

# Leading Community-Building Workshops

## Toolkit for Facilitators



**Facilitation:** *to make easy, to serve others*

# **Leading Community-Building Workshops in a Faith Context**

## **Toolkit for Facilitators**

This toolkit is designed to guide facilitators in leading three two-hour workshops for parishioners, based on the challenges facing the Church today and the CARITAS model of community-building.

The workshops aim to foster co-responsibility, collaboration and hope within parish communities, aligning with the synodal process and the CARITAS framework (Challenges, Agency, Roles, Insights, Teamwork, Action, Stewardship).

Each session builds on the previous one, encouraging participants to reflect, discuss and establish processes for strengthening their faith community.

## Introductory Material

### The Challenge of Church Today

As church communities, the challenges presented to us by the times we live in are numerous, including increasing secularisation, decreasing vocations to the priesthood, falling attendance and declining income. While various reasons for these trends have been discussed, there is not universal agreement regarding how the Church might meet these challenges and re-energise parish mission.

In the Diocese of Ferns, we have engaged in many synodal conversations where every voice contributes something to the discussion. Through these discussions with priests, with various councils and with parishioners, a picture has emerged of a living church consisting of numerous communities that express love and affection for the Christian way of life. Yet, there is also the sense that communities do not feel confident in navigating these times. With so many challenges, it is easy to feel lost, which can rob us of our hope.

One way forward is to firstly conceptualise the challenges, not as a list of things beyond our control, but as a way of being church today. The emphasis on dialogue gifted to us by synodality has encouraged the pastoral development team to perceive our way of being church along a continuum ranging from structured rituals to adaptive processes (See Fig 1).



Fig. 1: Conceptualising the Challenge of Church Today

In many conversations, there was a strong emphasis on maintaining the structured rituals of the sacraments and prayer to nourish our way of life. There was also considerable support for improving our approach to pastoral care and faith formation, such as support for accredited programmes for lay people. There were also many suggestions for immediate solutions that might 'fix' the problem. However, there were also tentative yet prophetic suggestions that we need to reflect more on the 'why?' and 'how?' of being church rather than rushing into compiling lists of 'what' to do. The reasons for this tended to highlight the growing disconnect between community life and the church.

Taken as a whole, these conversations suggested that adaptive processes, such as collaborative leadership and community-building approaches were currently lacking. Over the past two years, we have collaboratively worked on developing a model of community-building that could promote greater levels of co-responsibility in church communities. It is early days, but these seeds of community-building have yielded fruit, at least in the short term, in the communities in which elements of the model have been trialled. We have called this model of community-building **CARITAS** (see Fig. 2). This model provides a structured yet holistic framework that aligns with the spiritual, social and practical needs of a faith-inspired community.

