments. They can be classified as rituals, passions, courtesies, politics, and enculturation (from Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 1983).

All types of rituals, passions, courtesies, and enculturation were observed in five watches. For **ritual**, the most common type enacted by members is Task ritual. The constant occurrence of this ritual type can be attributed to the kind of communication activity observed. Since, mission is the group's strategy to meet a social need, the HOP believes that intercessory prayer is their strategy for social transformation. Among the many communication activities of the group, the Prayer Watch is the exact event where intercessory prayers are conducted. Hence, the Prayer Watch is primarily a Task Ritual.

The study found that **Passion** types of ritual can occur in any segment of the watches. For deeper sensemaking, members would combine different types of

Passion in one communicative act. Passions can also be used to enhance other cultural performances

Unlike passions that occur anywhere in the watch segments, **Courtesy** types appear on specific segments. Pleasantry and sociability appear frequently in the *kumustahan* (greetings) and snacks/fellowship portions of the watch. These two courtesy types also frequently enhance personal and collegial stories which belong to another form of cultural performance. On the other hand, privacy occurs during teaching sessions or segments that trigger deeper personal sharing and revelations. Leaders also enact privacy when overseeing members and unloading burdens to one another.

In some cases, privacies in organizations can be anxious experiences, such as being reprimanded privately to preserve dignity and confidentiality. Even some forms of pleasantries and sociabilities can be unnerving to newcomers (e.g., sarcastic jokes or name calling in cliques). However, the courtesies observed in the HOP are executed in light, kind, and comforting manner.

Privacy was also responded with encouragement, consolation, or advice. No behavior such as harsh jokes or cajoling that may lead to embarrassment was observed. This could be explained by the group's value on "Christlikeness" in relationships or dealings with one another. Hence, watches are means to promote affirming and supportive climate.

Regarding **Politics** performances, only cementing allies and showing personal strength were observed. The occasions of cementing allies could be attributed to the status of the HOP as a relatively young organization, hence, efforts on building partnerships or "recruiting" members are prevalent during watches. In essence,

anyone is welcome to the HOP and it's up to this person to discover if he or she finds belonging, and thus wholeheartedly commit to the ministry.

Just like Courtesies, these Politics performances came out as friendly, comforting, and serving. Showing personal strength can manifest as intimidation, defamation, and expulsion to display power and control (Pacanowsky and Trujillo, 1983). In the HOP however, this performance manifests in using one's talent, ability, skill, or resources to serve others.

The third and last is **Politics** performance, Bargaining did not appear in terms of personal relationships among members but only during prayer intercessions. Bargaining is defined as efforts to unite inconsistent goals through arguments and counter arguments, and proposals and counter proposals. The FGD and KII revealed that bargaining happens as HOP members discuss their varied levels of commitment to the church and parachurch and how they find ways to solve commitment inconsistencies. During observed prayer watches, however, members became focused on intercession as they “stand in the gap” or bargain (plea, negotiate) with God in behalf of the land and the people. Hence, in prayer watches, bargaining happens between God and HOP members through prayer, but not among themselves (personal or organizational level).

As for **Enculturation**, all its types-Learning and Teaching the Role, Learning and Teaching the Rope- were observed in all the five Watches. The prevalence of this performance can be attributed to the nature of the Prayer Watch as the exact avenue where the group learns together the principles and practice of prayer.

Transformations from Intercessory Prayer

Transformations are manifested both on the intercessor himself/ herself through his/her perceived culture of the organization and perceived identity.

Organizational Culture

Intercessory prayer transforms the nation and the personal life of the intercessor. This study uncovers the group's belief that intercessory prayers for social transformation change not only the subject of the prayer (the society or nation) but also the one who prays. Hence, this part reveals transforming effects of intercessory prayer on the personal life of the intercessor as well as on the nation.

As national prayer warriors in a parachurch, the intercessors say that their group can access visions for the nation; can understand the destiny and purpose of the nation; they can stand in the gap between God and the nation; this calling to pray is a special mission; they understand the collective and deductive nature of intercessory prayer; and they are connected with fellow intercessors.

But despite this special 'power' and responsibility, they have imbibed the culture of humility and become hidden or unassuming behind the scenes of such great national burden such that they give all glory and honor to God.

On a larger scale, HOP members also believe that intercession for the nation invites divine intervention on government affairs, hence, supernatural acts can speed up desired social change.

Identity

Working hand-in-hand with the church, the HOP has established its niche and identity in the body of Christ. Identity helps members make sense of themselves and their relationships. The parachurch members had three levels of identity – from the self to their work and to the nature of the organization.

For their self-identity, they now see being intercessors as a personal assignment, they were chosen/called by God, and they are intimate with God. For work identity, they pray strategically, pray arduous and fastidious prayers, plead to God for justice, continuously educate themselves about social and spiritual issues, discern spiritual things, and wait and receive instructions from the Lord on what and how to pray. For organizational identity, they look at HOP as carrying increased prayer burden, connecting and learning with one another, going beyond church routine, and being led by the Holy Spirit.

Complementation of the Church and Parachurch

The goal of the body of Christ is to fulfill the Great Commission (evangelism and discipleship of individuals and societies). In obedience to this mandate, the HOP developed a culture that is distinct yet complementing with the church as its partner institution. These complementing contributions of the parachurch to the church are its process (ministry workflow), setting, teaching, and organizational structure.

With members all coming from different Christian churches, the HOP is multicultural in that sense, thus conflicts are likely to occur due to background differences. However, being a "strong culture" (Gehy, 2014) due to high similarity in personal values that bond members to come together in the first place, the HOP

capitalizes on its complementation with the church to strengthen good relations. Participants reveal two stages where emotional bonding are built. First is before and upon entry to the HOP when kindred spirits get introduced to one another, and second, membership and participation in the HOP where socialization, assimilation, complementation, and rapport-building leadership hone their relational competence as a group.

