



The Materiality of Rosary Prayer and the Negotiation of Digital Media at Saint Odilia Parish, Cicadas, Bandung

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Abstract

Catholic devotion in urban settings faces the pressures of mediatization, which bring embodied experience into tension with the touchscreen. This article examines Rosary devotion at Saint Odilia Parish Church in Cicadas, Diocese of Bandung, asking how parishioners practice the devotion, interpret its symbolic meaning, and negotiate it within contemporary social life. The study adopts a qualitative, intrinsic-analytic single-case design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the head of the parish youth ministry, observation of devotional artifacts, and analysis of parish bulletins and digital communication channels. The data were examined using critical thematic analysis and interpreted through the theories of the Mediatization of Religion, Material Religion, and the Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST). Three findings emerge. First, devotional motivations differ across generations: older parishioners regard the Rosary as preparation for death, whereas younger Catholics select devotional practices according to their affinity with categorical communities. Second, parishioners continue to use physical rosary beads; digital Rosary applications are not customary, either individually or communally. Third, the parish treats digital media as an auxiliary resource for catechesis and emergency pastoral care (the cyberpulpit), without allowing it to displace the teaching on the real presence (*praesentia realis*), the materiality of the sacraments within incarnational theology, or the bodily assembly of the faithful (*assemblea*).

Keywords: *Digital Religion, Material Religion, Mediatization of Religion, Praesentia Realis, Rosary Devotion, RSST.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The convergence of digital media has situated religious institutions within an interconnected cultural landscape often described as networked religion. Within this landscape, communication technologies continually shift the boundaries between the sacred and the profane (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021). The sociology of religion examines this shift through the framework of the mediatization of religion. Hjarvard (2008) explains that mediatization does not merely transmit religious messages through technology. Rather, it transforms religious structures in a two-way process: religious practices, symbols, and authorities gradually adapt to media's operating rules, speed, and aesthetic demands—its media logic. Some observers argue that mediatization erodes sacred solemnity, turns communal rituals into spectacles, and reduces embodied encounters to two-dimensional images on device screens (Lövheim, 2016).



However, the assumption that digitalization necessarily weakens religious orthodoxy is challenged by the perspective of material religion. Meyer (2009) argues that religion never operates in pure abstraction. It works through “sensational forms”: aesthetic, embodied, and material arrangements that connect human beings with the transcendent. From this perspective, faith is not simply the rational acceptance of doctrinal propositions. It also requires embodied practice: fingers touch, eyes look, noses perceive sacred scents, and trained vision forms a sacred gaze (Morgan, 2005). This study uses Meyer’s concept as an analytical lens for interpreting parishioners’ practices, not as a theological definition of devotion. At this intersection, popular Catholic devotion—especially the Rosary—reveals a tension between the efficiency demanded by digital media and the materiality of the praying body.

The Catholic Church takes a distinctive and cautious approach to digital spaces. In its recent pastoral document on communication, *Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with social media*, the Dicastery for Communication emphasizes that engagement in digital spaces should serve fully human encounters (Dicastery for Communication, 2023). Digital spaces can indeed function as a third space connecting people in prayer across distances (Campbell, 2010). Nevertheless, Catholic sacramental theology does not accept the idea of digital sacraments and liturgy (Spadaro, 2014). This position rests on the dogma of *praesentia realis* (real presence) and on the incarnational principle governing sacramental matter, which cannot be transformed into binary code or pixels (Schmidt, 2020). The Church therefore accepts digital platforms only as a cyberpulpit: a means of reaching people in virtual spaces and directing them back toward physical encounters in church spaces (Schmidt, 2020).

In Indonesia, research on the mediatization of religion has largely examined urban Islamic preaching, virtual hijrah movements, or changes in Pentecostal-Charismatic church liturgy after the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, research on how Catholic parish communities manage tensions among adherence to sacramental dogma, Marian devotional traditions, and the influence of new media remains limited. This article addresses that research gap. Rosary prayer combines meditation on the mysteries of Christ’s salvation with the repeated recitation of the Hail Mary while the faithful move the beads through their fingers. Although the Rosary is not one of the principal sacraments, it involves tactile bodily participation and intense embodied fellowship at the local community level (*lingkungan*).

