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EVANGELIZATION AT THE DIGITAL PLATFORM: COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICES OF A CLERGY

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9 September 2026

Acceptance Page

This paper prepared by **MAR PHILIPPE F. LOPEZ** with the title: **"EVANGELIZATION AT THE DIGITAL PLATFORM: COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICES OF A CLERGY"** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Development Communication.

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Biographical Sketch

Mar Philippe F. Lopez is a multimedia editor working in government, based in Quezon City, Philippines. He currently serves as a Multimedia Production Specialist at the UP System Media and Communication Office (MCO).

He earned his Bachelor of Science in Information Technology from the Philippine School of Business Administration, Quezon City. With a background in information technology, he developed a strong interest in the visual and creative dimensions of the field, focusing on multimedia design, front-end development, and UI/UX design.

He began his professional career as a Creative Arts Specialist at the Department of Science and Technology – Information and Communication Technology Office (DOST-ICTO), which later became the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT). During his tenure, he contributed to several major government digital initiatives, including the iGovPhil Project, GovNet, National Government Portal, eTravel, NBOSS, and eGovApp. His work primarily involved producing information, education, and communication (IEC) materials and contributing to the UI/UX design of these platforms.

He currently serves as a Media Production Specialist at the UP System Media and Communication Office, where he is primarily responsible for the development of digital content and information, education, and communication (IEC) materials in support of the University's mandate as the national university. His work involves

translating institutional priorities, programs, and initiatives into clear, accessible, and visually coherent communication materials across digital platforms. In this role, he contributes to strengthening the University's public communication by ensuring that content is not only visually engaging but also aligned with institutional standards, visual identity guidelines, and strategic messaging.

Alongside his professional work, he is an active member of the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice Media Ministry, where he contributes to digital evangelization by applying his multimedia skills in service of the Church. He also served as the first Head of the Media Ministry, helping establish its direction and initiatives.

Acknowledgement

This research would not have been possible without the guidance and grace of our Lord, who continually provided me with strength, clarity, and inspiration throughout the entire research process. In moments of uncertainty and difficulty, His presence sustained me and allowed me to persevere in completing this work.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to our Lord Jesus Christ, whose grace, wisdom, and unfailing presence guided me throughout this journey. In moments of doubt and difficulty, He became my source of strength and direction, reminding me to persevere and trust in His plan.

To my wife, Ain Khera, this work is dedicated to you, whose love and steadfast presence made every hardship manageable.

To my children, who give everything I do its deepest meaning: to my son, Luke Johannes Y. Lopez †, whose memory remains my quiet inspiration and guiding light; and to my daughter, Lyanna Jeanne Y. Lopez, growing in her mother's womb as I complete this work, bringing the promise of new hope and joy.

To my family and friends, I offer this accomplishment as a tribute to your constant prayers, belief, and presence in my life.

This work stands as a testament not only to my efforts, but to the faith, hope, and love that surrounded me throughout this journey.

Table of Contents

Title Page i

University Permission Page ii

Acceptance Page iii

Biographical Sketch iv

Acknowledgment v

Dedication vi

Table of Contents ix

ABSTRACT xi

CHAPTER I: RATIONALE
- Meaning of Religious Communication 1
- Nature and Purpose of Religious Communication 2
- Significance and Relevance of Religious Communication 3
- Use of Ethnomethodology in Religious Communication 4

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
- Technological Shift in Evangelization Practices 6
- Digital Evangelization in the Catholic Church: Global and Local Perspectives 9
- Development Communication for Digital Evangelization 13
- Summary 15

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS
- Research Questions 16
- Ethnomethodology as Research Framework 16
- Gap in the Knowledge Body 18

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY
- Conversation Analysis Approach 23
- Unit of Analysis: Digital Homily 24
- Data Collection 24
- Full Transcription of the Homily 26
- Analytical Table: Excerpts, Codes, Sub-themes and Themes 30

CHAPTER V: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Digital Communicative Practices of the Clergy Promoting Laity Engagement 39
Linking Digital Communicative Practices in Digital Evangelization to the Literature and Expanding Understanding of Audience Engagement 48
Development Communication Principles Underpinning Clergy Communicative Practices 52
Expanding Development Communication 63

CHAPTER VI: RESEARCH SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION
Research Summary 69
Research Conclusion 71
Recommendation 75

REFERENCES 79

DECLARATION OF AI USE 82

Abstract

This study examines how Catholic clergy construct digital evangelization content as an interactionally engaging communicative event within online spaces. Approached through ethnomethodology and conversation analysis, the research focuses on the micro-level practices by which seemingly monologic evangelization content, such as a pre-recorded homily, is organized as a participatory experience. A recorded digital homily was transcribed and analyzed line-by-line to identify recurring communicative strategies. The findings indicate that the clergy employs rhetorical questioning to simulate dialogue, utilizes personalization and inclusive address to establish shared identity, integrates bilingual code-switching to enhance cultural resonance, draws on narrative and imagery to clarify meaning, conveys an empathetic tone to build connection, and invites communal participation.

A major methodological contribution of this research is demonstrating how implicit turn-taking and cognitive participation can be systematically analyzed in a structurally monologic, one-way digital format. By utilizing embedded question-and-answer sequences, the clergy successfully executes implicit turn-taking that happens entirely in the mind of the audience. This structural choice momentarily opens a cognitive response slot, mentally "giving the floor" to the viewer and forcing the audience out of passive listening into active, internal cognitive participation

Interpreted through a development communication (DevCom) perspective, these micro-level practices reflect the underlying principles of dialogue, participation, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment. **Ultimately, the study concludes that because digital evangelization is inherently guided by these underlying development communication principles, the practices of physical and digital evangelization remain fundamentally the same. This convergence provides profound confidence that transitioning from a physical space to a digital platform does not water down the messages and teachings of the Gospel. Instead, it preserves the purity of the message and proves that the core of the Church's mission, fostering genuine encounters and shared understanding rather than one-way proclamation, remains intact and powerful regardless of the medium**

Chapter 1:
Rationale

Meaning of Religious Communication

Religious communication refers to the many ways individuals express and share experiences connected to the sacred or to a sense of higher meaning. The term spiritual commonly refers to the human spirit, personal values, or a connection to something greater than oneself, whereas communication denotes the exchange of thoughts, feelings, or information. In this sense, religious communication encompasses practices such as prayer, meditation, storytelling, the use of symbols, and rituals that help individuals articulate and deepen their relationship with the divine or the transcendent. It functions as both a personal expression of faith and a communal process of nurturing identity, belonging, and shared meaning within a spiritual or religious community.

Beyond being a mere conduit for information, religious communication acts as a vital, reflexive framework that shapes the believer's worldview. It is a 'living bridge' that connects the interior life of the spirit with the external, often secularized, realities of daily existence. This communicative process is inherently dialogic; it requires a reciprocity between the speaker and the receiver, whether in the form of a shepherd and his flock, or a shared, digitally mediated reflection. By harmonizing theological doctrine with lived experience, religious communication serves to make the sacred accessible, transforming abstract beliefs into tangible, actionable commitments. Consequently, it does not merely preserve tradition; it actively fosters a culture of

encounter where individuals are invited to translate their faith into virtues, ultimately catalyzing personal and social change that resonates within both the individual heart and the broader communal environment.

This form of communication is often delivered in a physical and face-to-face interaction with the pastor and the laity. Spiritual communication takes various forms, but it has only one purpose: to deepen an individual's relationship with the Lord. Through this, individuals experience social change, transforming their actions and behaviors to align with Church teachings. Consequently, members engage in collective action to improve themselves and the environment in which they live.

Nature and Purpose of Religious Communication

Since religious communication connects our inner spirit to our everyday life, it acts as an active, moving process. It is not just about storing up information about religion; it is about bringing that message to life. In a religious setting, communication is meant to be relational and transformative. Its main goal is to build community and bring people together. It does not happen in isolation; instead, it helps create an environment, both in person and online, where people feel safe to have meaningful, deep conversations.

Because of this, the purpose of religious communication is much bigger than just sharing facts or rules. It is a mission to share the Good News and invite others to connect personally with the divine. By sharing religious stories, symbols, and values,

the communicator helps connect individuals into a shared sense of compassion and truth. It turns private, individual beliefs into a shared experience that everyone can witness.

Those who share this message act as guides. They use kind and honest words to offer hope to a world that often feels uncertain. As Pope Francis has noted, communication should not spread fear or false promises; it should give people reasons to be hopeful and help build stronger communities. In short, the goal of religious communication is to share the Gospel, help create a vibrant community of faith, and guide people toward a life-changing relationship with God (Schmitt, n.d.).

Significance and Relevance of Religious Communication

Studying how spiritual messages are shared is important because religion and media meet in almost every part of our lives today. This is not just a modern issue, as religious communication has played a big role in history for a long time. For centuries, the need to share faith has been a main reason why communication tools have grown. From the early days of writing on scrolls and the invention of the printing press to the start of radio and television, the desire to reach believers pushed people to create and improve ways to connect across long distances.

This history shows that religious groups did not just use technology, they often helped lead the way in changing the communication landscape. By trying to reach people far away with a message of hope, religious communication taught societies

how to share ideas on a large scale. This constant drive to share the spirit continues today in our digital world. In a time when online spaces can sometimes feel lonely or uncaring, religious communication reminds us that technology can be a place for real human connection. It shows that digital tools can be used for kindness and belonging, rather than just for information or profit.

Because of this, researching this topic is very timely. It shows how the old task of sharing faith is changing to fit the twenty first century. This study is important for a few reasons. It helps us see how faith stays strong in a digital age, how moral messages can spread in many different communities, and how we can use technology for meaningful connection. By looking at this, we learn how to keep the human side of communication alive, which is a lesson that can help everyone, no matter what they believe.

Use of Ethnomethodology in Religious Communication

Historically, the study of religious communication has often focused heavily on the theological content of the message or the macro-level impact of media on church communities. For instance, recent studies have thoroughly examined how Catholic parishes maximized social media to safely administer spiritual needs during global crises (Gozum & Sarmiento, 2021), and how these digital platforms function as "figured worlds" for the discursive construction of parish life and identity (Tenedero, 2025). Additionally, studies on digital religion have documented how the Internet

shifts traditional religious hierarchies toward more networked, personalized, and horizontal possibilities (Campbell, 2012).

However, as religious practices continue to migrate to and solidify within digital spaces, there is a growing necessity to understand not just what is being communicated or the broad outcomes of these platforms, but exactly how these digital interactions are interactionally structured. This is where ethnomethodology emerges as a highly relevant and precise lens for religious communication.

By viewing digital evangelization through an ethnomethodological perspective, the research focus deliberately shifts to the micro-level, specifically, the "taken-for-granted" communicative practices that the clergy actively use to foster connection. Rather than treating communication merely as the linear transmission of theological facts, this approach views it as an ongoing social act where "negotiated or collective meaning is produced, circulated and consumed by social actors" (Nyamnjoh, 2016).