Framework on Intercession as Communication for Social Transformation

I propose a framework on how spiritual communication through intercessory prayers contributes to social transformation (Figure 10). Nevertheless, the identity aspired for is for the parachurch to be seen as not competing, replacing, or devaluing the church but rather complementing or supporting the church.

The Prayer Watch is the encompassing communicative activity where values, symbols, and meaning-making activities through intercessory prayers blend together to create the parachurch culture and identity for social transformation.

First, shared values, symbols, and communicative performances can build parachurch culture and identity.

Values encompass a common vision, mission, and role are the intangible things that members must learn by heart and embrace in their life and lifestyle. The parachurch's vision centers on a righteous and prosperous country free to fully adhere to Biblical standards of governance. Its mission is a deductive view of social transformation through intensive prayers at the spiritual realm as they believe that a just and humane governance leads citizens to the saving ways of God. The

parachurch members have their own roles and niches by focusing on praying for national and political issues rather than just evangelism.

The parachurch members share common **symbols** such as the prayer house itself, the intercessory prayer, and the parachurch or prayer leader. The shared symbols for intercessory prayer encompass its personal and communal nature; its forceful advances yet foregrounding; and its transforming power for the prayed and the praying person.

Lastly, the lead **prayer warrior** is a servant and an "apprentice" who has to fully depend on God and a "cultural transmitter" of what the parachurch is all about - at the forefront in the battle for social transformation, yet hidden and unassuming support (servant, helper) of the church.

Communicative performances. Communicative performances are the language and non-verbal forms of communicative acts performed during prayer watches. Although they are distinct from each other, they can also be overlapping, combining, compounding and pointing to each other. Hence, communicative acts can be very effective in initiating members to the parachurch's way of life.

Church-parachurch dynamics. The shared values, symbols, and communicative performances of the parachurch are influenced by the church-parachurch dynamics that include climate, innovation, and strategy.

The climate becomes more positive as the members get to know each other and bond for the common vision and mission of the parachurch and assume their roles. Aside from complementing each other's strengths and weaknesses as partner organizations, emotional bonding of members determine the church-parachurch

climate. This is a combination of perceptions and feelings of group members regarding their duties as intercessors and relationships with one's self and others. Positive emotions are brought about by praying as well as constructive conceptions on the House of Prayer, which sustain members' commitment to the group.

Finally, the prayer watch is the niche where church-parachurch dynamics exist, and where a strategy or "a way of ordering the world" is implemented by providing a framework that promotes the collective's values and standards. On this basis, stakeholders are motivated to believe and act in ways that are expected to produce favorable results for the organization" (Alvesson, 2013, p.83). Strategy focuses on how the organization effectively navigates through conflicts in the church-parachurch dynamics.

Conclusion

The culture, identity, and role of parachurches as prayer warriors for national transformation emerge from the melding of the values, symbols, and communicative acts of the church and the parachurch to complement, bond, and carve their niches in the spiritual world.

The relationship between the church and the parachurch can be seen as unifying yet separating and innovative but not competitive.

Separating yet connecting and unifying. The church and the parachurch share communities and resources, but the parachurch can establish its own niche where it can effectively fulfill its interdependent role with the church. It is interdependent with the church because its values stem from the church and all its members belong to the church, yet the parachurch as an organization functions on its own and can work

outside or across church denominations. Interdependence with the church enables the parachurch to be a supporter and connector of churches because it is not limited to the local church or congregational structure. Hence, the House of Prayer itself is the very location where members can achieve this interdependence. Physical separation from the church is the culture's way of shaping its own existence to effectively fulfill its role as a parachurch or support to church.

Innovative but not competitive. HOP's different approach to intercessory ministry does not seek to compete, replace or devalue the church: rather, it intends to complement or support the church. First, the HOP initiates to be the prayer arm in the church's social missions. Second, it offers rest to those actively serving in the church. The HOP's Prayer Watch has emerged as an innovative way of serving people in the church by being a restful sanctuary. Rest pertains to break from ministry or works to "sit at the feet of Jesus" and listen to Him. This posture depicts prayer and Word (Bible) spirituality which are keys in developing strong personal relationship with God.

Hence, the Watch is the system of achieving interdependence with the church by creating a niche where organizational strengths of the church and parachurch are maximized while limitations are complemented by each other.

In this church-parachurch communication field, the HOP leads in the forefront of intercession for the nation yet remains alongside with the church to enable the church to fulfill its mission. It practices ministry ethics with regard to church relations, promote good relationships of church pastors and their members, and identify conflicting areas in this niche and direct strategies to address these challenges. Communication opportunities as well as communication challenges -confining,

limiting, and conflicting realities - in the church-parachurch dynamics together continue building the HOP organization's culture and identity.

Implications and Recommendations

For the Parachurch Administrators

The intercessors of HOP operated mainly face to face as they prayed in the parachurch. Yet, during the pandemic, social media and other technology were very much useful for members' communication. However, the study failed to mention the role of technology (mobiles, Facebook, etc.) to connect and share and still perform communicative acts to sustain the organizational culture of prayer and identity as prayer warriors. Such new technologies can be used in prayer watches.

Intercession has become a global phenomenon in recent years among parachurches. Perhaps it is because the HOP in this study is relatively newly established that any globalization efforts have had no influence to shape or reshape its culture. It will be interesting to explore the role of globalization (and competition from international intercessory groups and especially those on media) on the praying culture of the HOP.