This study investigates Rosary prayer at Saint Odilia Parish Church in Cicadas, Diocese of Bandung. The parish is located in eastern Bandung, a densely populated area of industry and working-class housing, and thus reflects the dynamics of an urban congregation shaped by high levels of work-related mobility. Against this background, the study asks three questions: (1) How do existential motivations and generational differences shape Rosary devotion amid the busy lives of Cicadas’s urban residents? (2) How do parishioners interpret the dialectic between the tactile materiality of rosary beads and the virtuality of digital media? (3) How does the parish community negotiate the theological boundary between digital media functions and the sacramental principles of the Church?



2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs four frameworks: the Mediatization of Religion, the perspective of Material Religion, the Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST), and the Catholic Church's teaching on devotion. The first three frameworks come from religious and media studies and are used as analytical lenses for interpreting parishioners' practices. The fourth derives from Church teaching and serves as a reference for understanding the nature of devotion and the limits of digital media in liturgy. The distinction is maintained so that sociological interpretations of parishioners' practices do not replace theological understandings of devotion.

2.1. Mediatization of Religion

Hjarvard (2008) uses mediatization to explain how media have become relatively independent institutions in society and how other institutions, including religion, adapt to them. Religious practices, symbols, and authorities gradually follow media logic: the rules of format, speed, and aesthetics that govern media. This concept differs from the mere use of media. Media do not simply transmit religious messages; they also help shape how religion is practiced and experienced.

The theory has prompted extensive discussion in religious and media studies (Hjarvard & Lövheim, 2012). Morgan (2011) argues that claims about mediatization should be tested against historical evidence, since religion and media were connected long before the digital era. Lövheim (2016) highlights face-to-face encounters as a challenge for the theory, an issue particularly relevant to neighborhood Rosary gatherings held in parishioners' living rooms.

This study uses mediatization to examine two issues: generational differences in devotional motivation and practice, and the position of digital media in parish life. Mediatization is treated as a hypothesis to be tested against field data, rather than as a predetermined conclusion.

2.2. Materiality of Religion

The perspective of Material Religion views religion as a practice that always unfolds through objects, bodies, and the senses (Houtman & Meyer, 2012). Meyer (2009) calls these modes "sensational forms"—relatively established and authorized forms through which the transcendent is made present, access to it is organized, and participants are bound together in a community. The word "sensational" refers to the senses, not to sensation in the sense of excitement or spectacle. Meyer (2012) adds that media and objects do not merely represent the divine; they help make presence perceptible.

Morgan complements this perspective through the study of visual culture. Morgan (1997) discusses the role of popular images in shaping popular piety, while Morgan (2005) explains how the ways people see and touch sacred objects form a sacred gaze.



This study uses the perspective to interpret rosary beads, the living rooms in which neighborhood prayers take place, and the act of touching while praying. It explains how the practice unfolds, but it does not determine the theological nature of devotion; for that question, the study refers to Church teaching in Section 2.4.

2.3. Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST)

Campbell (2010) developed RSST to explain how religious communities respond to new technologies. The approach rejects technological determinism. Religious communities are not passive recipients of technology; they evaluate, select, and organize technologies according to their own values. Campbell proposes four layers of analysis: the community's history and traditions; its core beliefs and patterns of practice; its processes of negotiating technology; and its communal framing and discourse about technology.

Research on prayer applications considers the affordances offered by technologies and the ways religious communities respond to them (Bellar, 2021; Campbell & Tsuria, 2021). This study translates the four layers into four analytical pillars: historical tradition and dogma; communal values and social priorities; technological negotiation and reconfiguration; and the articulation of communal discourse. These pillars are applied in Section 4.6.