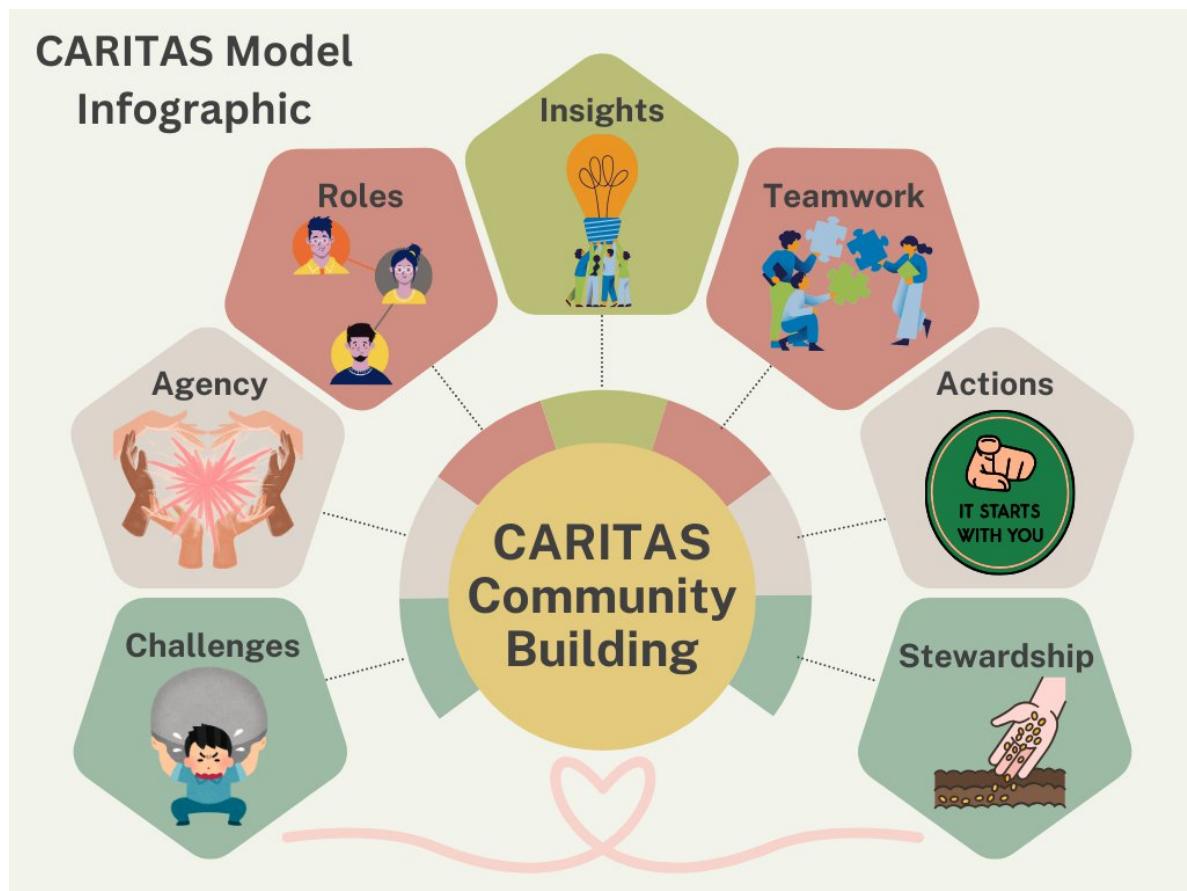


Fig. 2: The CARITAS Model of Community Building

## **Challenges**

*What are your hopes and fears for the future?*

Identifying challenges is a critical first step in community-building to establish the foundation for meaningful engagement especially during times of uncertainty. Without recognizing the specific obstacles - whether they be declining attendance, lack of youth involvement, declining income or crippling fears for the future - efforts to foster community could well be misdirected. Naming these challenges allows parishioners to reflect together upon root causes and create a shared sense of purpose.

## **Agency**

*What could you do to help address these challenges?*

A key approach to community-building is decentralisation. If too much depends on one person or a small few, the community is at great risk of disintegration. Once challenges are identified, the second step in community-building within parishes is fostering agency: the empowerment of individuals and groups to take ownership and act. Agency builds co-responsibility and collaboration in Christ by transforming passive concern into active participation, ensuring tailored actions come from within rather than being imposed externally.

## **Roles**

*Which roles are you interested in?*

People want to connect and share experiences and ideas though not necessarily as decision-makers, leaders or committee members. Identifying roles is about exploring responsibilities that align with individuals' strengths and the parish's needs. Roles provide structure to the momentum built by agency, ensuring efforts are coordinated and sustainable by recognizing the diversity of gifts within the parish. Collaborative roles also prevent burnout; when responsibilities are shared, no one carries the burden alone. Whether it is the finance committee (maintenance) or the pastoral council (mission), leadership must communicate and support these roles, promoting flexibility as needs evolve.

## **Insights**

*How has your involvement to date changed your view of parish?*

Through this process, shared insight begins to emerge. Typically, existing conflicts come to light that have hindered the maintenance of the local church and marred its mission. A general rule of thumb is that perceptions need to be transformed into perspectives to open up the horizon for new possibilities. This is the faith journey of adopting a Christian worldview. Without this ongoing process, sustainable mission is practically impossible. An openness to shared insight also helps the parish to remain responsive to its mission. It's the synodal reflection and ongoing journey that helps a community adapt to changing circumstances.

## **Teamwork**

*What could make collaboration between different groups or roles easier?*

Teamwork is a vital step in community-building within parishes, weaving individual efforts into a cohesive, shared mission. Teamwork helps the faith community truly embody a spirituality of communion, reflecting the unity of the Body of Christ. This is where the finance committee work with various maintenance teams – sacristans, cleaners, gardeners etc – for the good of the faith community as well as collaborate with the pastoral council. This is where the pastoral council works with various teams – hospitality, pastoral care, faith formation etc – to progress the mission of the local church. Good teamwork acknowledges our interdependence and need for shared leadership in community life, thus fostering mutual respect and interconnection. Spiritually, teamwork mirrors the gospel values of discipleship, service and love.