By identifying stakeholders and their specific needs, the HOP came up with strategized solutions that could be used to enhance the church-parachurch relationship. External-internal stakeholders (HOP members who are also church members) can prioritize the church and respect ministry limits and uniqueness. For external stakeholders (the church as a separate institution), they can invite church members instead of pastors in specific undertakings. Finally, among internal stakeholders (HOP members who do not experience ministry conflicts with the

church), strategies include volunteerism, partnership with other prayer houses, youth training, and flexibility.

For Communication Scholars

The new prayer warriors must first attend a seminar with a module to be oriented on what intercessory prayer is and how to be a prayer warrior for the nation. Aside from this, no other educational materials are mentioned that could guide the neophyte step by step, indicating that learning is through example, possibly mentoring, and through practice.

While being a prayer warrior needs spiritual conviction, it will not hurt to give practical advice through more educational materials and seminars (e.g., spiritual manual to being an intercessor) as well as to document all the FAQs (frequently asked questions) as reference for new prayer warriors.

The best practices on building a parachurch as well as the best prayer techniques and approaches can also be documented for future references and guides.

For Further Research

Findings showed an interconnection or networks of members from inside the church, from other churches and from the parachurch – or internal and external stakeholders or both. It will be interesting to explore a networked organization and see deeper the relationships of the various participants united in one mission to pray for the nation.

While the symbol of the leader showed what leadership traits are important for the parachurch to be effective, there has been no discussion on the role or

effectiveness of the founder of the HOP. What was his/her role before and even now is sustaining the parachurch's culture and identity?

The experiences of other parachurches in the country are worth exploring to strengthen their role in nation building.

The standpoint of the Evangelical church regarding parachurches can give a holistic picture of the organizational relationship of these two critical entities in spiritual growth of a nation.

The viewpoints of the public or church goers and non-church goers alike on prayers for social transformation and the role of spirituality and of churches can be explored.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A. Key Informant Interview Questions

SHARED VALUES

1. How do you want to see the Philippines in the future as an intercessor?
(Vision)
2. How will you explain to a person how your ministry (intercessory prayer for the nation) can accomplish your dream for the Philippines? (Mission)
3. As a parachurch, how would you describe your role vis a vis the church
(Role)?

SHARED SYMBOLS

1. What is the HOP to you?
2. What is intercessory prayer for you?
3. How do you view the prayer leader? How do you differentiate an HOP leader from a church pastor?

CLIMATE

1. What are your personal transformations in your journey as an intercessor?
2. How do you describe your relationship with the church? How do you create and sustain good relationships?

APPENDIX B. Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. How long have you been attending this House of Prayer? How do you feel about being a member of this parachurch?
2. A parachurch member can be described as a committed Christian who has made a decision that involves an above-average expression of their Christian faith. This person shows commitment to a lifestyle or ministry beyond church life. Since you are a parachurch member, what is your reflection or reaction to this definition?
3. What is the role of your church and what is the role of this group where you belong now in accomplishing the goal of social transformation?
4. What challenges have you experienced being a member of both the church and the parachurch? How could there be a good relationship between the church and parachurch?

APPENDIX C. Observations on Communication Components of the Prayer

Watch (adapted from Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013)

Communication Activity: Prayer Watch			
Date:			
Time Starts:		Ends:	
Gatekeeper:			
Component of Communication Activity	Category	Observations	Notes/Comments
Talk	Verbal behavior and interactions		
	Topic		
	Language		
Behavior	Physical behavior and gestures		
	People who stand out		
Situational Features	Appearance		
	Artifact		
	Physical setting		
	Symbol		

APPENDIX D. Communicative Performance Coding Guide

Code	Code description	Cultural Performance
A1	Personal rituals	Rituals
A2	Task rituals	
A3	Social rituals	
A4	Organizational rituals	
B1	Storytelling	Passions
B2	Personal Stories	
B3	Collegial Stories	
B4	Corporate Stories	
B5	Passionate Repartee	
C1	Courtesies	Sociality
C2	Pleasantries	
C3	Sociabilities	
C4	Privacies	
D1	Showing Personal Strength	Politics
D2	Cementing Allies	
D3	Bargaining	
E1	Learning and Teaching the Roles	Enculturation
E2	Learning and Teaching the Ropes	

APPENDIX E. Exemplar of Cultural Performance

I conducted participant-observations on five Watches in a span of three months to document the communicative acts as Cultural Performances in the House of Prayer. For analysis, a watch is divided into segments. A segment is a chunk of time where the start and end of a communicative act can be identified and separated from other acts.

This particular exemplar watch happened on August 14, 2021 from 9 in the morning to 12 noon at the rented space of the HOP. For analysis, the Watch is divided into three segments -Arrival (greetings, settling down of participants), Updates (giving of reports, briefing), and Word (Bible reading and discussion).

Table 1. Summary of Communicative Acts in Aug 14, 2021 (AM) Prayer Watch

Watch Date	Watch Segment	Cultural Performances
August 14, 2021 (9AM to 12PM))	Segment 1: Arrival/Settling down	Ritual-Task Enculturation-Learning and Teaching the Role Politics-Showing Personal Strength Passion-Personal Story Courtesies- Pleasantry, Privacy
	Segment 2: Updates	Passion- Passionate Repartee, Corporate Story Enculturation- Learning and Teaching the Rope, Learning and Teaching the Role Politics-Cementing Allies
	Segment 3: Word	Ritual- Organizational

Segment 1: Arrival/ Settling down

To perform the watches, gatekeepers and members have to physically go to the House of Prayer. The group adheres that Prayer Watches are to be strictly done at the HOP, not in homes, churches, other places, or even online despite this pandemic. By doing so, the group performs Enculturation, particularly Learn and Teach the Roles of the organization to new members by physically conducting the Watch at the House of Prayer. Physically going to the House of Prayer in small groups is the culture's way of maintaining its existence (as a separate location/structure from

the church) and adapting to outside forces such as legal restrictions and pandemic safety protocols.

