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The Meaning of Prayer for Young Catholic Religious Sisters of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Carolus Borromeus Mulyatno¹, Veronika Puji Astuti¹

¹Faculty of Theology, Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Carolus Borromeus Mulyatno; Email: carlomul@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research aims to obtain data on the meaning of prayer for young Catholic religious of the Congregation of Blessed Virgin Mary of Amersfoort of Samarinda Province. The data collected included three things that were formulated in three questions as research instruments. First, what kind of prayer atmosphere is experienced? Second, what are the benefits of prayer? Third, what are the fruits of prayer experienced? The three questions became research instruments used to collect data using the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. The data were analyzed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) theoretical framework. An important finding of this study is that the dominant atmosphere of prayer is silence, calm, full of gratitude, and close to God. The benefits of prayer are felt as a blessed experience to relate, communicate, and be with God. Prayer is also felt as a graceful experience that is very helpful for processing personal struggles and affirming steps in living life in fulfilling vocations and missions as a religious. The fruits of prayer include deeper self-knowledge, the experience of being loved by God, the experience of being supported by God's grace, the spiritual support of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the spirit of life renewal, and experiencing the figure of God as a Father who treats longing for a male figure or a father.

INTRODUCTION

Prayer is an important part of the dynamic life of believers. In Indonesia, which is known as a nation with a very strong tradition of religious life, most community members inherit the habit of prayer in the life of faith from family and community. In addition to ritual prayers of worship carried out together in the community, personal prayer has an important role. In carrying out the appreciation and implementation of the duties of a life of faith, prayer is one of the most meaningful spiritual supports (Kiyani et al., 2011). Prayer has an important meaning in maintaining mental health that affects the implementation of life responsibilities (Sharma & Singh, 2019). Prayer provides benefits and meaning in supporting a full, full, and quality life (Newman et al., 2023).

Prayer constitutes a vital component in the dynamic life of believers. In Indonesian society, known as a nation with deeply rooted religious traditions, the majority of community members

inherit prayer practices in their faith experience from family and community contexts. Beyond communal ritual worship conducted collectively within communities, personal prayer plays a significant role. In experiencing and fulfilling the responsibilities of faith-based living, prayer serves as profoundly meaningful spiritual support. Prayer holds substantial importance in maintaining mental health, which influences the execution of life responsibilities (Lekhak et al., 2023). Thus, prayer provides benefits and meaning in supporting holistic, complete, and quality living.

For Indonesian citizens living within the context of ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural diversity, encompassing thousands of islands and 740 local languages (Khoerunisa & Yuliani, 2025), prayer activities not only contribute to forming individual moral character but also foster spiritual-social virtues that underpin life (Elon & Pardosi, 2025). All citizens adhering to Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism,

Confucianism, and local belief systems contribute to preserving unity in diversity for developing a prosperous, harmonious, just, and peaceful society based on knowledge and appreciation of their faith values. Prayer activities and meanings play a role in cultivating multicultural-religious awareness that forms an integral part of Indonesian society's identity, building unity in diversity (Gede Agung et al., 2024).

Each religion and belief system inherits prayer traditions and practices prayer as part of essential faith-based living activities (Newman et al., 2023; Rosidin, 2016). Among Indonesian Catholics, who numerically constitute a minority group, there exists a group of religious women or nuns. These are Catholic women who, from their youth, choose celibate life (not marrying) and unite in religious groups known as religious congregations to live lives of prayer, community, and humanitarian social service (Sudarman et al., 2025). Like male Catholic religious members—priests and brothers—female religious members called nuns or sisters live their lives as a special calling from God through a life of prayer, fraternal community among congregation members, and fulfilling the congregation's mission (Eze et al., 2015).

For female religious members or nuns, prayer life constitutes an integral part of their calling and mission in the world. Prayer becomes the breath of believers' lives amid worldly challenges because prayer represents a crucial step in the process of life renewal amid various contemporary challenges (Newman et al., 2023). According to Munroe (2002), the meanings of prayer are: a path to experiencing an intimate relationship with God, giving integral meaning to life, and affirmation for carrying out humanitarian missions in living toward eternity. The dialogical relationship with God experienced in prayer becomes the foundation for integral self-development that strengthens the appreciation of life as executors of humanitarian missions in this world (Puchalska-Wasył & Zarzycka, 2020).