2.4. Church Teaching on Devotion

The fourth framework comes from Catholic Church teaching. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1674) classifies the Rosary as a form of popular piety, alongside pilgrimages, processions, and the Stations of the Cross. CCC 1675 states that such expressions of piety extend the Church's liturgical life but do not replace it. The Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Article 13), stipulates that popular devotions should accord with the liturgy, derive from it, and lead the faithful back to it, because the liturgy surpasses every form of devotion.

CCC 1676 adds that pastoral discernment is needed to support popular piety and, when necessary, purify the religious understandings underlying it so that the faithful may grow in their knowledge of the mystery of Christ. In this formulation, the Church understands devotion as a concrete expression of faith connected to the liturgy, not as the pursuit of sensation or spectacle. This study therefore uses Church teaching to understand the meaning of devotion, while materiality theory helps explain its outward forms.

Regarding digital spaces, the Dicastery for Communication (2023) emphasizes that engagement on social media should serve fully human encounters. Spadaro (2014) and Schmidt (2020) discuss sacramental theology in the context of the internet, emphasizing embodied presence, sacramental matter, and the assembly of the faithful as conditions of liturgy. These three principles—*praesentia realis*, the incarnational principle of sacramental matter, and *assemblea*—guide the analysis of the limits of digital media in the parish (Section 4.5).



2.5. Analytical Framework

The four frameworks work together with different functions. The following table summarizes the function, key concepts, and research questions assisted by each framework.

Table 1. Summarizes the function, key concepts, and research questions assisted

Framework	Function and Key Concepts	Research Question
Mediatization of religion (Hjarvard, 2008)	Sociological lens for reading the relationship between religion and media. Key concepts: media logic, privatization, taste communities.	Question 1: motivation and generational differences
Material Religion (Meyer, 2009; Morgan, 2005)	Analytical lens for reading the role of body, objects, and senses. Key concepts: sensational forms, sacred gaze.	Question 2: meaning of physical beads and digital media
RSST (Campbell, 2010)	Analytical lens for reading how communities select technology. Key concepts: four layers of analysis.	Question 3: parish negotiation with digital media
Church formulation (CCC 1674–1676; Sacrosanctum Concilium 13)	Reference on the nature of devotion and the limits of digital media. Key concepts: devotion as extension of liturgy, praesentia realis, incarnation, assemblea.	Questions 2 and 3



The researcher uses the first three lenses to explain the parishioners' practice, and uses the Church formulation to understand what the parishioners mean by devotion and why the parish limits digital media.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative approach using an intrinsic-analytic case-study method (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2018). A qualitative approach was selected because the study explores subjective processes, cultural meanings, and Catholic parishioners' theological articulations of Rosary devotion in contemporary urban settings. A single-case design enables an in-depth understanding of a religious phenomenon embedded in one spatial and institutional context: the parish community of Saint Odilia Church in Cicadas.

3.2. Research Location and Context

The research was conducted at Saint Odilia Parish Church in Cicadas, located at Jalan Cikutra No. 7, Sukamaju, Cibeunying Kidul, Bandung. The parish falls under the East Bandung Deanery of the Diocese of Bandung and is pastorally administered by priests of the Order of the Holy Cross (OSC; Ordo Sanctae Crucis) (Paroki Santa Odilia Cicadas, 2022). The site was purposively selected because of its sociological characteristics: the parish is situated in a densely populated residential area near textile and manufacturing industries, the Cicadas commercial center, and Santo Yusup Hospital. The parish's pastoral structure is based on territorial grassroots units (Lingkungan and Wilayah), which regularly hold Rosary prayers in parishioners' homes

3.3. Data Sources and Informant

The primary data came from the key informant, Andres Fatubun, Head of the Youth Ministry of Saint Odilia Parish in Cicadas. He was selected because of his strategic position in observing, mobilizing, and connecting religious dynamics among the parish hierarchy, older parishioners' neighborhood groups, and the spirituality of young urban Catholics. He participated in in-depth interviews using structured and semi-structured formats in two sessions: Session I on 18 September 2026 and Session II on 23 September 2026. The interviews covered the appeal of devotion, its role in communal cohesion, the meanings attached to physical artifacts and digital media, and the theological boundaries governing parish liturgy.