The group believes that continuous physical gathering in small groups strengthens each other's passion to pray. Also, it protects members from tendencies to get spiritually lethargic, isolated, and fearful especially in this pandemic. Such tendencies can be observed in many churches today suffering organizational and ministry dysfunctions related to Covid 19 restrictions. Hence, the group fights for its mission and persists to overcome obstacles.

Other behaviors of the group, the signing of Log Book to monitor attendance, as well as posting monthly monitoring sheet in a very visible location at the House of Prayer, are a Ritual Performance, particularly Task Ritual. To help members commit on their volunteered prayer schedules, the group uses Attendance Logbook and Monthly Monitoring Sheet. Gatekeepers and members sign the logbook every time they perform their watches. Every month, a member of the group posts a monitoring sheet, which highlights accomplished as well as missed watches. The sheet also serves as announcement that there are still schedules not occupied, and so they may volunteer as a gatekeeper to that watch. The group's objective is to have enough Watches that would create non-stop prayer "covering" for Davao City.

These Enculturation and Ritual Performances show the group's perception of prayer as a process, meaning, how intercessory prayer works on a micro or personal life of an intercessor as well as macro level or community life. To accomplish its mission of social transformation through intercessory prayer, the group believes that commitment with one's (micro) duty and with each other as a community (macro) are necessary.

Hence, the artifacts (attendance logbook, monthly monitoring sheet) and physical setting, and how the group interacts with these indicates that Intercessory prayer works on the personal life of the intercessor through formation of values and character (faithfulness, dedication, sacrifice). Moreover, these artifacts, situational features, and behaviors also indicate commitment to group life.

A watch may begin with a *kumusta* (asking how is everyone) and *testimonies* (personal stories such as blessings one can be thankful for). Participant 5 opens the session with a call for testimonies. Because the assigned leader (Participant 3) for this particular watch has not yet arrived, Participant 5 encourages everyone to freely share since there is ample time to spare while waiting for Participant 3.

Participant 5's initiative to facilitate is a Politics performance, specifically, Showing Personal Strength. A member in the group steps in to a task when the one assigned to is not around. Hence Participant 5 feels free to volunteer, in this case, her leadership and facilitation skills in order to keep an activity going. This performance reflects how members live out the need to serve and be served, as well as how leadership is enacted through service.

The Saturday 9am to 12 noon Prayer Watch is grouped to accommodate the two new members. This watch is led by the HOP leader assisted by 3 other married couples who take turns each week partnering with the HOP leader. Such grouping enables watch members to easily relate with each other due to common situations- marriage and family, as well as assimilate the new member to the group by connecting them to other married couples in the HOP.

Another micro perspective view on the climate of the group is that the HOP serves as a "revival" place where a member meets, invites, and inspires kindred spirits. This is evidenced by the circumstances that led to the new married couple members' joining of this ministry. The group leader met the married couple through a parents-get-together activity of a club where their children are both members. After knowing each other's faith background and interests, the HOP leader invited the couple and their children to join the ministry, to which they did. Hence, these circumstances led to a positive micro perspective on the relationships in the group.

Grouping of members for prayer watches is a situational feature which can be described as ritual performance or practice to accomplish a task. The monthly monitoring sheets posted at the house of prayer show the different watch assignments. For members who do not hold paid jobs (e.g. housewives) or have flexible work schedule, they usually volunteer for morning watches while those who have office jobs conduct watches after office hours. Members who own vehicles also do watches at

night while members who commute hold theirs during the day. Hence, this particular way of grouping which considers safety, convenience, and flexibility is a task ritual strategized to accomplish the group's goal of 24/7 prayers for the nation.

Segment 1 serves as *Kumustahan* (greeting) or 'How are you?' portion (also called testimony time) in which members talk about family or personal issues such as their current home situations and challenges. The new members in this group are a married couple who have been attending for about a month now. During this segment, they share about how they are taking care of their sick parent, a coming family reunion, and some of wonderful things happening in their own church. This segment shows Passion and Courtesy Performances (Personal Story, Pleasantry, and Privacy) as well as Enculturation (Learn and Teach the Ropes). These performances picture the HOP as a home where the self learns to unwind in prayer.

For the new members, being part of a Watch is an Enculturation Performance, particularly Learning and Teaching the Ropes, as old members indirectly demonstrate to the new couple members that Watches are not only prayers or spiritual experiences but also fellowship and friendship. The testimony sharing helps members be at ease with God, self, and others as they offer attention and affirmation to one another. Hence, a view of the House of Prayer as a sacred place where one can enjoy intimacy with God and one another is being developed.

Such performances also reveal the HOP leader as an administrator who oversees the overall health of the group by having listening ears not only on organizational concerns but also family conditions or personal situations of members.

After the greetings and testimony time, the group leader arrives and apologizes for being late. She says that she was about to go to the prayer house when her husband asked for her help in sewing his ripped work uniform. In this Passion performance, the group leader's Personal Story reveals her personal trait as a "down-to-earth" and relatable leader who also struggles balancing her time between family and the intercessory ministry. Her openness communicates to everyone that authenticity and vulnerability are welcome in the HOP. This Passion Performance (Personal Story) enacted by Participant 3 is an evidence that leadership points members to the group's aspiration of healthy relationships with one another.