Introducing this perspective allows researchers to perceive digital religious content not as static, one-way broadcasts, but as dynamic, socially organized actions. It justifies the need to reveal the invisible, interactional work the clergy performs to invite audience participation, demonstrating that making mediated faith an engaging and shared reality requires highly practical, everyday conversational methods

Chapter 2:
Review of Related Literature

Technological Shifts in Evangelization Practices

Evangelization and the Transmission of Faith

Passing on faith, religious teachings, values, and experiences lies at the heart of religious communication; indeed, in Catholicism, the transmission of faith is explicitly described as the goal of evangelization (Gozum & Sarmiento, 2021). Preaching the Word of God has always been the purpose of the Church, but the concept of evangelization goes beyond mere proclamation; it focuses on transforming individuals to build a better society. As Pope Paul VI pointed out in Evangelii Nuntiandi, evangelizing means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation, seeking to convert both individuals and society by the power of the Gospel (Paul VI, 1975, as cited in Gozum & Sarmiento, 2021),. In response to a fast-paced and ever-changing modern society, Pope John Paul II urged a "New Evangelization," which calls upon all Catholics to deepen their faith, believe in the Gospel message, and actively go forth to evangelize (USCCB, 2021, as cited in Gozum & Sarmiento, 2021),. Consequently, the transmission of faith is viewed not just as an inheritance but as a dynamic, communal act where the faithful are not just recipients, but active participants in the Church's evangelizing mission.

The Historical Evolution of Religious Mediation

Religion and communication technology have always been inherently linked. Historians and communications anthropologists argue that human beings can't perceive, experience, or practice any religion without applying some form of communication technology (Sumiala, 2024). From early rock paintings, shamanic ritual drumming, and handwritten scriptures to the revolutionary impact of the printing press, religion has always been mediated (Sumiala, 2024). The Church itself has historically utilized whatever means of communication were available at any given period. This reflects an ongoing evolution from oral transmission and the systematic manual copying of Bibles to mechanical printing, theater, radio, television, cinema, and eventually the current use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (Gaston, 2022).

The Digital Shift: From Broadcasting to Networked Religion

While early mass media (like print and television) were primarily one-way, one-to-many channels controlled by religious authorities and institutions, the advent of the Internet radically altered this paradigm (Sumiala, 2024). The Internet brought about networked, horizontal possibilities that gave rise to new religious actors and created new public spheres for discussing religion (Sumiala, 2024). Consequently, religious communication transformed into a global, digital, and mobile affair.

Scholars initially categorized this digital intersection into two distinct types: "religion online," where established religious institutions import traditional practices into digital contexts, and "online religion," which refers to digitally "born" forms of creating new religious practices (Helland, 2000, as cited in Sumiala, 2024). However, recent studies argue that the separation between offline and online domains is blurring. We have now entered an "onlife" era, a term coined by Luciano Floridi, characterized by the deep digital saturation of contemporary life, where the digital and the physical exist in a dialectic relationship (Floridi, 2015, as cited in Sumiala, 2024),. Heidi Campbell (2012) describes this contemporary landscape as "networked religion," which is defined by traits such as networked community, storied identities, and shifting authority (Campbell, 2012). In networked religion, traditional religious rituals become highly malleable and interconnected, reflecting broader cultural shifts toward individualized and "lived" religion (Campbell, 2012),.

Digital Mediatization and its Boundaries

Despite the rapid adoption of digital tools, the Church approaches technological mediatization with careful discernment. Pope Francis, in his encyclical Laudato Si', acknowledged the benefits of the digital revolution but warned that technological products are not neutral; their underlying logic can dominate lifestyles and lead to spiritual impoverishment through isolation and fragmentation (Pope Francis, 2015, as cited in Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025),. Similarly, the Spanish Episcopal Conference noted that the digital ecosystem

risks becoming a "digital swarm" of isolated individualities that causes spiritual impoverishment rather than fostering true community (CEE, 2021, as cited in Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025).

Therefore, while the Catholic Church heavily utilizes digital tools for administrative management, faith proclamation, and community support, the total digital mediatization of the celebration of sacraments remains an open and highly debated issue (Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025),. Ultimately, the digital space is no longer viewed as a parallel universe, but as an essential component of existential reality. Social media platforms like Facebook have become a new 'agora', a modern public square for politics, commerce, and spiritual dialogue (Galang & Galang, 2021).

Digital Evangelization in the Catholic Church: Global and Local Perspectives

Global Trends and Church Initiatives in Digital Media

Over the past two decades, the Catholic Church has increasingly embraced digital media as a new arena for its mission (Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025). The Internet is often described by Church leaders as a new continent for evangelization, an expansive mission field where the Gospel must be proclaimed (Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025),. Pope John Paul II urged the faithful to enter the online world (Gozum & Sarmiento, 2021), and Pope Benedict XVI later affirmed that social networks can be a means of evangelization and

community-building, especially in contexts where Christians feel isolated (Galang & Galang, 2021; Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025),. More recently, Pope Francis has encouraged clergy to “meet people where they are” (DeBoard, n.d.), acknowledging that the digital environment can foster genuine connection and dialogue (Galang & Galang, 2021; Izquierdo-Iranzo, 2025),.

Scholars of digital religion confirm that online religious engagement is now mainstream. Heidi Campbell (2012) describes this era as one of “networked religion,” marked by networked communities and shifting, fluid authority. Izquierdo-Iranzo (2025) notes that while the Catholic Church's digitalization is somewhat decentralized, there is strong institutional and grassroots acceptance for using digital platforms to proclaim the faith and support believers. Digital ubiquity has successfully expanded the spaces for religious practice, allowing communities to pray and experience faith together even when geographically dispersed.

The Philippine Context and Digital Adaptation

In the Philippines, a country that is highly active on social media, digital evangelization has taken on special pastoral urgency. Bishop Pablo Virgilio David (2022), President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, highlighted social media as a "perfect opportunity for evangelization". He emphasized that utilizing these platforms is not about building personal fame or popularity, but rather about making the Word of God accessible to as many people as possible.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the Philippine Church made swift use of digital media to maintain spiritual life. Gozum and Sarmiento (2021) found that Filipino parishes maximized platforms like Facebook and YouTube to conduct virtual Masses, rosaries, and catechetical activities, allowing the faithful to fulfill their spiritual needs safely at home. They concluded that this digital shift should remain a "model going forward" for inclusive evangelization. Similarly, Galang and Galang (2021) argued that social media, when used ethically, becomes a powerful tool in the Church's mission, likening digital platforms to the ancient Greek agora, a new public square for spiritual dialogue and community action.

The Shift to Online Ministry: Insights from Gaston (2022)

The acceleration of digital evangelization during the pandemic is profoundly captured in the work of Gaston (2022), who conducted a transcendental phenomenological study on Filipino chaplains in Italy. Gaston examined the lived experiences of these chaplains as they transitioned from traditional offline pastoral care to a heavily online ministry due to severe COVID-19 lockdowns. The study reveals that this shift to online ministry was viewed not as an anomaly, but as a direct part of the historical evolution of Church communication. Gaston emphasizes that Information and Communications Technology (ICT) served as a vital complement to, rather than a replacement for, face-to-face communication.

Crucially, Gaston’s (2022) findings highlight that communication "does not only convey reality, but creates it". The pandemic communicated fear, creating a lockdown reality; in response, the chaplains and the migrants collaboratively created a new digital reality to sustain their faith. The migrants spontaneously organized online groups for prayers, Biblical reflections, and reaching out to the needy, demonstrating active lay participation. For the chaplains, navigating this shift brought a profound sense of fulfillment, as ICT allowed them to maintain closeness with their flock and reach even more people than they did before the pandemic. Gaston's study underlines that even in mediated environments, pastoral presence and human connection can be powerfully sustained through intentional digital communicative practices.

Parish Facebook Pages as Figured Worlds: Insights from Tenedero (2025)

Complementing the phenomenological perspective is the study of Tenedero (2025), who investigated the Facebook page of a Philippine Catholic parish as a "figured world". Tenedero shifts the view of social media from a mere tool for self-expression to a dynamic locus of cultural and social construction. In this context, Facebook serves as the platform for the "digital staging of Catholic parish life," enabling the discursive (re)construction of church purpose, participation, interaction, and identity.

Tenedero (2025) identified that the communicative actions on the parish Facebook page primarily serve to inform, inspirit, and invite the faithful. The study characterizes the online interactions between the clergy, parish administrators, and the laity as defined by "banal positivity, solidarity, and fluidity". This supportive digital environment reflects the essence of community life, extending the physical parish into the virtual realm. By democratizing participation and flattening traditional hierarchies, the digital space allows both active parishioners and casual followers to co-create the parish's online identity. Tenedero's findings demonstrate that social media platforms are crucial spaces where the Catholic faith is actively practiced and reshaped, holding significant implications for the Church's missiological trajectory in the Global South.

Development Communication for Digital Evangelization

To fully understand the transformative nature of these digital evangelization practices, it is essential to anchor them in the framework of Development Communication (DevCom). Quebral (2012) defines development communication as "the art and science of human communication linked to the transitioning of communities from poverty in all its forms to a dynamic, overall growth that fosters equity and the unfolding of individual potential". At its core, DevCom is "communication with a social conscience".

Unlike traditional mass communication, which is often media-centric and source-oriented, DevCom is inherently message-centric and audience-oriented. It is characterized by three core values: it is purposive (aiming to influence behavior and achieve specific social goals), pragmatic (results-oriented), and value-laden (carrying underlying social and moral values). DevCom practices advocate for participatory communication, dialogue, community organizing, and empowerment.

The intersection between religious communication and DevCom is highly pronounced in the context of digital evangelization. The communicative practices of the clergy online, such as organizing digital communities, fostering two-way dialogue, and employing culturally sensitive messaging, mirror DevCom's participatory principles. As Gaston (2022) observed, chaplains utilized digital platforms to mobilize migrants for mutual support and spiritual resilience, effectively engaging in social mobilization. Similarly, Tenedero's (2025) identification of "solidarity and fluidity" in online parish interactions aligns with DevCom's goal of non-hierarchical communication and collective ownership, enabling the laity to co-create the parish's online identity.

Furthermore, drawing on Hemer and Tufte's (2016) concept of 'voice and matter'—which suggests that granting marginalized individuals a digital voice is a fundamental step toward social change—this study extends their framework to demonstrate how these interactive platforms simultaneously facilitate spiritual upliftment. Therefore, examining digital evangelization

through an ethnomethodological and DevCom lens allows researchers to see beyond the theological message. It reveals how the clergy strategically utilizes digital tools to democratize participation, empower the laity, and construct resilient, interactive communities of faith, setting the theoretical stage for analyzing the specific micro-level interactions that make this possible.

Summary

The literature demonstrates that digital evangelization is not merely a technological adaptation but a profound transformation of communicative practice. From global Church mandates to localized implementations during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the Church has actively embraced the digital landscape. Gaston's (2022) phenomenological study proves that clergy use digital spaces to create new realities of pastoral care, achieving fulfillment through expanded, resilient outreach. Concurrently, Tenedero's (2025) analysis reveals that these digital spaces function as "figured worlds" where church identity, solidarity, and participation are discursively co-constructed by the clergy and the laity. Finally, underpinning these practices are the core principles of Development Communication, which frame these digital interactions as purposive, participatory, and empowering social actions. Building upon this foundation, the current study utilizes an ethnomethodological framework to analyze the specific micro-level conversational strategies that the clergy employ to achieve these macro-level developmental and spiritual goals

Chapter 3:
Research Framework and Research Questions

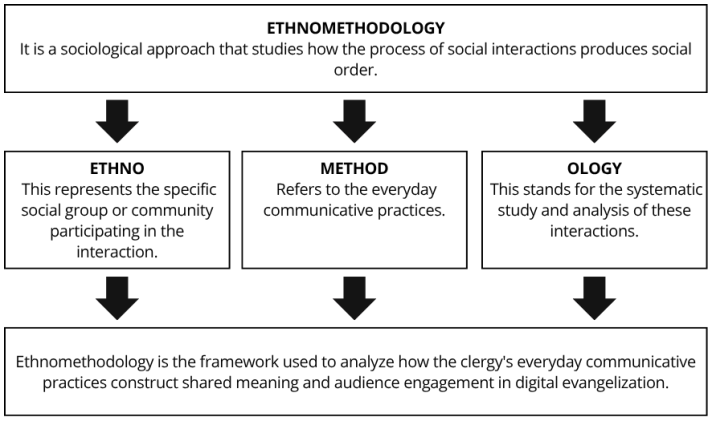
Research Questions

The study seeks to explore the interactional work through which priests make their evangelization online both understandable and authoritative. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

1. What digital communicative practices of the clergy promote engagement of the laity in parish communities?
2. What development communication principles or perspectives underlie such communicative practices?