The primary data were supplemented by three types of secondary data: (1) visual and material observation of spiritual artifacts, including rosary beads, statues of Mary, devotional candles, and



parish adoration facilities; (2) digital observation of livestreamed devotions on the YouTube channel of the parish's Social Communication Section (Komsos), as well as prayer intentions circulated in neighborhood WhatsApp groups; and (3) examination of official Church documents, including the Holy See's pastoral document *Towards Full Presence* (2023), liturgical catechesis literature, and historical archives of Cicadas Parish.

3.4. Prosedur dan Analisis Data

The data were analyzed using critical thematic analysis, adapted from the iterative model of Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis involved five stages: (1) familiarization with the data, through transcription of all interviews and repeated reading of the informant's statements; (2) initial coding, identifying passages on older parishioners' motivations, young people's spirituality, tactile experiences of rosary beads, the uncommon use of digital applications, and canonical theological concepts (*praesentia realis*, the materiality of the Incarnation, and *assemblea*); (3) development of theoretical themes by grouping empirical codes into broader analytical themes related to the Mediatization of Religion (Hjarvard, 2008), Material Religion (Meyer, 2009), and RSST (Campbell, 2010); (4) reviewing and naming themes by checking their fit with interview excerpts; and (5) producing an interpretive report connecting field findings with international monographs and journal literature.

3.5. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was maintained through source and theoretical triangulation (Denzin, 2009). Statements by the informant were cross-checked against normative documents on the Vatican's social teaching and Catholic sacramental doctrine. Member checking was also conducted to ensure that the researcher's interpretation of the informant's theological terminology was accurate. Academic reflexivity was maintained to minimize subjective bias in the construction of qualitative data

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Socio-Religious Context of Saint Odilia Parish, Cicadas

Missionaries of the Order of the Holy Cross (OSC) from the Netherlands officially established Saint Odilia Church in Cicadas on 1 October 1937. Historically, the parish was among the earliest pastoral stations in eastern Bandung and developed alongside Santo Yusup Hospital and Catholic schools. Geographically, it is located in the heterogeneous Cicadas area, characterized by high population mobility, busy commercial transport routes, and neighborhoods inhabited by laborers and urban workers.

The parish's pastoral structure is based on a network of territorial grassroots units (*Lingkungan*), where parishioners live out their faith directly. However, the time-efficiency demands of Bandung's modernization create structural tensions: many parishioners leave for work early in the morning and return late at night. Amid this fragmented urban life, popular devotions—especially Rosary prayers in parishioners' homes during May and October—become important centers of social and spiritual encounter. These devotions challenge the growing isolation of urban individuals.

4.2. Divergent Existential Motivations and Generational Polarization



Empirical examination of worship at Saint Odilia Parish reveals a marked difference in motivation between older parishioners and urban youth. For older people, the Rosary serves as preparation for the end of life. Andres Fatubun explained:

“Although the motivation is the same—to respond to or express a desire to draw closer to God—there are differences between age groups. For older people, devotion is often seen as preparation for the time when death comes. That is why older parishioners practice more forms of devotion. They usually pray the Rosary privately every night. Because they have more free time after retirement, they have more time to pray and practice devotion.”

For older residents of Cicadas, Rosary prayer reorganizes the use of time. After retirement, they have more free time, which they use to meditate on the fifteen to twenty mysteries of the salvation of Christ and Mary. The calm, rhythmic repetition of the Hail Mary creates a contemplative space that eases anxiety about bodily fragility and death. Moving the beads each night becomes a ritual of preparation for life's end and offers a sense of certainty as death approaches.

Young Catholics at Saint Odilia Parish present a different pattern. They tend to avoid neighborhood Rosary gatherings, which they may perceive as formal, repetitive, and slow. Fatubun explained:

“Among young people generally, this devotional prayer is not very popular. They usually feel that praying and attending daily or Sunday Mass is enough. However, within certain communities, devotion becomes important for young people. One example is the Emmanuel Community, which has a spirituality centered on the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This devotion is usually practiced through adoration before the Blessed Sacrament or attendance at the First Friday Mass each month.”