Table 2. Communicative Acts in August 14, 2021(AM) Prayer Watch

Segment 1: Arrival/ Settling down

ACTIONS	COMMUNICATIVE ACT	EXPLANATIONS
Signing of attendance log book and monthly monitoring sheet	Ritual (Task), Enculturation(Learn and Teach the Roles	These routines enable members to accomplish their duties as intercessors.
Physically going to the HOP		These activities help old and new members acquire social knowledge and skills to be competent members of the HOP.
Assistant leader voluntarily opens the Watch because the leader is late today.	Politics (Showing Personal Strength)	The behavior informs members that the watch is different from other group prayers such as chain or virtual prayer meetings.
Assistant leader displays personal skill or strength in facilitating a group		
Grouping of Participants 8 and 9 with married couples	Ritual (Task)	Helping new members feel welcome, accepted, and guided on how watches are carried out
Testimony/sharing on personal issues.	Passion (Personal Story, Courtesy (Pleasantry, Privacy), and Enculturation (Learning and Teaching the Rope)	Through their stories, members demonstrate to each other that the watches are not only for spiritual engagement but also showing care to one another.
Group Leader arrives, takes over the facilitation, and explains her lateness due to emergency family duty.	Passion (Personal Story)	Her story/explanation portrays the HOP leader as “normal” as any housewife. Her personal story reveals authenticity and vulnerability.

Segment 2: Updates

When greetings are done and the watch leader has finally arrived, the watch proceeds to the second segment as the leader gives ministry updates. Segment 2 reveals Passion, particularly, Passionate Repartee and Corporate Story. The terms

“mountain” and “prayer mountain” in the discussion are metaphors that reveal the group’s outlook on how prayer works to meet social needs. During this discussion, the HOP leader announces that soon, the group will check out a mountainous piece of land in Malabog, a rural area in the outskirts of Davao City because a local there donated a piece of land to HOP. This will be the location of the future construction of a house of prayer strategically located in a high place. This mountain will then be called a prayer mountain.

Participant 3 explains to Participant 9:

“Mountain is a strategic place to fight. The NPA(rebel group) goes there. When you are up there, you can see Bukidnon and Davao City.” (Aug14AMTrans, p.5)

In this Passion performance, Participant 3 who is the group leader explains the spiritual significance of a “mountain” when winning over the land for the Lord. She says that NPA’s (New People’s Army) would go to mountains since high places give them strategic battle offense and defense. Such is also the case in the spiritual realm where the group engages in warfare against evil influences. Hence, she is giving a spiritual explanation why the HOP members need to physically go to a far and even risky place to conduct prayer watches.

This exchange in the Segment 2 of this watch is a Passionate Repartee, which reflects how the group views intercessory prayer as a response to social need. There are two societal needs identified in the talk. The first is the need to be protected from evil influences. The conversation reflects how the group likens the HOP to a mountain as a refuge and fortress in the contention over the land between the forces of good and evil. The terms “mountain” and “prayer mountain” are argots that signify how victory in a war can be achieved through geographical advantage over the enemy. To be in a mountain or high place determines who wins.

For the HOP culture, mountain refers to a strategic high place where prayers of protection as well as blessings can be declared to the land. Thus the word “mountain” is both a symbol of the House of Prayer which is a “high place” in the spiritual realm. In the IFP (Intercessors of the Philippines) network, Houses of Prayers are developed

to rise as Prayer Mountains, a geographically bigger and “higher” network of intercessory prayers.

This talk component also shows Participant 5 (assistant leader) enculturating or introducing a new member on the common metaphors used by the group to help her make sense of the relevance of this community outreach to organization values. As Participant 3 informs the group on the plan for a prayer mountain in Marilog, Participant 5 cuts in the conversation by asking Participant 3 to explain to Participant 9 the group’s enthusiasm of choosing a high land as a prayer site. Participant 5 wants to make sure that new members Participants 8 and 9 (husband and wife) understand the significance of “mountain”. Hence, she interrupts Participant 3 and tells her to explain first to the couple why the group is excited with their “mountain talk”. Her behavior helps assimilate new members.

As Segment 2 continues, the conversation moves to the group's proposal on sponsoring a community pantry in Marilog. This part reveals the HOP's values, particularly their perceived mission which is social transformation through intercessory prayers. The group believes that prayers of declaration and petition pave way for God's blessings. These blessings are what a nation aspires such as prosperity and development.

During the conversation, a metaphor on the HOP as a “spring of living water” to the community is mentioned by Participant 3. She also announces to the group that the HOP is planning to give food, clothes, groceries and personal hygiene kits for the children in Malabog.

“We will go and bless the community with a community pantry. I saw the mountain spring there and I was reminded that the HOP is a spring of living water which will bring life to the community. This is the season where our light will shine so brightly. Our joy is now at the brim. We will overflow.” (Aug14AMTrans, p. 5)

She expresses that the HOP will bring life to the community in Malabog by calling the group “spring of living water”. Hence, the HOP sees its mission of intercessory prayer as channel of God’s blessing (abundance, redemption, restoration, renewal) in the community.

The metaphor “spring of living water” implies that God can intervene and provide better solutions than what government (kingdom of the world) can do to solve poverty and lack of basic services for the people in Marilog. Hence, when God blesses a community, he can override the limitations, hardships, and impossibilities in social development

Just like the metaphor “spring of living water”, the term “mountain” also connotes blessings. When rain pours in the mountain, water flows to bring refreshing to lower lands. Hence, an intercessor at the prayer mountain (physical elevation) has direct access to God and all His resources (spiritual elevation). The intercessor sees a gap or a discord between the good intentions of God to the land and the actual poor living of the people. Therefore, the intercessor positions himself by standing in this gap (in other words, praying) to ask God for these resources and channel them to the land. These argots flaunt how HOP members symbolize intercessory prayer on a microlevel perspective.