Ethnomethodology as Research Framework

Figure 1
Ethnomethodology as Research Framework



The present study adopts Ethnomethodology as its research framework for examining the communicative practices of the clergy in digital evangelization. Ethnomethodology, pioneered by Harold Garfinkel, is a sociological approach that

investigates how individuals use everyday methods to make sense of, produce, and sustain social order in interaction. It shifts the focus from what interactions are to how interactions occur, paying special attention to the "taken-for-granted" practices that people use to construct sensible and orderly ways of doing things in their daily routines. Through this lens, communication is not merely the linear transmission of information, but rather "the process of production of meaning, through symbolic action" (Nyamnjoh, 2016).

This framework relies on the premise that meaning is not fixed but is heavily dependent on social context and interaction. As highlighted by Ongkiko and Flor (1998) in development communication theory regarding symbolic interaction, language operates as a system of symbols people use to describe experiences, meaning that "meaning is personally constructed" based on specific perceptions and backgrounds. In mediated environments, communication functions as a social act where "negotiated or collective meaning is produced, circulated and consumed by social actors" (Nyamnjoh, 2016). Thus, communication is viewed as a continuous "two-way, multi-dimensional activity" where participants actively organize meaning using familiar communicative practices, even when lacking physical co-presence.

Applied to digital evangelization, ethnomethodology allows the study to move beyond examining the theological content of messages and instead focus on how communicative acts are produced as meaningful forms of interaction. By treating the pre-recorded digital homily as a natural document, the study can extract deep

meanings regarding how clergy navigate digital platforms to foster engagement. This aligns with contemporary perspectives that view social media not merely as a tool for self-expression but as a dynamic environment for the "discursive (re)construction" of church interaction, participation, and identity (Tenedero, 2025).

From this perspective, social reality is treated as something continually produced and reproduced through everyday interactions. To systematically observe this, Conversation Analysis (CA) serves as the methodological tool to examine the micro-level architecture of how the clergy structures messages to invite interpretation and alignment from the audience. Ultimately, this framework offers a precise lens for understanding how the clergy's communicative practices serve as practical methods that facilitate engagement, understanding, and a sense of shared experience in a mediated environment.

Gap in the Knowledge Body

Existing literature has extensively explored the macro-level implications of digital religion and the Church's migration to online platforms (Campbell, 2012; Gozum & Sarmiento, 2021). Recent studies have significantly contributed to our understanding of this phenomenon, such as how social media platforms function as a "figured world" for the discursive construction of Catholic parish life (Tenedero, 2025) and the phenomenological lived experiences of the clergy as they shifted from offline to online ministries during global crises (Gaston, 2022). Furthermore, studies on digital religion have thoroughly documented the historical evolution of religious mediation,

emphasizing how the Internet has transformed traditional hierarchical communication into networked, horizontal possibilities (Campbell, 2012).

However, a significant gap exists in understanding the micro-level conversational architecture that makes this digital engagement successful. While earlier studies have focused primarily on what digital platforms achieve for the Church, such as building solidarity or extending pastoral care (Tenedero, 2025), there is a scarcity of research investigating exactly how the clergy interactively organize their talk to accomplish this. Specifically, previous research often treats pre-recorded digital evangelization content as static, one-way broadcasts. There is a lack of micro-analytic examination detailing the taken-for-granted communicative strategies clergy employ to transform structurally monologic content into an interactionally engaging, participatory experience.

Furthermore, while current studies recognize the democratizing and community-building power of online religious spaces, these phenomena have rarely been examined through the theoretical lens of Development Communication (DevCom). A gap remains in bridging ethnomethodological practices with the macro-level DevCom principles.

This study addresses these gaps by employing Conversation Analysis to uncover the specific, everyday communicative practices used by the clergy in a mediated environment, and by anchoring these micro-level interactions within the DevCom

paradigm to prove that effective digital evangelization is fundamentally a collaborative, development-oriented social action.

Explanation of the Framework

The diagram outlines the logical flow of the research, moving from the baseline phenomenon to the ethnomethodological framework, the conversation analysis, the core variables, and finally, the transformed outcome.

1. **Digital Evangelization Content**
    a. The framework begins with the unit of analysis: the pre-recorded digital homily. By its technological nature, a pre-recorded homily is structurally monologic—a one-way transmission of religious doctrine without the physical co-presence of an audience or the capacity for immediate, synchronous feedback.
2. **Ethnomethodological Framework**
    a. To understand how this monologic content becomes engaging, the study applies Ethnomethodology. Rather than looking at communication merely as the transfer of information, ethnomethodology views it as a practical accomplishment where meaning is continuously achieved through the interactional work of the participants. It focuses on the "taken-for-granted" everyday methods that individuals use to make sense of and

sustain social order in their interactions. Through this lens, the digital homily is treated not as a static product but as a socially situated activity that requires active organization to be recognizable and meaningful to the laity.

3. **Conversation Analysis (CA)**
    a. Acting as the bridge between theory and data, Conversation Analysis (CA) serves as the micro-analytic tool to examine the naturally occurring talk within the homily. CA allows the researcher to scrutinize the homily line-by-line, moment-by-moment, to uncover the hidden architecture of the interaction.
4. **Communicative Practices and DevCom Principles**
    a. The framework splits into two interconnected pillars representing the study's dual research questions:
        i. **Micro-Level Communicative Practices (RQ1):** Through CA, the study extracts the specific, observable conversational strategies the clergy uses. Rather than pre-defining these practices, the analysis allows the recurring discursive and interactional methods employed during digital religious content to emerge naturally from the data. The focus is on identifying exactly how the clergy organizes their talk to construct meaning and sustain audience engagement in a mediated setting.

ii. **Underlying DevCom Principles (RQ2):** The framework suggests that these micro-level practices are not random; they are intrinsically underpinned by underlying Development Communication principles. As indicated by the two-way arrow in the diagram, there is a direct operational relationship between the two pillars. This means that whatever specific interactional strategies are discovered through CA will be subsequently analyzed to understand how they operationalize overarching DevCom values, such as dialogue, participatory communication, equality, and empowerment, in the digital space.

5. Interactionally Engaging Communicative Event

a. The convergence of the clergy's micro-level communicative practices and their underlying DevCom principles results in the final outcome at the bottom of the diagram. The framework illustrates that when these elements are actively employed, the structurally one-way digital homily is successfully transformed into an interactionally engaging communicative event. Ultimately, the audience is empowered and repositioned from passive receivers of a religious broadcast into active co-participants in a shared dialogue of faith.

Chapter 4:
Methodology

Conversation Analysis Approach

The study employs a qualitative, exploratory research design using Conversation Analysis (CA) as the primary analytical method. Conversation Analysis is a micro-analytic approach that examines naturally occurring talk in fine detail, focusing on how communicative interactions are organized moment by moment. It allows the researcher to analyze how meaning is constructed through the sequencing of talk, including features such as pauses, emphasis, and patterns of delivery.

In this study, the analysis focuses on how communicative practices are structured in a mediated setting. Through repeated viewing and detailed transcription, the researcher examines how specific features of communication contribute to the organization of meaning and the construction of engagement.

The approach is inductive and interpretive. Rather than testing predefined hypotheses, patterns are allowed to emerge from the data through systematic observation and analysis. This enables the identification of recurring communicative practices that shape how messages are delivered and understood.

Unit of Analysis: Digital Homily

The unit of analysis of this study is a pre-recorded digital homily produced by clergy and distributed through online platforms. The homily is treated as a communicative event in which meaning is organized and presented in a mediated environment.

In this context, the homily is not approached solely as a religious message but as an instance of social interaction. When a priest speaks into a camera, greets viewers, or modulates tone and delivery, these actions function as communicative practices that contribute to making the message recognizable and meaningful to an audience. These practices reflect how speakers draw on familiar and socially understood methods to sustain engagement despite the absence of physical co-presence.

By examining transcripts of these homilies, the study is able to analyze how communication is organized through specific patterns. These include how messages are structured to invite interpretation, how emphasis is created through delivery, and how communicative actions are designed to align with the audience's expectations. Even in a mediated and seemingly one-way format, the homily can be understood as an interactional accomplishment in which meaning is actively constructed.

Data Collection

The data for this study are gathered through the transcription and close analysis of pre-recorded digital evangelization videos produced by clergy. These materials are

sourced from official parish-affiliated social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube.

The selected video captures both verbal and non-verbal communicative elements, allowing the researcher to examine how speech, gesture, tone, and visual cues contribute to the construction of meaning. The recordings are transcribed in detail to preserve features relevant to the analysis.

To ensure relevance and consistency, the following inclusion criteria guide the selection of materials:

- **Publicly accessible:** The video must be intentionally edited or uploaded for digital distribution and publicly available on an official or parish-affiliated social media account.
- **Audio-visual clarity:** The recording must possess sufficient sound and image quality to allow accurate transcription of both verbal and non-verbal features.

These criteria will ensure that the collected data represent authentic, context-appropriate examples of the clergy's digital evangelization practices.

Full Transcription of the Homily

This section presents the full transcription of the selected homily that serves as the primary data for this study. The transcript provides the complete verbal content of the homily delivered during the Sinulog celebration and constitutes the empirical basis for the subsequent conversation analysis. Presenting the full transcript allows readers to examine the original communicative context from which the analytical excerpts in the succeeding sections are drawn.

Feast of the Santo Nino Homily Transcription:

1. Maligayang Kapistahan po sa atin! (Happy Feast Day to all of us!)
2. Ang isang batang mahimbing na natutulog (A child sleeping soundly)
3. sa bisig ng kanyang magulang, eh hindi nag-aalala (in the arms of his parent, does not worry)
4. kung may pagkain ba bukas, (.) (if there is food for tomorrow,)
5. o kung may pambayad ba ng kuryente, ng tubig, ng utang, (or if there is money to pay for electricity, water, debt,)
6. o kung anong mangyayari bukas. (or what will happen tomorrow.)
7. Tahimik siyang natutulog (He sleeps peacefully)
8. dahil alam niyang may umaalalay at kumakalinga sa kanya. (because he knows someone is supporting and caring for him.)
9. That image captures the heart of today's feast,
10. the feast of the Santo Niño.
11. Hindi ito simpleng debosyon, (This is not a simple devotion,)
12. it's a powerful invitation from Jesus himself.
13. Ngayong pinagdiriwang natin ang batang si Jesus, (Now that we are celebrating the child Jesus,)
14. malinaw na sinasabi ni Jesus sa Ebanghelyo ngayon, (Jesus is clearly saying in the Gospel today,)
15. "become like children."
16. Hindi ito sentimental message lamang. (This is not just a sentimental message.)
17. Again, it's a radical call
18. to change the way we see greatness, power, and success.
19. Sa Ebanghelyo, may nagtanong– (In the Gospel, someone asked–)
20. nang nagtanong ang mga alagad kay Jesus: (when the disciples asked Jesus:)
21. "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"
22. Marahil inakala ng mga alagad (Perhaps the disciples thought)
23. na magtuturo si Jesus tungkol sa pamumuno, (that Jesus would teach about leadership,)
24. leadership, pagiging makapangyarihan. (leadership, being powerful.)