These data suggest a sociological shift from parish- and territory-based religiosity toward spirituality based on elective affinities and categorical communities. Urban youth live under the pressure of accelerated media and seek faith experiences that are more affective, expressive, and intimate, such as silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in the Cicadas parish adoration chapel. This finding is consistent with Hjarvard's (2008) thesis that mediatization and urban modernization encourage the privatization and emotionalization of religious practice. These processes shift ritual allegiance away from residential territory toward communities of taste chosen through personal affinity.

4.3. Grassroots Communal Cohesion and Social Solidarity

Urban individualism puts pressure on congregational cohesion, yet neighborhood Rosary prayer at Saint Odilia Parish continues to function as a source of social capital and communal solidarity. Moving prayer gatherings from one home to another provides an “ecological pause” from the noise and pressures of working life. Fatubun described this social dimension:



"The social dimension is similar. Many Catholics are busy with their own activities, leaving in the morning and returning at night. Without devotional prayer such as the Rosary, everyone would remain occupied with their own affairs. Devotional prayer invites people to pause briefly amid worldly noise and make time for God. Every Rosary gathering ends with an offering collected in a donation box. The money usually goes into the neighborhood community fund, which helps visit sick people or support families after a death. So, in addition to its spiritual dimension, being present and spending time together strengthens social relationships."

Parishioners in Cicadas refer to Matthew 18:20, which speaks of Christ's presence when two or three gather. From Meyer's (2009) perspective, bodily gatherings in parishioners' living rooms form "aesthetic formations." Social solidarity emerges not from exchanging information on screens but from embodied participation: parishioners sit in a circle on mats, coordinate their breathing and intonation as they pray together, smell melting candles, and share refreshments afterward.

Sociologically, the donation collection institutionalizes offerings and converts religious capital into microeconomic capital directed toward communal philanthropy. The neighborhood fund directly assists residents in crisis, for example by helping visit a family member hospitalized at Santo Yusup Hospital or providing condolences and support to a bereaved household. The connection between contemplation of divine mysteries and financial assistance shows that Rosary devotion at Cicadas Parish functions as a social safety net. It helps sustain urban working-class residents who receive limited protection from formal public welfare systems.

4.4. The Dialectic of Tactile Materiality and the Limits of Sensory Virtuality

One of the study's most important empirical findings concerns parishioners' attitudes toward digital rosary beads. The mobile technology industry has introduced various prayer applications, including interactive Rosary applications for Android and iOS (Bellar, 2021; Our Catholic Radio, 2026). Nevertheless, parishioners do not use these applications as a customary or official practice, either individually or communally. Instead, they continue to use rosary beads made of wood or metal. Fatubun emphasized:

"These spiritual objects help Catholics express their faith. They are not worshiped as objects; they serve only as intermediaries. Touching, feeling, smelling, or venerating objects regarded as sacred is an expression of faith. Compared with the physical version, the virtual version is less engaging because it cannot be experienced through all the senses. It can only be seen, not truly felt. Digital Rosary applications are not commonly used. Even when people pray the Rosary from different places at the same time, they still use rosary beads rather than an application. For example, during worldwide Rosary prayer, Catholics in different countries continue to use physical beads."

The uncommon use of digital Rosary applications can be interpreted through Meyer's (2009) concept of sensational forms and Morgan's (1997, 2005) concepts of visual and tactile piety. These concepts function as analytical lenses, not as theological explanations of the nature of devotion. Within Catholic



cosmology, physical matter is not an idolatrous trap but a sacramental mediator through which the invisible is made present (Meyer, 2012). A device screen is flat and offers uniform feedback to bodily movement; tapping the screen to move a virtual bead provides no actual physical friction.

By contrast, when parishioners feel the rough surface of a wooden bead, sense the weight of a metal cross, and move their fingers from one bead to the next, proprioceptive feedback anchors their awareness. Morgan (2005) shows that sight and touch work together to form a “sacred gaze.” Digital space does not provide the same haptic dimension, so parishioners may feel that praying through a mobile application lacks the depth of religious experience associated with bodily immersion.