On the other hand, an HOP members does not only pray in his or her personal faith, but the faith of others in the group ignites one’s faith, hence, unity in prayer enables the HOP to have the courage and endurance in their pursuit for social transformation. On a macrolevel perspective, actual meeting in the HOP informs members that the ministry operates through communal learning and having a “physical base” where intercessors operate.

As the leader continues to lay down to the group what the HOP ministry will do to the tribal community in Malabog, she says: **“We will educate them with prayer for the nation.”** (Aug14Trans, p.5). This talk is a Passion Performance (particularly, Corporate Story) which promotes the ideology and values of the House of Prayer. She emphasizes that the HOP offers specialized teachings and practices on intercessory prayers for social transformation. Her statement reveals what kind of impact does the HOP want to see in the tribal community in Malabog. Their goal is more than evangelism or converting people to be christians. More so, their intention is to train the community to be intercessors for the nation.

Living out the HOP role in the body of Christ, a group value, is also emerging from this talk. The HOP has a unique role- a parachurch or church support. This is

evidenced by the group leader's emphasis that what they will establish in Malabog is a house of prayer, not a church. Hence, their primary goal is to reach churched people and teach them to be intercessors, not unchurched or unevangelized tribal people and convert them to Christianity which is the evangelistic function of the church. In this segment of the watch, the group members are informed of the HOP's complementing (not competing) relationship with the church.

The conversation also brings up meanings on what an intercessor does. This conversation enculturates members to the tasks expected of him or her, such as being educated on social and spiritual issues. In the Enculturation performance, the group leader emphasizes the group's goal of establishing a house of prayer in the tribal community and educating the people with prayers for the nation. This conversation shows that the HOP is being known to members as an organization that advocates national prayers (going beyond personal prayers) as well as extending the church primary responsibility of sharing the gospel (personal salvation) to social transformation. Another task of an intercessor is praying strategically for social and political issues with spiritual discernment. In a Passion performance, (Passionate Repartee) for instance, the group leader explains the spiritual significance of a "mountain" when winning over the land for the Lord.

As the segment prods on, a Politics performance (Cementing Allies) emerges as the group leader tells a new member that she is "hinog" (*ripe*) for this ministry (Aug14AMTrans, p.5). The term *ripe for ministry* connotes that this new attendee is considered an ally or one of the group as she has shown traits of an intercessor, such as faithfully availing of her time for prayer watches. To be identified as an intercessor, one must possess specific traits and values. The member responds with tears in her eyes as the group leader utters the recognition.

Finally, another communicative act- Passion Performance, notably, Corporate Story, surfaces at the end part of Segment 2. The sharing reflects an intercessor's understanding of him or herself as someone who is especially called by God to fulfill an assignment. The group leader uses the metaphor of the life of Moses who received God's call of freeing the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt (Aug14AMTrans, p.6). The book of Exodus informs readers that Moses underwent personal transformation in the first 40 years of his life as a powerful prince in Egypt to becoming a desert

nomad before he encountered God who speak to him from a burning bush on his special assignment. Just like Moses, HOP members also need to recognize and respond to this call.

Table 3. Communicative acts in Aug 14, 2021 (AM) Prayer Watch

Segment 2: Updates

ACTIONS	COMMUNICATIVE ACT	EXPLANATIONS
"Mountain is a strategic place to fight. The NPA(rebel group) goes there." The HOP as "spring of living water" to the community.	Passion (Passionate Repartee, Corporate Story)	"Mountain" and "spring of living water" are argots reflecting the HOP's perceptions of intercessory prayers for social transformation. These metaphors reflect group ideology.
Participant 5 telling Participant 3: "Explain to Participant 9 why mountain."	Enculturation(Learning and Teaching the Rope)	Helping a new member learn the significance of the metaphor "mountain" in spiritual warfare
"We will educate them with prayers for the nation."	Enculturation(Learning and Teaching the Rope)	The statement reinforces to members the vision, mission, and role of the HOP.
"Participant 9, you are ripe for this ministry."	Politics (Cementing Allies)	The group leader affirms Participant 9 by stating that she has what it takes to be an intercessor, thus, she is an ally.
Promised Land Account	Passion (Corporate Story)	The group believes that being an intercessor is a calling and alludes the Biblical account of Moses who was called to lead the nation of Israel. This is a metaphor on the organization's vision, mission, and role.

Segment 3: Word

The theme Microlevel scope of Intercessory Prayer is repeated in Segment 3 (Word) in this particular watch. Such cognition is brought about by segment of this Watch which is an online message the group participates in. The online activity is an Organizational Ritual called Soaring with the Scepter of Strength (SwSS), a 7 month-long intense worship, warfare, and fasting for the nation for the coming 2022 national election initiated by the Intercessors of the Philippines which umbrellas the 24/7 HOPs nationwide. Since the SwSS is a national event, it is done online. However, local HOPs still gather physically in their respective locations and join online together as one group. The Davao HOP participates in the SwSS, hence for today's Watch, the message is taken from the SwSS session.

In this online message, the speaker talks about Peace as a spiritual warfare weapon. In this pandemic, he instructs listeners (intercessors all over the Philippines) to declare God's shalom (peace) which he describes as "soundness of the body and mind, well-being" to declare life and healing to family members sick with Covid. He also urges listeners to use peace as "forward guard" (sending it ahead to homes where someone is sick. He gives an example of this to the audience:

"Lord, I speak peace to the family of my brother or sister so and so as he is being brought to the hospital now. Give the nurses or doctors peace and sound mind as they tend to him. Comfort the family member with the peace of Christ to overcome panic, fear, and angst associated with Covid sickness(Aug14AmTrans,p. 8)."