25. Bagkus, anong ginawa niya? (Instead, what did he do?)
26. Tumawag siya ng isang bata, (He called a child,)
27. inilagay sa kanilang gitna, (placed him in their midst,)
28. at sabi niya: (and he said:)
29. “Amen I say to you,
30. unless you turn and become like children,
31. you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”
32. Well, sa totoo, (Well, in truth,)
33. sa mata ng mundo, ang bata ay mahina (in the eyes of the world, the child is weak)
34. walang kapangyarihan, (has no power,)
35. walang impluwensya. (has no influence.)
36. But in the eyes of Jesus,
37. the child reveals the true path to the kingdom.
38. To be childlike means total dependence on God.
39. At ’yan ang daan sa tunay na kadakilaan. (And that is the path to true greatness.)
40. ’Yan ang daan sa kaharian ng langit. (That is the path to the kingdom of heaven.)
41. This is asking for a change of mentality.
42. From wanting to be first,
43. to choosing to be last.
44. From dominating others,
45. to trusting God.
46. From proving our greatness,
47. to receiving love freely.
48. Tulad ng pinaalala ni Jesus sa atin mismo, (Just as Jesus himself reminded us,)
49. “Whoever wishes to be first among you
50. shall be your servant.”
51. In God’s kingdom,
52. greatness is not measured
53. by how high we rise,
54. but by how low we are willing to bend
55. how low we are willing to kneel.
56. True greatness is found
57. in humble service
58. and love that descends to meet others where they are.
59. May sinasabi pong napakaganda (There is something very beautiful said)
60. si GK Chesterton tungkol dito. (by GK Chesterton about this.)
61. Sabi niya, (He said,)
62. “Greatness is making others feel great.”
63. And this perfectly describes Jesus.
64. Jesus never used His power to dominate.
65. He used power to lift others up,
66. to empower them.
67. Nagpagaling Siya ng may sakit, (He healed the sick,)
68. nagpatawad ng makasalanan, (forgave sinners,)
69. tumanggap sa mga pinagtatabuyan, (welcomed the outcasts,)
70. and restored the dignity
71. of the broken and the wounded.

72. Ang bata, hindi kailangang magpakitang-gilas (A child doesn't need to show off)
73. para siya’y mahalin. (in order to be loved.)
74. A child doesn’t earn love.
75. He just receives love.
76. At ’yan ang pinakapuso ng Santo Niño. (And that is the very heart of the Santo Niño.)
77. God doesn’t wait for us to be perfect
78. before loving us.
79. He loves us first,
80. and that love slowly transforms us.
81. Eh sa totoo lang, (Honestly,)
82. napakahirap tanggapin (it is very hard to accept)
83. at isabuhay ang itinuturo ni Jesus (and live out what Jesus is teaching)
84. dahil kabaligtaran ito (because it is the exact opposite)
85. ng itinuturo ng mundo. (of what the world teaches.)
86. Ang sinasabi ng mundo: (What the world says is:)
87. “Be strong! Be independent! Be in control!”
88. Huwag kang magpakita ng kahinaan. (Do not show weakness.)
89. Huwag kang umasa kanino man. (Do not depend on anyone.)
90. At sa totoo lang, (.) (And in truth,)
91. madalas pinaniniwalaan natin ito (we often believe this)
92. and we live that way.
93. At talaga namang, ito’y nakakapagod– (And it really is exhausting–)
94. emotionally, spiritually, physically.
95. Isipin mo kung lagi ka na lang (Imagine if you are always)
96. nabubuhay na parang kailangan (living as if you need)
97. mong patunayan ang sarili mo, (to prove yourself,)
98. laging nakikipag-compete, (always competing,)
99. nakikipagtagisan sa iba (clashing with others)
100. hindi ba nakakapagod? (isn't it tiring?)
101. *It is exhausting
102. carrying burdens alone
103. because we are afraid to look weak.*
104. But the Santo Niño
105. gently invites us to a different path.
106. Ang pagiging tulad ng bata (Being like a child)
107. ay hindi landas ng kahinaan, (is not a path of weakness,)
108. kundi landas ng pagtitiwala (but a path of trust)
109. at pagsuko ng sarili sa Diyos. (and surrender of oneself to God.)
110. To be childlike
111. is not to be immature
112. or to be childish.
113. It is to be humble enough to say,
114. *“Lord, I need You.” *
115. Again, the Santo Niño tells us:
116. true power doesn’t intimidate,
117. it reassures.
118. True greatness doesn’t crush,
119. it uplifts.
120. Jesus as the Santo Niño

stands before us,
not demanding successes and achievements,
but inviting trust and surrender.
Hindi Niya sinasabing, (He is not saying,)
“Patunayan mo muna ang sarili mo.” (“Prove yourself first.”)
He’s saying,
“Halika. Come to me.” (“Come. Come to me.”)
*My dear friends,
the Feast of the Santo Niño reminds us
that greatness in God’s kingdom
is not about rising above others,
but about kneeling before God
with a trusting heart.*
Let us choose today
to be small,
to be little like the Santo Niño—
not to lose ourselves,
but to finally find freedom.
Let us allow Jesus to empower us,
not by making us proud,
but by making us secure in His love.
*In God’s kingdom,
we become truly great
not by being strong on our own,
but by trusting God like a child.*
Let us end with a prayer,
and together we pray:
“Lord Jesus, our Santo Niño,
You call us to become like little children,
to trust without calculation,
to depend without shame,
and to receive love without conditions.
Teach us to surrender our pride,
our need for control,
and our fear of weakness.
May we rest in Your arms like children,
open to Your mercy,
guided by Your grace,
and empowered to love as You love.
Make us humble, trusting hearts,
so that in You
we find true greatness
and true freedom.
Amen.”

Analytical Table: Excerpts, Codes, Sub-themes, and Themes

RQ1: What digital communicative practices of the clergy promote engagement of the laity in parish communities?

Table 1
Analytical Table for Research Question Number 1

Excerpt	**Code** (Actual Action of the priest that shows how the excerpt affects the audience)	**Sub Theme** (Recurring strategy that shows how the themes manifest in the engagement)	**Theme** (Communicative Practices of the clergy that promote engagement)
FPP: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Line 21) SPP: "Amen I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Lines 29–31)	Embedded Q&A	Structures the homily into a question–answer sequence that simulates interaction	The priest demonstrated **simulated dialogue through rhetorical structures** by posing questions, both scriptural and second-person scenarios, and following them with responses that guide the audience to interpret the message as part of an unfolding exchange while inviting internal reflection on their own experiences.
FPP: "Isipin mo kung lagi ka na lang nabubuhay na parang kailangan mong patunayan ang sarili mo, laging nakikipag-compete, nakikipagtagisan sa iba hindi ba nakakapagod?" (Lines 95–100) Translation: "Imagine if you are always living as if you need to prove yourself, always competing, clashing with others isn't it tiring?" (Lines 95–100)	Rhetorical Question	Prompts internal response through a second-person scenario and questioning	

SPP: “It is exhausting carrying burdens alone because we are afraid to look weak.” (Lines 101–103)			
FPP: “Maligayang Kapistahan po sa atin!” (Line 1) Translation: Happy Feast Day to all of us! (Line 1) SPP (Projected): Greeting response	Inclusive Greeting	Establishes shared communicative space through inclusive opening	The priest demonstrated **personalization and inclusive address** by using an inclusive greeting and inclusive language (“natin”) to position both speaker and audience within the same celebrating community and to frame the call to become like children as a shared responsibility.
“Ngayong pinagdiriwang natin ang batang si Jesus, malinaw na sinasabi ni Jesus sa Ebanghelyo ngayon, ‘become like children.’” (Lines 13–15) Translation: Now that we are celebrating the child Jesus, Jesus is clearly saying in the Gospel today, “become like children.” (Lines 13–15)	Inclusive Pronoun Use	Constructs shared identity through collective language	The priest demonstrated **personalization and inclusive address** by using an inclusive greeting and inclusive language (“natin”) to position both speaker and audience within the same celebrating community and to frame the call to become like children as a shared responsibility.
“Hindi ito simpleng debosyon, it’s a powerful invitation from Jesus himself.” (Lines 11–12) Translation: This is not a simple devotion, it’s a powerful invitation from Jesus himself. (Lines 11–12)	Code-Switching for Emphasis	Enhances meaning through strategic language alternation	The priest demonstrated **bilingual code-switching and cultural resonance** by shifting between Filipino and English to emphasize the message as an invitation and to contrast worldly and religious perspectives through language use.

“Well, sa totoo, sa mata ng mundo, ang bata ay mahina walang kapangyarihan, walang impluwensya. But in the eyes of Jesus, the child reveals the true path to the kingdom.” (Lines 32–37) Translation: "Well, in truth, in the eyes of the world, the child is weak, has no power, has no influence. But in the eyes of Jesus, the child reveals the true path to the kingdom." (Lines 32–37)	Code-Switching for Contrast	Frames contrast using bilingual structure	
“Ang isang batang mahimbing na natutulog sa bisig ng kanyang magulang, eh hindi nag-aalala kung may pagkain ba bukas, o kung may pambayad ba ng kuryente, ng tubig, ng utang, o kung anong mangyayari bukas. Tahimik siyang natutulog dahil alam niyang may umaalalay at kumakalinga sa kanya.” (Lines 2–8) Translation: "A child sleeping soundly in the arms of his parent, does not worry if there is food for tomorrow, or if there is money to pay for electricity, water, debt, or what will happen tomorrow. He sleeps peacefully because he knows someone is supporting and caring for him." (Lines 2–8)	Narrative Storytelling	Uses vivid imagery rooted in familiar experience	The priest demonstrated the **use of narrative and imagery** by constructing a relatable image of a child at rest to illustrate trust and dependence on God and by presenting contrasts that clarify the meaning of humility.

“From wanting to be first, to choosing to be last. From dominating others, to trusting God.” (Lines 42–45)	Contrast Framing	Clarifies meaning through oppositional imagery	
“At talaga namang, ito’y nakakapagod, emotionally, spiritually, physically.” (Lines 93–94) Translation: "And it really is exhausting, emotionally, spiritually, physically." (Lines 93–94)	Emotional Validation	Names and affirms the audience's struggle	The priest demonstrated **emotional tone and empathy** by explicitly articulating the exhaustion experienced
“Eh sa totoo lang, napakahirap tanggapin at isabuhay ang itinuturo ni Jesus dahil kabaligtaran ito ng itinuturo ng mundo.” (Lines 81–84) Translation: "Honestly, it is very hard to accept and live out what Jesus is teaching because it is the exact opposite of what the world teaches." (Lines 81–84).	Affective Acknowledgment	Aligns with audience difficulty and resistance	
“He’s saying, ‘Halika. Come to me.’” (Lines 126–127) Translation: "He’s saying, 'Come. Come to me.'" (Lines 126–127).	Personal Invitation	Invites relational response and trust	The priest demonstrated **inviting participation** by issuing a personal invitation that encourages the audience to respond with trust and by guiding them into a shared act of communal prayer that facilitates the collective articulation of trust and surrender

FPP: “Let us end with a prayer, and together we pray:” (Lines 146–147) SPP: “Lord Jesus, our Santo Niño, You call us to become like little children, to trust without calculation, to depend without shame, and to receive love without conditions.” (Lines 148–152)	Collective Summons	Transitions the audience into active participation	
“May we rest in Your arms like children, open to Your mercy, guided by Your grace, and empowered to love as You love.” (Lines 156–159)	Collective Articulation	Enables shared expression of faith	

RQ2: What development communication principles or perspectives underlie such communicative practices?