Prayer represents a spiritual journey to build and experience an intimate relationship with God, the Creator. Prayer is also understood as the experience of dwelling in God. Relationship with God is preserved through habits of communal and personal prayer. Therefore, disciplined prayer habits play important roles in life's journey that involves

God's intervention so that worldly events are directed toward the eternal future. In his research, Onyeije (2025) emphasizes prayer's role in preserving the intimate relationship between God and humanity.

Prayer serves as motivation for building healthy lifestyles physically, psychologically, spiritually, and socially. An intimate relationship with God experienced in prayer influences physical, spiritual, mental, and social health integrally. God's strength drawn from prayer positively influences life appreciation, disciplined life organization and fulfillment, and motivates social solidarity in communal living (Tatar, 2021a). Prayer habits help believers increasingly purify their understanding of God's image and self-recognition as God's messengers. Prayer plays an important role in fostering faith or an intimate relationship with God that affirms, develops awareness of God's accompanying presence that strengthens self-development responsibility, and motivates solidarity with fellow humans in building communal life (Munroe, 2002). Awareness of the calling essence helps believers and religious members live in free choices based on faith, teaching values. Thus, prayer experiences depicting an intimate personal relationship between believers and God ultimately become life foundations for executing humanitarian mission tasks in realizing human salvation (Krause & Hayward, 2013).

Prayer plays an important role in developing personal quality as believers. Prayer represents expressions of humility, awareness of limitations or imperfection, and openness to always seek God's help. Many people understand prayer as heart expressions for requesting God to fulfill all individual and family needs. Humility and simplicity constitute life choices spiritually driven by awareness of limitations and simultaneously motivation to always seek God's help in fulfilling life responsibly in faith's light. Prayer becomes a path for holistic personality purification (Predeko, 2023).

Prayer is often directed toward requesting God to extend His hand to humanity so life's problems can be solved. Prayer is also often understood as an effort to calm the heart, overcome worries, and opportunities to experience peace and tranquility in a close relationship intimacy with God. Prayer becomes a path to experiencing supernatural

strength within the heart. Divine strength experienced in prayer provides peace (Krause & Hayward, 2013).

Praying constitutes a way and path of faith-based living to overcome self-love or egoism for increasingly caring lives serving others and creation. Prayer content consists of real-life experiences as believers colored by joy, sorrow, and responsibility for developing communal life (Van Der Merwe, 2018). Life's ups and downs also color prayer's fluctuations. A love relationship with God does not always proceed smoothly and warmly. Prayer can bring blazing experiences. However, sometimes arid experiences (Mulyatno, 2019) also emerge. Prayer becomes a means for experiencing God's love in this life, whether in enthusiastic or weary situations (Lekhak et al., 2023).

Deep prayer increasingly fosters cooperation and dialogue for building fraternal communal life, caring for environmental preservation, and realizing peaceful communal life (Mulyatno, 2019). Prayer becomes a dialogue experience between humans and God that encourages humans to realize fraternal life in the spirit. Prayer's dialogical character becomes the foundation for developing brotherhood with all people from various backgrounds for realizing a love culture, defending human dignity, achieving justice and peace, and serving the poor (Tatar, 2021a).

For religious members of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, prayer constitutes spiritual strength for living, calling, and mission virtues. Prayer represents an intimate relationship with God lived within every life event and activity (Shoemaker, 2006). Prayer becomes a strong foundation for increasingly identifying with St. Virgin Mary as the Congregation's patron. Mary's virtues lived include faith attitudes that enable God to become strong in humans. Through Mary, SPM religious members are led to Jesus and live according to His Good News. The Good News lived by Jesus becomes the foundation for executing humanitarian missions as SPM religious members within the context of Indonesia's pluralistic society. Prayer for SPM religious members becomes a spiritual journey to absorb Jesus' heart virtues that are easily compassionate toward humans and creation cries (Vega & Primeaux, 2007).

From the above description, it appears that prayer holds profound meaning for holistic life.

Prayer has three important meanings. First, prayer constitutes a personal spiritual relationship experience (Predeko, 2023). Second, prayer becomes a sign of psychosocial-spiritual maturity (Puchalska-Wasyl & Zarzycka, 2020; Tatar, 2021b). Third, prayer represents an expression of Catholic religious life (Krause & Hayward, 2013; Munroe, 2002).