Table 2. Analytical Dimension

Analytical Dimension	Physical Neighborhood Rosary Devotion	Cyber-Mediated Devotion (YouTube and WhatsApp)
Sensory modalities	Haptic and tactile (feeling beads), olfactory (candle scent), full visual experience, and the acoustic resonance of a room (Meyer, 2009).	Optical and acoustic experience through a two-dimensional screen, without touch or smell (Morgan, 2005).
Material artifacts	Wooden or metal rosary beads, statues of the Virgin Mary, lit candles, and hymnbooks (Morgan, 1997).	Smartphones, monitor screens, web-stream links, and online chat text.
Communal spatiality	Participants are bodily present and gather in a shared physical space, such as a parishioner’s living room.	Participants connect through a network but remain separated in their private domestic spaces (domestic isolation).
Social practice	Face-to-face conversation and cash offerings collected in a donation box, providing support for sick or deceased community members.	Prayer intentions circulate in instant-messaging groups without a direct flow of economic assistance.
Normative status	A primary communal rite of the Church with full communal validity (Spadaro, 2014).	An emergency auxiliary resource (cyberpulpit), documentation archive, and supplementary catechetical tool (Schmidt, 2020).

The table indicates that Saint Odilia Parish does not regard cyberspace as a replacement for physical encounter. Instead, cyberspace is permitted to operate at the margins of the worship system as a supporting resource.

4.5. Theological Negotiation: Praesentia Realis, Incarnation, and the Limits of Assemblea



The firm boundaries placed on digital media at Saint Odilia Parish are rooted in Catholic liturgical theology and canon law. Fatubun explains that Catholic tradition clearly distinguishes the secular anthropological term “ritual” from the ecclesial terms “rite,” “liturgy,” and “sacrament.” On this basis, the Church cannot transfer the sacraments to social media because of three non-negotiable dogmatic principles:

1. **Praesentia Realis (Real Presence).** Sacramental liturgy requires an ordained priest and the faithful to be bodily present at the same time and place (Spadaro, 2014). Divine grace calls for a real encounter, not a projection of virtual images.
2. **The Principle of the Incarnation (Sacramental Matter).** Following the mystery of the Word made flesh (John 1:14), the Church communicates sacramental grace through material signs that can be physically touched: the pouring of baptismal water, the anointing with chrism, the laying on of priestly hands, and the wheat bread and wine of the Eucharist (Schmidt, 2020). Electromagnetic waves, optical fibers, and digital signals do not possess the embodied materiality required to serve as valid sacramental means.
3. **The Assembly of the Faithful (Assemblea).** Liturgy is a communal celebration of the entire mystical Body of the Church, gathered bodily around the altar. It is not an individual act of watching religious content alone on a television or mobile-phone screen (Spadaro, 2014).

The doctrinal position articulated by the youth ministry at Cicadas Parish aligns with the Holy See’s document *Towards Full Presence*, which emphasizes fully human encounters (Dicastery for Communication, 2023). The parish’s Social Communication Section uses digital media only as a cyberpulpit to reach parishioners isolated by illness, old age, or emergencies such as a pandemic. Its principal aim is to encourage them to return to physical participation in church.

4.6. Reconfiguring Religious Practice through the RSST Matrix

The dynamics at Saint Odilia Parish empirically support the Religious-Social Shaping of Technology theory developed by Campbell (2010). Campbell argues that religious communities are not passive recipients of technological determinism. They act actively by testing, filtering, rejecting, or reconfiguring communication technologies to align them with internal values, historical traditions, and moral boundaries (Khaulani & Ammatillah, 2023, p. 92). The RSST model evaluates technological integration through four analytical pillars:



Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST) at St. Odilia Cicadas Parish



Figure 1. The Religious-Social Shaping of Technology (RSST) process at St. Odilia Parish, Cicadas..