Table 2
Analytical Table for Research Question Number 2

Excerpt	**Code** (Actual Action of the priest that shows how the excerpt affects the audience)	**Sub Theme** (Strategy used by the priest that shows the DevCom Principles)	**Theme** (Development Communication Principles)
“Let us end with a prayer, and together we pray: Lord Jesus, our Santo Niño, You call us to become like little children, to trust without calculation, to depend without shame, and to receive love without conditions.” (Lines 146–152)	Collective Participation Cue	Frames communication as a shared activity	The priest demonstrated **participatory communication and collective ownership** by inviting the audience into a shared act of prayer, enabling them to adopt the prayer as their own expression, and issuing an inclusive directive that positions them as co-participants.

“May we rest in Your arms like children, open to Your mercy, guided by Your grace, and empowered to love as You love.” (Lines 156–159)	Collective Articulation	Encourages co-construction of meaning	
“Let us choose today to be small, to be little like the Santo Niño, not to lose ourselves, but to finally find freedom.” (Lines 134–138)	Call to Action	Invites shared future action	
“Isipin mo kung lagi ka na lang nabubuhay na parang kailangan mong patunayan ang sarili mo, laging nakikipag-compete, nakikipagtagisan sa iba hindi ba nakakapagod?” (Lines 95–100)	Reflective Prompt	Positions the audience as respondents	The priest demonstrated **dialogue and two-way engagement** by prompting internal audience response through questioning and by structuring the homily as a question–answer sequence.
“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (Line 21)	Embedded Q&A	Simulates conversational exchange	
“Maligayang Kapistahan po sa atin!” (Line 1)	Inclusive Greeting	Establishes shared footing	The priest demonstrated **equality and non-hierarchical communication** by positioning himself within the same community as the audience and by using inclusive language to establish shared responsibility.

“Ngayong pinagdiriwang natin ang batang si Jesus, malinaw na sinasabi ni Jesus sa Ebanghelyo ngayon, ‘become like children.’” (Lines 13–15)	Inclusive Pronoun Use	Aligns the speaker with the audience	
“Ang isang batang mahimbing na natutulog sa bisig ng kanyang magulang, eh hindi nag-aalala kung may pagkain ba bukas, o kung may pambayad ba ng kuryente, ng tubig, ng utang, o kung anong mangyayari bukas. Tahimik siyang natutulog dahil alam niyang may umaalalay at kumakalinga sa kanya.“ (Lines 2–8)	Cultural Imagery	Grounds message in lived experience	The priest demonstrated **cultural sensitivity and audience-centeredness** by using familiar family imagery, alternating languages to frame contrasting perspectives, and articulating the audience’s experience of exhaustion.
“Well, sa totoo, sa mata ng mundo, ang bata ay mahina, walang kapangyarihan,walang impluwensya. But in the eyes of Jesus, the child reveals the true path to the kingdom.” (Lines 32–37)	Local Language Framing	Uses bilingual contrast for clarity	
“At talaga namang, ito’y nakakapagod, emotionally, spiritually, physically.” (Lines 93–94)	Emotional Validation	Recognizes lived burden	
“He’s saying, ‘Halika. Come to me.’” (Lines 126–127)	Invitation to Trust	Encourages relational response	The priest demonstrated **empowerment and a call to action** by inviting the audience to entrust themselves to Jesus, leading a prayer that calls them to surrender pride, and

“Teach us to surrender our pride, our need for control, and our fear of weakness.” (Lines 153–155)	Transformative Appeal	Encourages inner change	affirming that they can trust God and find rest in Him.
“May we rest in Your arms like children…” (Lines 156–159 full)	Empowerment Framing	Affirms capacity for trust	

Chapter 5:
Results and Discussions

In this section, the findings from the detailed analysis of the digital homily are synthesized and interpreted to address the research questions. The discussion is structured to explicitly answer:

1. *What digital communicative practices of the clergy promote engagement of the laity in parish communities? and*
2. *What development communication principles or perspectives underlie such communicative practices?*

The analytical themes, sub-themes, and codes identified in the previous section are integrated here into a coherent discussion. Drawing on the ethnomethodological framework of the study, the results illustrate how a priest's nuanced communicative practices transform a seemingly one-way online sermon into an interactionally rich experience.

Furthermore, the findings are also related to and examined alongside the Review of Related Literature to establish how the identified communicative practices are supported by, aligned with, or extend existing literatures. This integration allows the discussion to demonstrate that the observed practices are not only grounded in empirical analysis but are also consistent with documented communication theories and studies in digital evangelization and development communication .

This section also connects these findings to development communication, highlighting the contribution of this study to understanding digital ministry as both a communicative practice and a socially organized action.

Digital Communicative Practices of the Clergy Promoting Laity Engagement

The findings show that audience engagement in the digital homily is achieved through recurring communicative practices demonstrated by the priest. These practices are manifested through specific communicative actions identified in the analytical table, such as rhetorical questioning, direct address, inclusive language, code-switching, narrative construction, emotional validation, and collective prayer. These actions illustrate how the priest transforms a monologic homily into an interactionally engaging experience.

Simulated Dialogue through Rhetorical Structures

The priest demonstrated simulated dialogue by structuring the homily through rhetorical questioning and embedded interactional sequences that invite internal audience participation. This is evident in the excerpt, `“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (Lines 19–21)`, where the priest introduces a question within the narration of the Gospel and subsequently provides its answer within the homily. In this moment, the question functions

as a first pair part that projects an expected response, even though no audible reply is produced by the audience.

The placement of this question within the homily creates a momentary pause that invites listeners to reflect, anticipate, or internally formulate an answer before the priest continues. Although the priest ultimately completes the sequence by providing the response, the structure itself mirrors a question–answer exchange typical of everyday interaction. This embedded interactional pattern allows the audience to momentarily occupy the role of respondent, thereby simulating participation within an otherwise monologic setting.

These communicative actions show how the priest organizes the homily as an interaction rather than a purely one-way delivery. By incorporating question–answer structures drawn from scriptural narration, the priest reproduces adjacency-pair-like sequences, where the first pair part (question) projects a relevant second pair part (answer). Even though both parts are delivered by the same speaker, the sequence is designed in a way that invites the audience to mentally engage with the unfolding exchange.

From a Conversation Analysis perspective, this reflects the use of implicit turn-taking, where the speaker anticipates and accounts for possible audience responses in the design of his utterances. The rhetorical question serves as an interactional resource that momentarily opens a response slot, allowing the audience to align with or reflect on the question before the priest proceeds. In

doing so, the homily maintains a sense of conversational flow, despite the absence of an actual interlocutor.

Personalization and Inclusive Address

The priest demonstrated personalization and inclusive address by positioning the audience as direct participants in the message through inclusive greetings and second-person constructions. This is evident in "My dear friends" (Line 128), which establishes relational closeness, and "Isipin mo…" [Imagine if you…] (Line 95), which invites the listener to situate themselves within the scenario being described. These expressions directly address the audience, not as distant listeners, but as individuals who are personally implicated in the message.

These communicative actions show how the priest reduces the distance between himself and the audience, framing the homily as a shared and personal experience. The use of direct address, particularly second-person constructions, creates a sense of immediacy and involvement, as the audience is prompted to imagine their own experiences within the narrative being presented. At the same time, relational expressions such as "My dear friends" establish an affective connection, reinforcing a tone of familiarity and care. Together, these linguistic strategies position the audience as active participants rather than passive recipients, demonstrating how personalization and inclusive address promote engagement.

From a Conversation Analysis perspective, these forms of address function as interactional resources that organize participation within a monologic setting. By directly invoking the listener through second-person constructions, the priest creates a participation framework where the audience is expected to align with the scenario, reflect on their own experiences, and internally respond. This reflects how talk can be designed to include recipients as co-present participants, even without explicit turn-taking. The personalization of the message sustains attention and involvement by continuously re-orienting the discourse toward the listener's perspective.

Bilingual Code-Switching and Cultural Resonance

The priest demonstrated code-switching by alternating between Filipino and English to enhance clarity and emphasize key ideas. This is evident in statements such as "That image captures the heart of today's feast" (Line 9), which follows the Filipino description, "Ang isang batang mahimbing na natutulog… Tahimik siyang natutulog dahil alam niyang may umaalalay at kumakalinga sa kanya" ["A child sleeping soundly... He sleeps peacefully because he knows someone is supporting and caring for him."] (Lines 2–8), where the priest first presents a vivid image in Filipino before summarizing its meaning in English. Similarly, the line "It is exhausting carrying burdens alone…" (Lines 101–103) comes after the Filipino build-up, "Isipin mo kung lagi ka na lang nabubuhay na parang

kailangan mong patunayan ang sarili mo… hindi ba nakakapagod?” ["Imagine if you are always living as if you need to prove yourself... isn't it tiring?"] (Lines 95–100), where the priest first engages the audience through a relatable Filipino scenario before reinforcing the key idea in English.

These moments show how the priest strategically moves between languages within the homily. Filipino is used to ground the message in familiar, experiential, and emotionally resonant expressions, while English is used to distill, emphasize, or articulate the core insight of the message. Through this pattern, the priest not only ensures that the audience understands the message but also highlights key points by presenting them across both languages, reinforcing their meaning and significance.

From a Conversation Analysis perspective, code-switching operates as an interactional resource that signals shifts in meaning, emphasis, and orientation within the discourse. The movement between languages helps organize the flow of the homily by marking transitions between explanation and emphasis. These shifts guide the audience in interpreting which parts of the message carry particular weight, while also sustaining attention by varying the linguistic delivery. In this way, language choice becomes part of how the priest structures the interaction, even within a monologic format.

Use of Narrative and Imagery

The priest demonstrated the use of narrative and imagery by presenting relatable and concrete scenarios that illustrate abstract theological concepts. This is evident in the excerpt, “Ang isang batang mahimbing na natutulog” ["A child sleeping soundly"] (Line 2) and “Tahimik siyang natutulog” ["He sleeps peacefully"] (Line 7), which depict a child resting securely in the care of a parent. These lines present a simple yet vivid image that the audience can easily visualize and relate to.

These communicative actions show how the priest grounds abstract teachings in everyday experience, making the message more accessible to the audience. By introducing a concrete image at the beginning of the homily, the priest provides a reference point that supports the explanation of theological ideas such as trust and dependence on God. Additional imagery, such as “carrying burdens alone” (Lines 101–103), further reinforces the message by linking abstract concepts to familiar human experiences. Through these selected excerpts, the homily allows listeners to form mental images that support understanding and engagement.

The use of patterned contrasts also contributes to how imagery is sustained throughout the homily. For instance, “From wanting to be first, to choosing to be last” (Lines 41–43) presents contrasting images that help clarify the message. These structured expressions guide the audience in

interpreting the meaning of the narrative and reinforce key ideas through repetition and contrast.

From a Conversation Analysis perspective, these narrative and imagery-based excerpts function as interactional resources that support audience alignment. The concrete images provide a shared reference that listeners can use to follow the progression of the message. This allows the audience to remain engaged by connecting each part of the homily to previously introduced images.