The purpose of this research is to obtain data regarding the meaning of prayer for young religious members of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The meaning of prayer encompasses the prayer atmosphere experienced, prayer understanding, and benefits, as well as the fruits of prayer for daily life. Prayer meaning contains three dimensions: individual, communal, and social-humanitarian or missionary dimensions. Thus, prayer becomes the breath and pulse of holistic life rather than merely a means for filling inner emptiness. Nevertheless, there has been no published research on the meaning of prayer for the holistic life of young religious members. Therefore, the researcher is motivated to explore the experiences of young religious members of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary regarding the meaning of prayer for their personal life and religious mission.

METHODS

The focus group discussion (FGD) method was used by the researcher to collect data on the meaning of prayer for young religious of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Samarinda Province. Province refers to the ecclesiastical territory and service context of the religious. The FGDs involved all seven young or junior religious. They are between 22 and 26 years old and are categorised as young religious who have not yet made their final vows as permanent religious members. They have experienced between one and seven years of formation and accompaniment in the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the ninth year, a young religious in the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is allowed to apply to the provincial superior to take perpetual vows.

The FGD was conducted on 12 August 2024 at Maguwoharjo, Yogyakarta. The FGD took about 90 minutes and involved the researcher, a notetaker, and 7 participants. The relatively small number of FGD participants, namely 7 people, allows the FGD

process to run intensively, and each participant has the opportunity to convey their ideas and opinions (Creswell, 2013). The research subjects of the FGDs were young religious members of the SPM congregation who work in the context of a pluralistic society in terms of religion, belief, ethnicity, race, and culture. They work in the social and educational fields in Banjarmasin, Samarinda, Tangerang, and West Kutai. Encounters with Muslims occur in their work and daily interactions. FGD has several advantages that are suitable for the objectives of this research. FGD is a valuable method for exploring deep experiences, generating rich and nuanced data through open-ended discussions among diverse participants. It provides contextual understanding, diverse perspectives, and in-depth insights into complex issues, ultimately offering a comprehensive understanding of experiences and meanings.

The research instrument consists of questions formulated based on the conceptual framework of three meanings of prayer. First, how do young religious members experience the atmosphere of prayer? Second, how do young religious members understand the meaning of prayer? Third, what are the fruits of prayer for daily life? The collected data is then interpreted and analyzed using the theoretical framework of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA is a systematic method to uncover the meaning of individuals' experiences in depth (Willig & Rogers, 2017). Why use the IPA framework? IPA provides an in-depth understanding of individual experiences and meanings. With its phenomenological focus, interpretative approach, and idiographic emphasis, IPA offers a contextual and holistic understanding of human experiences (Alase, 2017; Smith et al., 2013). IPA also provides nuanced insights into the complex nature of human experiences, informing theory, practice, and policy in various fields. In the IPA theoretical framework, deep experience becomes an important element that is analysed, and the ultimate meaning is found (Qutoshi, 2018). Then, the meaning of prayer is analysed from three dimensions of prayer, namely personal, communal, and missionary dimensions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data obtained through FGDs are described the meaning of prayer includes the atmosphere of prayer, the meaning of prayer, and the benefits and fruits of prayer. These three things are then presented in the form of descriptive descriptions.

Atmosphere of Prayer

During the FGD session on August 12th, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM, each participant expressed their willingness to actively engage and share their personal experiences regarding the meaning of prayer. Concerning the atmosphere of prayer, the most prominent experiences were feelings of gratitude and stillness. A distinctive expression from several participants was, "prayer makes the heart feel grateful and still".

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) revealed important data indicating that the dominant atmosphere of prayer is characterized by gratitude, silence, and a sense of closeness to God. Young religious sisters experience prayer as a moment that provides psychological calmness. In addition, they also encounter a spiritual atmosphere of intimacy with God, marked by a deep sense of gratitude. The gratitude found in prayer strengthens their personal life. Another aspect of the prayer atmosphere is the experience of peace and tranquility, which reduces anxiety and provides strength to love God more deeply.

Understanding of Prayer

Regarding the question about the meaning of prayer, at the initial stage, the FGD participants were somewhat slow to respond. They tended to immediately explain the impact or benefits of prayer in their lives as religious. However, with prompting questions such as how they came to know prayer and who taught them to pray, they gradually began to explain that prayer is a spiritual experience of a relationship with God. The phrase "a relationship of love with God" emerged as a key expression in understanding the meaning of prayer.