Hence, the HOP members believe that intercessory prayer transforms a helpless and weak person to one who has direct access to God's power and resources to meet every need and challenge, as well as someone who "stands in the gap" or assist someone troubled or sick. The organizational ritual enforces intercessory prayers symbolizing social transformation.

Table 4. Communicative acts in Aug 14, 2021 (AM) Prayer Watch

Segment 3: Word

ACTIONS	COMMUNICATIVE ACT	EXPLANATIONS
SwSS speaker: Peace as warfare weapon	Ritual (Organizational ritual)	A special national assembly of houses of prayers and intercessors

APPENDIX F. Strategy for Stakeholders to Enhance Complementation of Church and Parachurch

Prioritize the church

Among the strategies carried out by the group, three types have emerged based on the kind of stakeholders dealt with. The external and Internal stakeholders refer to the church organization and to the HOP members who are also church members.

Conflicts happen in schedules and ministries especially for participants who also hold leadership positions in their local churches. They resolve this by prioritizing the church. Participant 2 says that among her family and church friends who she has invited to the HOP, they follow one rule.

“We make sure it doesn’t conflict with the church because the church is really the priority. Our pastor understands because he was once a member of a prayer house too(P2, p.4).”

Participant 2 narrates that her Watch members are also members of the worship team in their church. She says that these members used to have problem with Saturday schedules because the HOP used to have big group meetings in the morning, which also conflicts with the Praise and Worship Saturday preparation in their church. Fortunately, she says that her group has already resolved the issue.

“We are blessed now because our worship team head also attends the prayer house, so he manages the schedule so that church practice schedules don’t overlap with the HOP. The Lord has arranged everything.” (P2, p.5)

Part of this strategy, according to Participant 2, is also weighing someone’s responsibility in the church and in the HOP. For instance, if the Watch member happens to be the Worship leader on a Sunday service, this member should not attend the HOP’s Saturday gatherings so he or she can devote her time and energy on the Saturday preparation in the church.

Another way to prioritize the church is to ensure that HOP members do not substitute HOP activities to church activities, says participant 1.

“In the prayer house, we are encouraging people not to stop attending prayer meetings in their own churches. We have different focus here.”(P1, p. 7)

Respect Ministry limits and uniqueness

In order to counter impacts that may lead to others and more serious conflicts, HOP members respect ministry limits and uniqueness, such as practicing ministry ethics. An example of this is setting percentage of time for the church ministry and for the HOP. Asked if it is possible to be an active member of both the church and HOP ministries, Participant 3 says that the key to unlock this issue is to know the duties of the church and the parachurch. She says she understands why some church members find this challenging because most of them have only experienced church life.

“I’m so privileged because God gives me opportunity to be part of a parachurch, so it was not difficult for me to understand the principles of church and parachurch.” (P3, p. 5)

She admits that being active in a church and still wanting to be active in a parachurch, one can undergo a perplexing transition. To do both, one thing needs to be settled.

“I have to ask the Lord where to render my service. It’s a question on where God wants you to render your service to Him. What is your assignment from Him?” (P3, pp.5-6)

She adds that for her part, she has already a clear answer to the question which helps her maneuver in the external and internal environments of the HOP. To strategically divide her time, she gives one Sunday a month to preach in her local church while she attends online (and not doing any ministry) on other Sundays. On other days, her work is focused on the prayer routines in the HOP. Hence, she suggests that an intercessor can allocate certain percentages of their time to the ministry they believe to be their personal assignment from the Lord (P3, pp.5-6).

They were also asked whether it is possible for a Christian to effectively juggle church and parachurch responsibilities, Participant 1 says it is possible as long as his or her church is also engaged in the similar ministry of the parachurch. For instance, churches with strong intercessory ministries are also participative in the IFP

endeavors. However, even if the HOP member's local church does not partner with IFP, he or she can still join the HOP. Participant 1 narrates how he was able to actively participate as a youth in a Worship and Dance parachurch while also being a church leader.

"I was not supported by my church to join parachurches, but I still fulfilled all my duties to my church, and on my own free time, I join other parachurches. But I did not leave my church. I did not leave any church work undone (P1, p.8)."

Participant 7 also adheres to this ethics.

"We must not neglect our local church. Whatever we learn here (HOP), we will apply it there (local church)."(FGD-DP2, p. 10)

For Participants 9 and 7, respecting ministry limits and uniqueness involves tact and prudence when inviting others to join the HOP ministry, introducing the HOP to church pastors, and prioritizing ministries.

"My brother is a church pastor, and I want to invite him (to the HOP) but I'm careful because we have protocol in this area." (FGD-DP2, p. 16)

"Just like what Participat 7 says, we cannot go above our pastors because they are the overseers (in the church)... there is a place for everything." (FGD-DP2, p. 19)

Participants point out that in order to reduce conflicts, there must be a clear understanding of the functions and boundaries of the church and the parachurch. According to Participant 6, for someone like him who was not really following Jesus as the Lord of his life in his early years, the church really played a big role in his spiritual growth.

"For me, the church is so important because of the pastor's role as a spiritual guide. My environment was different from yours. Maybe you grew up as true Christians, but I did not...I do need a pastor, someone who can be a confidante and accountability partner in my spiritual journey. Here in the HOP, on the other hand, the teachings are deeper and provide deeper insights on prayers for the nation." (FGD-DP2, p.19)

Participant 6 points out that when distinctions are clear, overlaps or repetitions in ministry are avoided, hence, giving way to a complementing relationship instead of competition.