Emotional Tone and Empathy

The priest demonstrated emotional validation by articulating the struggles and experiences of the audience. This is evident in the excerpts, "napakahirap tanggapin" ["very hard to accept"] (Lines 81–82), "nakakapagod" ["exhausting"] (Lines 93–100), and "It is exhausting carrying burdens alone…" (Lines 101–103), where the priest explicitly acknowledges emotional and spiritual fatigue. These expressions directly name the difficulty, exhaustion, and burden experienced by the audience.

These communicative actions show how the priest aligns himself with the audience's lived experiences. By verbalizing feelings such as difficulty and exhaustion, the priest validates the internal struggles of the listeners and presents them as shared human experiences rather than individual

shortcomings. The use of Filipino expressions such as “napakahirap tanggapin” and “nakakapagod” conveys emotional immediacy and relatability, while the English statement, “It is exhausting carrying burdens alone…,” reframes the experience in a reflective and generalized form. Together, these expressions connect personal emotion with broader meaning, reinforcing the message while maintaining a compassionate tone.

The sequencing of these excerpts also reflects a progression in emotional tone. The priest first acknowledges the difficulty (“napakahirap tanggapin”), then intensifies the emotional recognition through repeated references to exhaustion (“nakakapagod”), before articulating the underlying condition in a more reflective statement (“`It is exhausting carrying burdens alone…”`). This progression guides the audience through an emotional journey that moves from recognition to understanding, sustaining their emotional engagement throughout the homily.

From a Conversation Analysis perspective, these expressions function as interactional resources that display understanding and alignment with the audience. By articulating the audience’s possible thoughts and feelings, the priest anticipates and responds to their internal states, effectively producing both the expression of concern and its acknowledgment within the discourse. This creates a sense of responsiveness, even in the absence of actual turn-taking, as the audience recognizes their own experiences in the priest’s words.

Inviting Participation: The Communal Prayer as Engagement

The priest demonstrated participation by inviting the audience into a shared communicative act through collective prayer. This is evident in the excerpt, `“Let us end with a prayer, and together we pray” (Lines 146–147)`, followed by the communal prayer (Lines 148–164). This marks a transition from the homily as a spoken message to a shared activity involving both the priest and the audience.

These communicative actions show how the priest moves the audience from passive listening to active participation. By explicitly inviting the audience to pray together, the priest creates a moment where listeners are no longer positioned solely as recipients of the message but as participants in a collective act. The use of inclusive language, particularly “let us” and “together,” reinforces this shift by framing the prayer as a shared experience rather than an individual or clerical action. This demonstrates how participation is enacted within the homily.

The transition into communal prayer also reflects a change in the interactional structure of the discourse. While the earlier parts of the homily are primarily monologic, this segment introduces a participation framework where the audience is expected to respond by joining in the prayer. This resembles a summons-response sequence, where the priest’s invitation functions as a call and the audience’s participation in prayer completes the action. In this way, the homily becomes not only a message but a jointly accomplished activity.

From a Conversation Analysis perspective, this moment illustrates how participation can be organized within a structured interaction, even in a mediated or monologic context. The priest shifts from delivering content to facilitating an activity, creating a space where the audience's role becomes more visibly active. This supports engagement by transforming the communicative event into something that is co-performed rather than solely delivered.

Linking Digital Communicative Practices in Digital Evangelization to the Literature and Expanding Understanding of Audience Engagement

The findings under Research Question 1 are consistent with and significantly extend the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, which conceptualizes digital evangelization not simply as a technological adjustment, but as a fundamental transformation of communicative practice. The review emphasizes that online religious communication has moved away from top-down broadcasting toward networked, dialogic, and relational forms of interaction. Viewed in this light, the present findings support the Review of Related Literature (RRL) by demonstrating exactly how these macro-level characteristics of digital evangelization are concretely achieved at the micro-level through specific communicative practices within a digital homily.

First, the finding on **simulated dialogue through rhetorical structures** directly operationalizes the literature's characterization of digital media as a

space for "networked religion" and interactive communication. Campbell (2012) and Sumiala (2024) highlight a shift toward horizontal, interactive religious communication. Furthermore, Tenedero (2025) and Galang (2021) describe online parish spaces as new "public squares" where church identity is reconstructed through dialogue. The present study extends these findings by revealing the interactional mechanism behind this: the priest's use of embedded question-and-answer sequences simulates conversational turn-taking, sustaining interactional engagement even within a structurally monologic homily.

Second, the finding on **personalization and inclusive address** effectively operationalizes the Vatican's vision in *Toward Full Presence*, which urges the transformation of digital platforms into "spaces of encounter and communion". Synod of Bishops (2012) frames the transmission of faith as a shared, communal mission. By utilizing inclusive pronouns and shared greetings, the priest places himself and the audience within the same communicative and spiritual space, proving interactionally that the homily is an act of shared engagement rather than a top-down clerical broadcast.

Third, the finding on **bilingual code-switching and cultural resonance** aligns closely with the RRL's emphasis on contextual adaptation and accessibility. Bishop Pablo Virgilio David (2022) argued that the primary purpose of social media ministry is to ensure the accessibility of God's Word. Read alongside Tenedero's (2025) observations of local digital adaptation

during the pandemic, the priest's strategic movement between Filipino for emotional immediacy and English for theological synthesis is revealed to be a highly audience-centered communicative choice. This finding proves that accessibility in digital evangelization is achieved not just by using digital platforms, but through intentional language choices that ground the message in the audience's lived reality.

Fourth, the **use of narrative and imagery** supports the Synod of Bishops' (2012) assertion that evangelization must facilitate a "living encounter with God." Furthermore, this aligns with Schmitt's (n.d.) observation that spiritual communication should be transformative and relational rather than merely conveying information. By anchoring abstract theological concepts in concrete, familiar imagery, like a sleeping child resting securely in a parent's arms, the priest makes theological meaning understandable through everyday experience.

Fifth, the communicative practice of utilizing **emotional tone and empathy** provides interactional evidence for Gaston's (2022) phenomenological findings. Gaston established that online ministry functions as a genuine extension of pastoral care, where clergy make their pastoral presence recognizable in virtual settings. By explicitly naming the audience's emotional exhaustion, burden, and difficulty, the priest enacts a deeply pastoral orientation. This finding demonstrates that digital evangelization succeeds when it first recognizes the audience's lived struggles before calling them to

spiritual trust, confirming the RRL's framing of digital ministry as relational and pastorally mediated communication. Furthermore, the priest's empathetic validation operationalizes what Izquierdo-Iranzo (2025) identifies as the Church's vital opportunity for 'religious accompaniment at a distance.' By acknowledging their exhaustion, the priest proves that digital mediatisation can successfully deliver genuine human and spiritual support.

Finally, the finding on **inviting participation through communal prayer** presents the clearest link to the reviewed literature's focus on collective faith practices. Gozum and Sarmiento (2021) and Gaston (2022) demonstrated that digital religious spaces allow for the co-creation of pastoral life and communal acts of worship. The priest's interactional transition from a spoken exposition to guiding a collective prayer is highly significant. It physically and interactionally moves the audience from passive listening to active participation, confirming that the transmission of faith online remains a jointly accomplished, community-forming event. This directly validates Izquierdo-Iranzo's (2025) finding that while the digital mediation of formal sacraments remains highly debated, there is widespread acceptance and success in using digital platforms for shared community prayer. Izquierdo-Iranzo notes that digital ubiquity provides a flexible space where 'members of the same community can pray together... even if each member is in a different place.' By guiding the online audience into a collective prayer, the priest leverages this exact digital ubiquity, proving that the digital space is a valid, interactional venue for active spiritual participation.

Taken together, the findings for Research Question 1 confirm the macro-level theories reviewed in Chapter 2 and significantly extend them by specifying the concrete, micro-level interactional means through which digital evangelization becomes dialogic, inclusive, culturally resonant, pastorally relational, and communally participatory.

Development Communication Principles Underpinning Clergy Communicative Practices

The findings show that the communicative practices demonstrated by the priest are underpinned by development communication principles. These principles are manifested through the same communicative actions identified in the analytical table, showing how engagement is structured through interactional and audience-centered approaches.

Participatory Communication and Collective Ownership:

The findings indicate that the communicative practices of the priest are underpinned by the development communication principle of participatory communication, particularly through the construction of collective ownership in meaning-making and action. This is evident in how the priest structures segments of the homily as shared activities rather than individual instruction.

This is explicitly manifested in the invitation to communal prayer:

> *"Let us end with a prayer, and together we pray: Lord Jesus, our Santo Niño, You call us to become like little children, to trust without calculation, to depend without shame, and to receive love without conditions." (Lines 146–152)*

The phrase "let us" and "together we pray" function as a collective participation cue, framing communication as a shared act. Rather than positioning himself as the sole speaker, the priest constructs the moment as a co-performed activity, allowing the audience to participate in the communicative process. This reflects the participatory communication principle where stakeholders are engaged not merely as recipients but as active participants.

This participatory orientation is further reinforced in:

> *"May we rest in Your arms like children, open to Your mercy, guided by Your grace, and empowered to love as You love." (Lines 156–159)*

Here, the use of "we" enables collective articulation, where the audience is invited to internalize and co-express the message. The communication does not remain at the level of transmission but becomes a shared construction of meaning. This demonstrates how the priest facilitates engagement by allowing the audience to mentally and spiritually align themselves with the message.

Similarly, participation extends into shared commitment through:

> *"Let us choose today to be small, to be little like the Santo Niño, not to lose ourselves, but to finally find freedom." (Lines 134–138)*

This statement operates as a call to action, but one that is collectively framed. The use of "let us choose" positions the action as a shared decision rather than an imposed directive. This reflects a development communication perspective where action is more effective when it emerges from collective agreement and participation.

Across these excerpts, participation is not limited to verbal exchange but is enacted through shared language, collective framing, and inclusive invitations. The priest's communicative practice transforms the homily into a participatory space where the laity are engaged as co-actors in meaning-making and response. This aligns with the development communication principle that communication processes are most effective when they foster involvement, shared ownership, and collective engagement.

Dialogue and Two-Way Engagement:

The findings show that the communicative practices of the priest are underpinned by the development communication principle of dialogue and two-way engagement, particularly through the simulation of interaction within

a monologic setting. Rather than presenting the homily as a one-way transmission of doctrine, the priest structures the message to reflect an exchange that acknowledges the audience as active respondents.

This is evident in the use of reflective questioning:

> *"Isipin mo kung lagi ka na lang nabubuhay na parang kailangan mong patunayan ang sarili mo, laging nakikipag-compete, nakikipagtagisan sa iba hindi ba nakakapagod?" (Lines 95–100)*
>
> *Translation: "Imagine if you are always living as if you need to prove yourself, always competing, clashing with others, isn't it tiring?" (Lines 95–100).*

This functions as a reflective prompt that positions the audience as respondents. The question invites the audience to internally process and respond, creating a moment where their voice is implicitly included in the communicative exchange. This demonstrates how dialogue can occur even without verbal feedback, as the audience is engaged in meaning-making through internal participation.

The dialogic structure is further reinforced through:

> *"Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Line 21)*

This excerpt, identified as an embedded Q&A, simulates a conversational exchange by introducing a question that is later addressed within the homily. By incorporating this question–answer sequence, the priest structures the

message in a way that mirrors natural conversational flow. The audience is guided through a process of inquiry and response, reinforcing the sense of interaction.

Across these excerpts, dialogue is not dependent on actual turn-taking but is constructed through questioning, anticipation of response, and sequential structuring of ideas. The priest's communicative practice reflects a two-way orientation by recognizing the audience as participants whose thoughts, questions, and reflections are part of the communicative process.