The FGD revealed that the understanding of prayer is diverse. First, prayer is understood as an opportunity to experience God's love. Second, prayer is seen as an affirmation of one's mission as a religious. Third, prayer strengthens the awareness that the entirety of life is essentially prayer or a personal relationship with God. Fourth, prayer becomes a moment to draw closer to God. Fifth, prayer is seen as an opportunity to dwell in God.

Sixth, prayer is understood as self-recognition and religious identity. From these six understandings of prayer, it is evident that prayer is viewed as a personal relationship with a loving God who sends and calls one to a deeper awareness of their identity and mission as a religious. Therefore, prayer is also understood as an integrated life in relationship with God that affects self-knowledge, strengthens religious identity, and affirms one's mission.

The understanding of prayer is connected to the meaning of a special vocation and mission that is lived out through celibacy or an unmarried life, to devote oneself fully to living in community with fellow religious and sincerely serving others. Prayer strengthens the awareness, conviction, and responsibility to carry out the mission in areas such as education, social work, and healthcare. The belief in the existence of this calling is also affirmed in the study by Sari and Setyawan (2017). Just as a vocation is believed to come from God, prayer is a gift from God that nurtures their conviction that in fulfilling their service tasks, they experience God's guidance and assistance.

The Benefits and Fruits of Prayer

In responding to the question about the benefits and fruits of prayer, the FGD participants were very enthusiastic. They engaged with this topic actively and eagerly. Several recurring keywords regarding the benefits and fruits of prayer included "affirmation of their vocation and mission as religious who are loved by God." Prayer is considered an essential part of their lives. In fact, it was repeatedly expressed that prayer constitutes the wholeness of their lives. The discussion on this topic lasted nearly 50 minutes.

The data shows that prayer is highly beneficial and meaningful in the life of religious individuals. This section is richer and more profound than the components on prayer atmosphere and understanding. This supports the hypothesis of this study that for religious persons, prayer holds abundant meaning, benefits, and fruits.

The first benefit of prayer is the strength to carry out social responsibilities through communal life, both in joy and hardship. This idea resonates with the experience of Thérèse of Lisieux, who described how prayer strengthened her patience when being humiliated by others (Clarke, 1996). Prayer brings meaning to life in fulfilling responsibilities and contributing to the common

good. Prayer supports the implementation of the human mission to continuously transform the world.

Prayer becomes a spiritual experience that refreshes one's inner life and strengthens the identity of being called a person of prayer. A key finding in the experience of prayer is the deep awareness of one's mission as a religious. Living as a person of prayer helps young sisters of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary realize that their vocation and mission—or human mission—is a unified whole that flows from the experience of being loved by God.

The culmination of the meaning of prayer for the young sisters of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary is found in their experience of the fruits of prayer. They experience prayer as a moment that bears awareness and conviction about God's role in their vocation and mission. Awareness of religious identity influences existential freedom and leads to a quality life choice in carrying out their ministry (Faiq, 2022). The forms of God's role include strength and perseverance in both smooth and challenging ministries, fluency in handling tasks, constructive solutions in overcoming service-related problems, and sincerity of heart in serving others.

The fruit of prayer for young sisters of the SPM congregation is humility, embracing silence without self-display or excessive speech. This aligns with the faith teaching that serves as a guide for living out prayer as a foundation for carrying out God's will for the good of all creation. It can be affirmed that the fruit of prayer is the greater self-emptying and allowing oneself to be filled by God, and a deepened commitment to live out one's vocation and mission in service to others within society.

Prayer also bears the fruit of personal awareness and conviction that their vocation as persons of prayer and their mission in the world are entrusted by God and rooted in His love (Tatar, 2021a). In prayer, they discover spiritual fruit—being strengthened in living their vocation and mission. The first and foremost vocation is to grow in love for Jesus and to dwell in God's love. Prayer becomes the inner strength to live out this calling and mission in daily life, both in community and in ministry. Grounded in the awareness and conviction that the vocation and mission come from God, the young sisters of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary recognize the importance of self-emptying, to

be filled with the power of God's love in living out their calling and mission (Clarke, 1996). Through self-emptying, they are helped to prioritize God's will, know themselves more deeply, and experience the help of Jesus. As members of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary, they also experience prayer's fruit as a personal affirmation of always being called and sent, with the accompaniment of Mother Mary. The human dimension drawn from prayer is growing in patience and offering total commitment in service. The spiritual dimension of the fruits of prayer includes experiences of union with God and renewed relationship with Him (Wijaya et al., 2025). The psychological dimension includes experiencing closeness with God as a loving Father.