Another strategy to maintain healthy relationships between external and internal stakeholders is to strike balance in church and parachurch commitments. With Participant 10's dilemma, Participant 13 suggests that Participant 10 needs to reach out to their pastors to explain her situation so the pastors need not wonder or worry about her absence in the church (FGD-DP, p.28).” **“There should be balance. As a member, you can explain to our pastors why you cannot attend our Saturday prayer meeting,”** she says.

Respecting ministry limits and uniqueness also means being ethical in dealing with church leadership and ministries, says Participant 9.

“When I bring our youth to activities outside the church, I would ask permission from our pastor. He would always allow me. You know why? I’ll tell you a secret. They can observe our loyalty. Just like parents. They would always give us permission to our activities when they see that we are mature enough to know our limits.” (FGD-DP2, p.32)

Participant 7 reminds everyone of the need to recognize and adhere to the specifics of each organization. Her statement informs fellow members that the HOP values and supports the church by not neglecting or competing with it. She adds that it is unbecoming to be a parachurch member at the expense of church membership.

“We should not forget our local church. It is not right to just do what is convenient for us. We follow protocols just like we have house rules. We must take care of our church.” (FGD-DP2, P. 37)

Strategy for External Stakeholder

There are also strategies for external stakeholders or the church.

Invite church members instead of pastors

Participant 3 says that the HOP used to believe that it would be easier to invite Christians to participate in the ministry of intercessory prayers for social transformation by getting the pastors' support. They hope that the pastors themselves will be the one

to mobilize some members of his congregation or the church intercessory team to hold some of the watches in order to complete the 24/7 prayer vision. Participant 3 says that she personally visited church pastors in an effort to connect and communicate with them the vision of the HOP. Some church leaders had negative perceptions and attitudes. Thus, Participant 3 realized that the prayer movement partnership does not have to be limited with the church. They changed their strategy.

Hence, she says that she now partners with any Christian, not necessarily a church leader or pastor, but someone who shares the same passion for prayers for governance.

“We are always on the lookout. We ask the Lord to bring us partners...I’m looking for people who will commit to this movement of 24/7. I am not manipulating people. I’m only inviting.” (P3, p.8)

Participant 3 believes that this strategy will target people like Participant 2 who can effectively balance church and parachurch memberships. To note, Participant 2 and her watch members are transparent with their church leaders regarding their Watch duties. Participant 3 hopes that all HOP members will reach the point where they can ethically conduct their mission as a support to the church.

Another strategy for creating partnerships, especially with churches whose pastors are not interested or passive with the HOP, is to partner with members who are “mature” enough to effectively tread on this thin line, says Participant 9.

“We can influence our pastor to support the HOP if they can see the good outcomes of our HOP membership. It would be better if the HOP will tap pastors instead of just members, but since other pastors do not fully grasp the significance of this parachurch yet, let us then be good examples to them as members.” (FGD-DP2, p.22)

Strategy with Internal Stakeholder

Some strategies are also for members of the HOP.

Practice volunteerism

Since the group relies on the volunteerism of its members, Participant 3 makes sure that their own needs in the group must be taken care of. The voluntary nature of the ministry is a way to prevent burn out and instill a positive climate, hence the member is only responsible to the specific task he or she committed to.

“Everyone is free. All are volunteers. We should not add more responsibilities to the members who are also church leaders. The Watch is already a big contribution of their time here in the HOP.”
(P3, p.7)

In the focus group discussion, Participant 10 shares about how her HOP attendance and absence in some church activities draw flak from her pastors. Participant 11 responds by gently requesting others to respect a church member's decision on the level of his or her participation in the HOP. She says that consideration must be given to church members who may not be able to fulfill all church requirements because of certain personal situations.

“We all have weaknesses. Nobody is perfect. So I hope this does not become an issue. We should not question what is voluntarily given. We all have reasons behind what we offer.” (FGD-DP2, p. 30)

Partner with prayer houses instead of church

Since partnership with church pastors is a hurdle, the HOP compensates by turning to other prayer houses in other parts of the country.

“One of the highlights of this ministry is that God partnered us with people who have led successful 24/7 ministry. This is big eye opener for me that we are in the right track. We are a part of them. We found a family. We are not strangers, so we no longer doubt what we do because there is already established community to learn from. We don't only see (community of prayer houses in Davao City), but we are aligned with (prayer houses in other parts of the Philippines), hence we are inspired.” (P3, p. 7)

Conduct youth training

Another strategy to achieve the 24/7 prayer advocacy is not only to recruit adult and spiritually mature Christians but also to train young people by instilling to them

love and concern for the nation. Participant 3 handles the youth group fellowship every Monday evening at the HOP. **“We are also training young people the value of prayer,”** (P3, p. 8) she says.

Practice flexibility

Finally, the innovative Watch gathering is also a very effective means of carrying out goals despite the threats of pandemic and restrictions which sorely affected big churches.

“We cannot be together in one social sitting due to pandemic, so we decide to do the Watches. In one day, for example, we have some watches, so we are scattered. We seldom meet as one big group.” (P1, p.5)

Table 1. Strategies For Internal and External Stakeholders

STRATEGIES	PARTICIPANTS
External and Internal stakeholders	
Prioritize the church	P2, P1
Respect ministry limits and uniqueness	P3, P1, P7, P9, P6, P13
External stakeholders	
Invite church members instead of pastors	P3, P9
Internal stakeholders	
Practice volunteerism	P3, P11
Partner with prayer houses beyond the church	P3
Conduct youth training	P3
Practice flexibility	P1