This aligns with the development communication perspective that effective communication is not purely transmissive but dialogic, where meaning is shaped through interaction. In this case, the priest achieves dialogue by structuring the homily as an exchange, allowing the audience to engage cognitively and emotionally. Thus, the underlying principle is not merely the presence of questions, but the creation of a communicative environment where the audience is positioned as an active participant in the unfolding message.

Equality and Non-Hierarchical Communication:

The findings show that the communicative practices of the priest are underpinned by the development communication principle of equality and non-hierarchical communication, particularly through the use of inclusive

language that positions both the speaker and the audience within the same communicative and experiential space. Rather than asserting authority, the priest constructs the homily as a shared reflection, minimizing the distance between clergy and laity.

This is evident in the opening statement:

> *“Maligayang Kapistahan po sa atin!” (Line 1)*
>
> *Translation: Translation: "Happy Feast Day to all of us!" (Line 1).*

The use of “sa atin” functions as an inclusive greeting that establishes shared footing. From the outset, the priest frames the homily as a communal experience, signaling that both he and the audience are participants in the same celebration. This removes the sense of a hierarchical divide and instead creates a shared communicative space.

This non-hierarchical positioning is further reinforced in:

> *“Ngayong pinagdiriwang natin ang batang si Jesus, malinaw na sinasabi ni Jesus sa Ebanghelyo ngayon, ‘become like children.’” (Lines 13–15)*
>
> *Translation: "Now that we are celebrating the child Jesus, Jesus is clearly saying in the Gospel today, 'become like children.'" (Lines 13–15).*

Here, the use of “natin” reflects inclusive pronoun use, aligning the speaker with the audience. The priest does not present the message as something directed solely at the listeners; instead, he includes himself within the same call to action. This demonstrates a shared responsibility in understanding and living out the message.

Across these excerpts, equality is achieved through linguistic choices that emphasize shared identity, collective experience, and mutual participation. The priest avoids positioning himself as an authority speaking above the audience and instead communicates as part of the same community. This reflects a development communication perspective that values respect, inclusivity, and the reduction of power imbalances in communication processes.

By framing the homily as a shared journey rather than a top-down instruction, the priest fosters a communicative environment where the laity are treated as equal participants. This demonstrates that the underlying principle is not only the use of inclusive language, but the intentional construction of a non-hierarchical relationship between speaker and audience, where meaning is developed collectively rather than imposed.

Cultural Sensitivity and Audience-Centeredness:

The findings indicate that the communicative practices of the priest are underpinned by the development communication principle of cultural

sensitivity and audience-centeredness, particularly through the use of culturally grounded imagery, bilingual language, and references to the lived experiences of the audience. The homily demonstrates an orientation toward adapting the message in ways that resonate with the audience's linguistic and social context.

This is evident in the use of culturally familiar imagery:

> *"Ang isang batang mahimbing na natutulog sa bisig ng kanyang magulang, eh hindi nag-aalala kung may pagkain ba bukas, o kung may pambayad ba ng kuryente, ng tubig, ng utang, o kung anong mangyayari bukas. Tahimik siyang natutulog dahil alam niyang may umaalalay at kumakalinga sa kanya." (Lines 2–8)*
>
> *Translation: "A child sleeping soundly in the arms of his parent, does not worry if there is food for tomorrow, or if there is money to pay for electricity, water, debt, or what will happen tomorrow. He sleeps peacefully because he knows someone is supporting and caring for him." (Lines 2–8).*

This passage functions as cultural imagery that grounds the message in lived experience. The references to everyday concerns such as food, bills, and uncertainty reflect situations familiar to the audience, making the message more relatable and meaningful. By situating the theological message within ordinary life, the priest ensures that the audience can connect the abstract idea of trust in God with their own realities.

Cultural sensitivity is further demonstrated through bilingual expression:

> *“Well, sa totoo, sa mata ng mundo, ang bata ay mahina, walang kapangyarihan, walang impluwensya. But in the eyes of Jesus, the child reveals the true path to the kingdom.” (Lines 32–37)*
>
> *Translation: "Well, in truth, in the eyes of the world, the child is weak, has no power, has no influence. But in the eyes of Jesus, the child reveals the true path to the kingdom." (Lines 32–37).*

This use of local language framing through code-switching allows the priest to present contrasting perspectives in a way that is both accessible and emphatic. Filipino is used to articulate familiar and socially grounded views, while English conveys the theological framing, enabling clarity and reinforcing meaning. This reflects an audience-centered approach that considers how language choice affects comprehension and engagement.

Additionally, the priest acknowledges the emotional realities of the audience:

> *“At talaga namang, ito’y nakakapagod, emotionally, spiritually, physically.” (Lines 93–94)*
>
> *Translation: "And it really is exhausting, emotionally, spiritually, physically." (Lines 93–94).*

This serves as emotional validation, recognizing the lived burden of the audience. By explicitly naming their experiences of exhaustion, the priest

aligns the message with the audience's emotional state, reinforcing relevance and connection.

Across these excerpts, cultural sensitivity is enacted through contextualization, linguistic adaptation, and recognition of lived experience. The priest communicates in a way that reflects the audience's cultural and social realities, ensuring that the message is not abstract or detached but grounded and relatable.

This aligns with the development communication perspective that effective communication must be audience-centered, culturally appropriate, and responsive to local context. The underlying principle is not only the use of familiar language or examples, but the intentional adaptation of the message to fit the audience's worldview and experiences, thereby enhancing understanding and engagement.

Empowerment and Call to Action:

The findings indicate that the communicative practices of the priest are underpinned by the development communication principle of empowerment and call to action, particularly through invitations that encourage the audience to respond personally and collectively to the message. Rather than presenting the homily as purely reflective, the priest structures it in a way that enables the audience to see themselves as capable of acting on the message.

This is evident in the direct invitation:

> *“He’s saying, ‘Halika. Come to me.’” (Lines 126–127)*
>
> *Translation: "He’s saying, 'Come. Come to me.'" (Lines 126–127).*

This functions as an invitation to trust that encourages a relational response. The phrase “come to me” positions the audience not as passive listeners but as individuals who are being called to respond. This reflects an empowering approach where the audience is given agency to act on the invitation.

Empowerment is further reinforced through the concluding prayer:

> *“Teach us to surrender our pride, our need for control, and our fear of weakness.” (Lines 153–155)*

This serves as a transformative appeal, encouraging inner change. By guiding the audience to articulate this request themselves, the priest enables them to take ownership of the desired transformation. The act of expressing this prayer reflects participation in a process of change rather than mere reception of instruction.

Additionally, the framing of the prayer affirms the audience’s capacity to respond:

> *“May we rest in Your arms like children, open to Your mercy, guided by Your grace, and empowered to love as You love.” (Lines 156–159)*

This operates as empowerment framing, affirming the audience's ability to trust and act. The use of "may we" constructs the response as both collective and attainable, reinforcing the idea that the audience is capable of embodying the message.

Across these excerpts, empowerment is achieved through invitation, affirmation, and guided response. The priest does not impose action but facilitates it by allowing the audience to articulate commitment and recognize their capacity for change. The communicative process moves from understanding to participation and ultimately to action.

This aligns with the development communication perspective that communication should enable individuals and communities to take an active role in transformation. The underlying principle is not only the presence of a call to action, but the creation of a communicative environment where the audience is equipped and encouraged to act, thereby fostering a sense of agency and ownership in living out the message.

Expanding Development Communication

The findings for Research Question 2 reveal a powerful convergence between the pastoral goals outlined in Chapter 2 and the core principles of Development Communication (DevCom). While the Review of Related Literature (RRL) conceptualizes digital evangelization as a communal, horizontal, and networked

endeavor, the present study demonstrates that these macro-level religious shifts are functionally sustained by DevCom principles. By treating the digital homily not as a top-down broadcast but as a shared communicative event, the findings substantiate the literature's premise that modern evangelization thrives on audience-centered, collaborative frameworks.

The **principle of participatory communication** serves as a practical manifestation of the Church's vision for inclusive evangelization. In the framework of Development Communication, people-centered development relies on individuals and communities as active deliverers rather than passive objects, making the process inherently participatory (Velasco, Cadiz, & Lumanta, 1999). This aligns perfectly with the Synod of Bishops (2012) and Gozum and Sarmiento (2021), who argue that transmitting the faith must be a communal task rather than an individual clerical performance. The present study translates this theological and developmental ideal into an interactional reality. By structuring the homily around collective participation cues (e.g., "let us pray"), the priest functionally shifts the laity from passive receivers of a religious broadcast to active co-participants in a shared spiritual activity.

Closely related is the **principle of collective ownership**. In development communication, true participation inherently involves "first-person engagement" and "shared ownership" aimed at collective improvement (Milan, 2016). This corroborates Tenedero’s (2025) and Gaston’s (2022) observations regarding the co-creation of online religious spaces. The literature highlights that digital parishes and virtual prayer groups are jointly constructed environments where pastoral life is

sustained collectively. The findings support this by revealing how the priest's use of collective articulation enables the audience to adopt the homily's prayer as their own shared expression. Thereby, it interactionally proves that digital faith transmission is a jointly accomplished community act, reflecting the development communication ideal that shared ownership of a process leads to collective improvement and empowerment (Milan, 2016).

In the framework of Development Communication, **dialogue and two-way engagement** is a fundamental principle of the participatory paradigm. Hemer and Tufte (2016) emphasize that dialogic communication serves as a cornerstone for participatory development, purposefully replacing top-down transmission with mutual, empowering interaction. Furthermore, this transactional approach to communication emphasizes a two-way, cyclical process that views audiences not as passive receptacles but as active co-participants and partners (Velasco, Cadiz, & Lumanta, 1999). The presence of this dialogue and two-way engagement in the priest's homily validates the "horizontal possibilities" of the internet identified by Sumiala (2024), as well as Galang and Galang's (2021) description of social media as a new spiritual agora. Although the digital homily is structurally one-way, the priest's use of reflective prompts and embedded question-and-answer sequences treats the laity as active respondents. This finding bridges DevCom theory and digital religion by demonstrating how a dialogic environment, an essential requirement for fostering participatory social change, can be effectively simulated and sustained even in the absence of synchronous verbal feedback.

In the context of Development Communication, **equality** is recognized as a core tenet that emphasizes a preference for flat hierarchies and egalitarian relationships (Milan, 2016). Furthermore, the transactional model of communication actively challenges traditional top-down approaches by requiring communicators to "assume equality with the beneficiaries" and treat them as true "co-participants or partners" rather than passive subjects (Velasco, Cadiz, & Lumanta, 1999). This principle of equality and non-hierarchical communication perfectly anchors Campbell's (2012) concept of shifting authority within "networked religion." As noted in Chapter 2, digital platforms allow influence to flow across a shared, open field rather than strictly through fixed institutional channels. The findings provide micro-level evidence for this shift: by utilizing inclusive greetings ("sa atin") and shared pronoun framing, the priest intentionally steps down from a traditional position of hierarchical authority. This establishes a mutual, lateral relationship with the audience, effectively fulfilling the DevCom ideal of flattening power dynamics to foster genuine connection and partnership.

In the framework of Development Communication, prioritizing the **cultural sensitivity and audience-centeredness** of the receivers is a fundamental principle. Quebral (1988) asserts that development communication is inherently "audience-oriented," meaning the end-use of the information by the people is the top priority and strictly guides how messages are best communicated. Furthermore, Jamias (1975) established that because DevCom is mass-oriented, it must give "great consideration to language, level, and culture". The finding regarding cultural sensitivity and audience-centeredness reinforces these DevCom ideals, as well as

the RRL's focus on contextual adaptation. Gaston (2022) and Tenedero (2025) emphasized that effective digital ministry during and after the pandemic relied heavily on grounding messages in local Filipino realities. The study proves that this adaptation is achieved interactionally through bilingual code-switching and the explicit validation of the audience's everyday exhaustion. By anchoring the theological message in the linguistic and emotional habits of the listeners, the priest enacts a deeply audience-centered communication model that perfectly fulfills the DevCom mandate, making the Gospel culturally and situationally resonant.