This study has successfully provided data addressing three key questions about the meaning of prayer: the experienced atmosphere, the understanding of prayer, and the benefits and fruits of prayer. In previously published research, there has not been any integrated attempt to connect prayer with these three variables. No prior studies or publications have specifically explored the relationship between the atmosphere of prayer and the understanding and meaning of prayer.

First, the findings reveal that the atmosphere experienced by young religious sisters during prayer includes feelings of gratitude, silence, peace, and a sense of closeness to a loving God. The experience of discovering meaning in the act and atmosphere of prayer, which brings peace and closeness to God, aligns with the findings of Wijaya et al. (2025). The peace that prayer brings has a significant impact on community life. In other words, inner peace through prayer leads to a life of harmony and peace (Rosidin, 2016). Closeness to God, gratitude, calm, and silence emerge as the dominant experiences in daily prayer life. Living as a person of prayer nurtures an intimate relationship with God in everyday life, fostering inner peace and gratitude (Krause & Hayward, 2013). Inner calm contributes to mental health and productivity. For Catholic sisters, maintaining the habit of prayer is a consequence of their commitment to live out their vocation and mission (Kim, 2022).

Second, prayer provides real benefits in the life of a religious person. It helps give meaning to life as a vocation and a mission to serve others. Through inner peace developed by consistent prayer, religious individuals can take distance from daily

work routines and cultivate spiritual sensitivity to the voice of God, the Creator (Prabowo, 2022). An intimate relationship with God, fostering the ability to hear His voice and will, is a key aspect of religious vocation. Perseverance in practicing and understanding prayer leads to inner purification.

The benefits of prayer for young SPM religious sisters include continuously directing and awakening their awareness of their identity as religious women and the supernatural strength of God in their personal lives and service to others. Prayer helps them better understand themselves, strengthens their religious identity, and enhances personal quality in fulfilling their daily responsibilities of faith (Flanigan, 2007; Van Der Merwe, 2018). Regarding the meaning of prayer as a relational and holistic experience, young religious need to be guided to understand prayer as a unifying experience of the heart with Jesus, who knows, cares, loves, and is moved to serve the suffering. Prayer should support the growth of personal, communal, and missionary life quality (Elon & Pardosi, 2025).

Third, the study also reveals important data regarding the fruits of prayer. Prayer produces a sense of intimacy with God and a dwelling in Him. This is in line with the biblical teaching that the call to abide in the Lord is meant to experience His love and bring forth abundant joy (Barus, 2023). Gratitude and inner peace are signs of joy in faith. The data also shows that prayer yields an experience of being loved by God in daily life, in line with the findings of Wahyuni (2014). For religious individuals, the experience of being loved by God should bear fruit in a commitment to build fraternity in community life (Tatar, 2021a). The connection between prayer and strengthening the commitment to build brotherhood in religious life is one dimension of prayer that must be reinforced in the accompaniment of young religious.

A particularly notable finding is that prayer can bring healing from emotional wounds—such as those caused by a lack of fatherly affection. Healing from such wounds through prayer is a unique finding. Christian theology, based on Scripture and tradition, affirms that one of the fruits of prayer—both of Jesus and the faithful—is healing (Cosmin Tudor Ciocan, 2021). The experience of closeness with God fills the longing for a father figure through God's fatherly presence. This experience

brings spiritual healing from the lack of paternal affection.

Beyond its spiritual dimension, prayer also has an affective dimension. It inspires motivation for holistic renewal and purification. Regarding the renewal of life experienced as the fruit of prayer, the experience of the young sisters of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary aligns with Pope Francis's affirmation that prayer is a source of ongoing conversion and personal transformation (Korpi, 2020). This renewal, as a conversion process, leads to deeper self-knowledge in one's relationship with God and a greater commitment to human mission.

Young religious sisters experience prayer as a moment that strengthens their awareness of God's presence in their vocation and mission (Turysbekova et al., 2025). Prayer strengthens both the awareness and resolve to carry out the human mission with responsibility (Lekhak et al., 2023). In undertaking this mission, prayer becomes a power that enables the self to overcome anxiety, pessimism, and helplessness. Prayer brings inner calm that contributes to mental well-being and work productivity (Newman et al., 2023). The human relationship with God—sustained through prayer—strengthens the conviction that God is involved in human life, making the journey one of fulfilling a responsibility to embody a human mission that leads to eternal union with Him.