First, Historical Tradition and Dogma. Cicadas Parish remains firmly committed to centuries-old Catholic sacramental orthodoxy. This dogmatic foundation resists the logic of digital media when it risks reducing sacraments to online simulations. The parish treated virtual Mass during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic as an extraordinary emergency dispensation and discontinued it after the public-health emergency ended, in order to restore the physical assembly (assemblea).

Second, Communal Values and Social Priorities. The parish community prioritizes territorial neighborhood fellowship and care for older parishioners. It firmly maintains physical encounters during Rosary prayer because neighborhood rites generate social capital and mobilize solidarity funds collected through the donation box for bereaved residents. The parish resists digital-screen individualism because it may weaken the grassroots bonds that sustain parish life.

Third, Technological Negotiation and Reconfiguration. The Cicadas parish community selects technologies according to their function. Parishioners welcome the eKatolik Bible-reading application (<https://ekatolik.id/>) because it allows them to reflect on Scripture during daily commutes by commuter train or public transportation. The parish also considers livestreams on the Komsos YouTube channel useful for sick and bedridden parishioners. In contrast, the community has not adopted mobile digital Rosary applications as a customary or official practice, preserving the tactile experience of physical beads. It accepts technology as a tool for accessing texts and information but not when it threatens the material integrity of devotional rites.

Fourth, Articulation of Communal Discourse. Lay youth leaders and parish clergy continue to promote the idea that digital technology should serve human dignity rather than control people. Fatubun stated:

“Digitalization cannot replace human physical presence, real encounters, or the validity of the sacraments. Catholics of every generation must use digital media wisely, ethically, and



responsibly so that technology serves people rather than turning people into objects of digitalization."

This communal discourse challenges a deterministic reading of mediatization theory (Hjarvard, 2008), which assumes that religious institutions inevitably submit to media logic. The empirical evidence from Saint Odilia Parish instead reveals institutional resilience: the parish community has placed digital media logic beneath Catholic sacramental logic. Digital media are maintained as supporting infrastructure on the outer threshold of religious life, while the center of spiritual experience remains rooted in rosary beads touched by hand, embodied fellowship in neighborhood settings, and real encounters before the altar.

5. CONCLUSION

This study shows that parishioners at Saint Odilia Parish in Cicadas do not passively accept digitalization in the practice, interpretation, and negotiation of Rosary prayer. Their practices remain rooted in the theology of embodiment and the materiality of Catholic faith. Amid the fast pace of urban life, devotional motivations differ across generations: older parishioners turn their retirement free time into preparation for the end of life, while younger Catholics select devotional practices according to their affinity with categorical communities. Nevertheless, face-to-face neighborhood rites continue to create social capital and provide a microeconomic safety net through collected offerings.

Parishioners continue to use physical rosary beads, and digital Rosary applications are not commonly used individually or communally at Cicadas Parish. This finding affirms that Catholic devotion, as articulated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1674–1676) and the Second Vatican Council (Sacrosanctum Concilium, Article 13), is not about sensation, passing emotion, or outward spectacle. Devotion is a concrete expression of faith and an extension of the Church's liturgical life. The sensory and bodily engagement involved in the practice is an outward expression of the faithful's personal encounter with God, as discussed in Material Religion (Meyer, 2009). This outward form expresses devotion; it is not its ultimate purpose.

Through the RSST framework, the community of Saint Odilia Parish positions cyberspace as a cyberpulpit and an emergency catechetical resource. It does not sacrifice the dogma of *praesentia realis*, the incarnational principle of sacramental matter, or the nature of the bodily assembly of the faithful (*assemblea*). Thus, urban Catholic faith in Cicadas suggests that salvation and genuine fraternity do not flow through pixels on device screens, but through the embodied encounter of the faithful in the presence of God.

This study is limited by its single-case design and its focus on the perspective of parish youth leadership at one urban site. Future research could broaden the scope through comparative ethnography, comparing Rosary devotion in densely populated urban parishes with that in remote



rural mission stations outside Java. Further studies could also quantitatively measure the use of digital media among different age groups of Catholics in Indonesia.

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