Finally, the principles of **empowerment and a call to action** are fundamental to the Development Communication paradigm. Empowerment is recognized as one of the core values—the "four Es"—essential for genuine social transformation (Ongkiko & Flor, 1998), while a clear "call for action" ensures that audiences are not left passive, but are equipped to know exactly what to do and how to act upon the message they receive (Piotrow et al., 1997, as cited in Velasco, Cadiz, & Lumanta, 1999). This perfectly extends Gaston's (2022) argument that digital communication "does not only convey reality, but creates it." While empowerment was not explicitly isolated as a standalone term in the earlier RRL, Gaston emphasizes that the shift to online ministry "created not only a new reality for the world but also for the spirit in the world." The present findings show exactly how this reality is created interactionally: by issuing personal invitations to trust ("Come to me") and guiding the audience through transformative appeals, the priest executes a clear call to action. This empowers the laity to enact their own spiritual agency, transitioning them from

passive listeners into active agents who jointly construct the reality of their digital faith community.

In synthesis, the findings for Research Question 2 do more than just align with the literature; they demonstrate that effective digital evangelization intrinsically relies on DevCom methodologies. By fostering participation, collective ownership, equality, cultural resonance, and empowerment, the clergy's online communicative practices validate that the digital transmission of faith is most successful when it functions as a collaborative, development-oriented social action.

Chapter 6:
Research Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

Research Summary

This study examined how Catholic clergy enact digital evangelization through communicative practices that promote engagement of the laity. Situated within the broader shift of religious communication to online platforms, the study addressed the problem of how engagement is interactionally achieved despite the seemingly one-way nature of digital homilies. Anchored in ethnomethodology and operationalized through Conversation Analysis (CA), the study focused on how clergy "do interaction" in a mediated setting by drawing on the structures of everyday talk.

A pre-recorded homily delivered during the Feast of the Santo Niño served as the primary data. The analysis demonstrated that, although monologic in form, the homily exhibits recognizable interactional features such as questioning, pausing, emphasizing, and projecting audience responses. These features allow the priest to simulate dialogue and sustain audience involvement.

In relation to RQ1, the findings show that engagement is achieved through recurring communicative practices. Foremost among these is the use of simulated dialogue through rhetorical structures. Because the homily is a pre-recorded material, there is no actual, physical turn-taking occurring between the priest and the laity. **Instead, by utilizing embedded question-and-answer sequences, the priest successfully executes**

implicit turn-taking that happens entirely in the mind of the audience. By posing a question, he creates the expectation of a response and mentally "gives the floor" to the viewer before completing the conversational pair himself. **This structural choice momentarily opens a cognitive response slot, forcing the audience out of passive listening and into active, internal participation.** Other key practices include the use of inclusive language to construct shared identity, code-switching to enhance cultural resonance, narrative and imagery to ground abstract messages, and an empathetic tone to align with the audience's lived experiences. **These practices collectively transform the monologic homily into an interactionally engaging event, enabling cognitive, emotional, and spiritual participation from the laity.**

In relation to RQ2, the study found that these communicative practices reflect core development communication principles. The priest's use of simulated dialogue operationalizes participation and dialogue, while inclusive and culturally grounded language demonstrates audience-centeredness and cultural sensitivity. Moreover, the homily's movement toward prayer and invitation to trust in God reflects empowerment, as the audience is positioned as active agents in responding to the message.

Overall, the study establishes that digital homilies are not merely content delivery mechanisms but are interactionally constructed spaces. Through systematic communicative practices, clergy reproduce

the norms of everyday interaction in digital contexts, thereby sustaining engagement and fostering a sense of participation and community among the laity.

Research Conclusion

Conclusions from this study affirm that Catholic clergy can effectively foster engagement and a sense of community in digital evangelization by using ordinary conversational practices in their online content. In answer to RQ1, the clergy's digital communicative practices that promote laity engagement were clearly identified. **The priest in the study transformed a one-way sermon into an interaction-rich encounter by simulating dialogue and utilizing other interactional strategies. By posing rhetorical questions, he created the expectation of a response and mentally "gave the floor" to his audience. He then often followed up with an answer or comment, effectively completing both parts of a conversational pair by himself. This approach means the priest was essentially "talking to and with his audience rather than at them," maintaining a conversational flow despite the lack of physical feedback.** Additionally, frequent use of inclusive language and personal address, such as greeting viewers collectively, helped establish a shared identity and rapport, positioning the priest and online laity as members of one community journeying together. Storytelling and relatable examples from everyday life, delivered in a warm, empathetic tone, further

drew viewers in by connecting the Gospel message to their personal experiences and feelings. These conclusions highlight that even in a digital medium, traditional pastoral communication can be interactive. **The clergy's micro-level tactics, from adjacency pairs, dialogic questions, and emphatic tone, all work together to sustain the faithful's attention and invite their unseen participation.** In short, the priest's conversational style of preaching online cultivates engagement, as the viewers are treated not as passive observers but as implicit dialogue partners in the homily.

In answer to RQ2, the study concludes that these engagement strategies are underpinned by fundamental development communication principles, revealing a strong alignment between effective digital ministry and development-oriented communication. **The priest's methods exemplify a participatory approach: he involves the audience cognitively and spiritually at each step, reflecting the DevCom ideal that people are not mere receivers of messages but active participants in the communication process.** The simulated Q&A and invitation to pray together embody the principle of two-way dialogue, emphasizing listening and responding over one-way transmission. Likewise, his consistent use of "we" and "our" language and his acknowledgment that "we all face these struggles" demonstrate equality and solidarity, flattening the usual hierarchy between clergy and laity in favor of a more mutual, empowering relationship. The bilingual code-switching and use of local idioms or cultural touchstones (like the Santo Niño devotion) show a commitment to cultural sensitivity and

audience-centeredness, tailoring the message to the linguistic and cultural context of the parishioners. Moreover, by giving voice to the audience's unspoken questions and fears, and then addressing them with compassion, the priest practices an empathetic, human-centered communication, validating the laity's real-life concerns within the homily. This empathetic stance in turn carries an implicit message of empowerment: the faithful are reassured that their everyday struggles are heard and that they have an active role, through faith and prayer, in overcoming them. By the end of the homily, when the priest invites collective prayer and the community prays together, the laity are effectively transformed from passive listeners into co-creators of the faith experience, echoing the development communication ideal of community ownership of the process.

Overall, the conclusions suggest that digital religious communication benefits greatly from being approached as dialogical, participatory, and audience-focused rather than as a top-down broadcast. **A significant methodological contribution of this research is demonstrating how implicit turn-taking and cognitive participation can be systematically analyzed in digital evangelization, even in the absence of actual, synchronous conversation.** By revealing these hidden interactional structures, the study proves that the engaging online homily functioned as a true 'dialogue of faith', wherein the priest and people (though physically apart) co-constructed a sense of community and shared meaning through interactive cues. This insight has broader implications: it positions digital evangelization

as 'socially organized action', much like a development initiative, where success depends on engaging and uplifting the community, not just disseminating information. In bridging ethnomethodology and development communication, the study validates the idea that effective ministry in the digital age is fundamentally collaborative. Priests who adopt inclusive, responsive communicative practices are, in fact, leveraging the same principles that make development programs effective, thereby enhancing their evangelizing mission. Ultimately, this study succeeds in surfacing the foundational assumption that digital evangelization is inherently guided by underlying development communication principles. By illuminating the deeper meaning behind these actions, the research highlights that religious communication, much like DevCom, is fundamentally driven by the goal of social transformation and changing perspectives. **Because these underlying principles define the communicative actions in both physical and digital spaces, the practices remain fundamentally the same. This provides profound confidence that transitioning to a digital platform does not compromise or water down the essence of the Gospel. Instead, it preserves the purity of the message and the true intention of the Church, fostering genuine encounters and shared understanding, proving that its core mission remains intact and powerful regardless of the medium.**

Recommendation

Methodological Recommendation

While this study successfully utilized Conversation Analysis to demonstrate how clergy structurally invite implicit turn-taking and cognitive participation in a pre-recorded, monologic format, there is a vast opportunity to further explore this phenomenon in asynchronous settings. It is highly recommended that future studies analyze actual audience responses, such as comments, reactions, and typed feedback in various forms of digital evangelization. By examining other content, researchers can observe explicit turn-taking, treating the audience's typed comments as direct "second-pair parts" to the priest's rhetorical prompts. Analyzing these concrete interactional responses will provide deeper empirical evidence of how the laity actively co-constructs the "dialogue of faith" and further illuminate the extent of their participatory engagement in the digital public square.

Practical Recommendation

In light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered not only for clergy engaged in digital evangelization but also for other communicators who design and deliver messages on digital platforms. While the study focuses on religious preaching, the

communicative practices identified, such as simulated dialogue, inclusive language, narrative storytelling, empathetic tone, and audience participation, are widely applicable to other fields of communication. These insights may benefit educators, digital content creators, motivational speakers, development communication practitioners, and civic communicators who seek to foster engagement and meaningful interaction with online audiences. These direct, actionable suggestions draw from the study's actual results:

- **Simulate a Dialogue with the Online Audience:** Communicators in digital settings may incorporate rhetorical questions and anticipated responses to create the structure of a two-way interaction. By posing questions and allowing space for reflection before offering a response, the message invites active mental participation. This approach transforms a monologic delivery into an interactionally organized exchange that sustains audience engagement.
- **Use Inclusive Language to Build Community:** Communicators may use inclusive language that positions themselves within the same community as the audience. Expressions such as "we" and "our" construct a shared identity and reinforce the collective nature of the message. This reduces hierarchical distance and encourages audiences to see themselves as active participants rather than passive recipients.

- **Incorporate Local Language and Cultural References:** Communicators may integrate code-switching and culturally familiar references to make messages more accessible and resonant. Drawing from shared linguistic and cultural contexts allows the content to connect more directly with the lived experiences of the audience, reflecting an audience-centered and culturally sensitive approach.
- **Tell Relatable Stories and Visualize Concepts:** Communicators may use narratives, anecdotes, and concrete imagery to communicate ideas more effectively. By grounding abstract concepts in familiar experiences, messages become more understandable and engaging. This enables audiences to relate the content to their own contexts, supporting deeper reflection.
- **Adopt an Empathetic and Encouraging Tone:** Communicators may acknowledge the emotional and situational realities of their audience and respond with empathy. By articulating shared experiences and offering reassurance, the message fosters trust and creates a supportive communicative environment that encourages sustained engagement.
- **Invite Active Participation (Even Remotely):** Communicators may incorporate elements that explicitly invite participation, such as prompts for reflection, responses, or collective action. Even in

digital contexts, these strategies position audiences as active contributors, reinforcing participation and strengthening a sense of community.

Each of these recommendations stems from verified communicative tactics observed in the research. By consciously implementing these strategies, Catholic clergy and their media teams can enhance digital evangelization efforts, making online evangelization content more interactive, inclusive, and impactful for the faithful. Embracing these practices not only aligns with the Church's mission to evangelize in modern forums but also echoes the proven principles of engaging and uplifting communities through communication.

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Declaration of AI Use

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