Based on the research data, young religious sisters discover the meaning of prayer as a personal relationship with God. Prayer is a source of peace, calm, and affirmation in living one's vocation and mission. Prayer is a spiritual practice that matures religious life. The results show that prayer plays a significant role in the development of personal maturity.

There are three distinctive contributions of this study compared to previous research. First, it explores the experience of prayer in an integrative way—linking atmosphere, understanding, benefits, and fruits of prayer. Second, it focuses on young religious sisters of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary who live out their vocation and mission as praying women and servants of society uniquely. Third, the meaning of prayer—based on their life experiences—produces data on the individual, communal, and missionary dimensions of religious life. Thus, the experience of prayer has an integral

significance: it matures personal religious life, strengthens community fraternity, and empowers service to others.

One important area that still needs to be strengthened in the formation of young religious is understanding prayer as a means of maturing compassion, care, and the struggle for a just, dignified, and fraternal life—especially for the poor and marginalized (Okafor, 2014). The quality of personal, communal, and ministerial life reflects or radiates from deep faith and prayer experiences. Every religious life is linked to authentic prayer. All activities must demonstrate a strong relevance to real-life contexts and contribute to the development of society through inclusive cooperation and dialogue.

Young religious sisters need support to understand prayer and cultivate the spiritual experience of being women of prayer who are motivated to be in solidarity with others, the suffering, and creation. In relation to the vocation and mission of believers, prayer is a force that inspires solidarity with the suffering (Deorji, 2025). Therefore, an essential aim is to foster a proper understanding and experience of prayer that impacts the quality of service and commitment to build communal life. Prayer has internal effects on strengthening personal faith, communal effects on developing religious fraternity, and external effects on improving service quality in society for the realization of a more fraternal, just, and peaceful world. The experience of prayer can also be shared through various media, including digital platforms that can inspire many.

Another key area that needs to be strengthened in the lives of young religious sisters is accompaniment for bearing witness—especially in ministry and interactions with young people—about the meaning of prayer. In relation to youth, young religious women need support in developing digital literacy connected to their vocation and mission of proclaiming faith values (Kreis & Crammond, 2021). This is consistent with their experience of Mary's accompaniment found in prayer, which fosters shared awareness among young religious to care about societal problems and shared life challenges. They need to nurture a critical and empathetic relationship in interpreting the joys and sorrows of humanity and the world's concerns as

sources of growth in prayer, community life, witness, and mission in the world.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that the objectives set out at the beginning can be achieved. The data showing the achievement of the research objectives are as follows. Firstly, prayer activities build a positive psychological and spiritual atmosphere in personal life. Young religious people experience an atmosphere of gratitude, calmness, and closeness to God. This confirms that prayer supports the development of personal maturity and mental health. Still related to the personal dimension of prayer, young religious experience the benefits of prayer for self-knowledge, purification of life, and affirmation of identity as religiously called and sent by God. Secondly, prayer provides an abundance of fruit that supports vocation and mission. The humanitarian mission dimension of prayer is evident in this finding. What has not been clearly revealed from the results of this study is the communal dimension of prayer. This means that the young religious have not explicitly expressed the meaning of prayer for improving the quality of brotherhood in community life.

Starting from the results of this study, young religious people need assistance to find the meaning of prayer more deeply. The meaning of prayer for the vocation and mission of fraternal community life needs to be understood and lived out in the lives of religious. In addition, the humanitarian mission dimension of prayer needs to be deepened by understanding, awareness, and appreciation of prayer life to increase compassion and impartiality for the poor and marginalised. Awareness of self-emptying becomes an asset to witness a simple life as a religious who relies on the power of God's love in service to the poor, in line with the spirituality of the prayer of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The results of this study contribute academically and pedagogically. Academically, this research contributes to providing one of the models of reflecting real phenomena and experiences in scientific writing. Pedagogically, the results of this study contribute to the religious of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to recognise the level of depth of meaning of prayer for their young religious. This is very useful for providing continuous accompaniment for young religious in

the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and various congregations, so that young religious are facilitated to reach a level of meaning of prayer that affects the depth of meaning of their vocation and mission.

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