## **Action**

*What's one possible action you'd like to be part of?*

In the beginning, the process of forming good team networks is action enough. There is also the possibility that too many actions will be put forward without any structure or process for decision-making and prioritisation. Without the relevant structures and processes, suggested actions may well become part of a win-lose scenario and lead to disunity. Once teams are established, joint actions begin to emerge, which can be co-ordinated by team leaders and supported by the pastoral council or finance committee. In this model, leadership is shared. Spiritually, action reflects faith on the move; living out Christ's call to serve.

## **Stewardship**

*What legacy do you hope our community leaves for the next generation?*

Stewardship is about nurturing what's been built and passing it forward responsibly. This involves the ongoing cultivation of local leaders; mentoring younger parishioners or training successors for key roles like liturgy coordination or outreach. It also means managing resources wisely - time, talent and finances - so initiatives remain sustainable. Spiritually, stewardship reflects biblical principles of tending God's gifts to us. By embedding stewardship, faith communities can avoid stagnation or disintegration. It's an enduring act of love: helping to build and sustain a faith-filled communion of hope that outlasts any single member, rooted in service and shared responsibility.

## **Conclusion**

**CARITAS** provides our diocese with a practical blueprint for local renewal that is rooted in faith that shows our love for our local church. This is one example of the synodal church in action, and it begins with a single step forward together as a local community. A synodal church thrives when its people embrace their call to co-create, not just receive. In the words of one woman of faith in a small local community: '*For the past number of years, we have received, and we enjoyed it. It was good. Now, you're asking us to give and it is challenging.*'

This lady is now on her recently formed pastoral council. This is hope. In the prophetic words of St. Pope John Paul II, '*the Church of the Third Millennium will need to encourage all the baptized and confirmed to be aware of their active responsibility in the Church's life*'.

It is likely that this model will be developed into a toolkit for formation purposes. More and more, we are realising that the steps of **CARITAS** are invitations to grow together, to turn challenges into opportunities, and to leave an enduring legacy of faith. So gather the community, ask the challenging questions, build agency, explore roles, search for shared insight, form teams around the finance committee and pastoral council, promote collaborative action, nourish stewardship and celebrate the movement of the Spirit.

*This article was originally authored by Sean O'Leary and published in the June 2025 issue of INTERCOM magazine.*

## General Guidelines for Facilitators

- Audience: Parishioners of varying ages, backgrounds and levels of involvement.
- Objective: To empower participants to embrace co-responsibility in their parish through the CARITAS model, fostering a renewed sense of mission and community.
- Tone: Welcoming, inclusive, reflective and hope-filled, rooted in faith and synodality.
- Materials Needed:
  - Copies of the CARITAS model.
  - Flip charts, markers, pens and notepads.
  - Handouts with discussion prompts and reflection questions (provided below).
  - A space conducive to dialogue.
  - Optional: A Bible or Prayer book for opening/closing prayers, projector for visuals.
- Facilitator Role:
  - Create a safe, respectful environment for open dialogue.
  - Encourage every voice, especially those less heard.
  - Guide discussions without dominating; allow participants to co-create solutions.
  - Tie conversations to the CARITAS model and the spiritual mission of the Church.
- Preparation:
  - Familiarize yourself with the CARITAS model and the challenges outlined in the material.
  - Prepare opening prayers or reflections rooted in Gospel values (e.g., service, communion, stewardship).
  - Review the workshop structure to ensure smooth transitions between activities.

## **Workshop Structure Overview**

Each workshop is two hours, with a mix of prayer, discussion, small-group activities, and process planning. The sessions are progressive, moving from awareness to the importance of decision-making structures and processes to sustainability.

- Workshop 1: Naming Challenges and Building Agency (Focus: Challenges, Agency)
- Workshop 2: Discovering Roles and Gaining Insights (Focus: Roles, Insights)
- Workshop 3: Fostering Teamwork and Planning for Action and Stewardship (Focus: Teamwork, Action, Stewardship)

## Workshop 1: Naming Challenges and Building Agency

Objective: Help participants identify challenges facing their parish and foster a sense of agency to address them collaboratively.

Duration: 2 hours

Agenda:

- Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 minutes)
  - Welcome participants and set the tone: a synodal journey of listening and co-responsibility.
  - Opening prayer: Reflect on John 15:12-17 (love and service) or a prayer for hope and unity.
  - Briefly introduce the CARITAS model, emphasizing that today focuses on Challenges and Agency.
- Icebreaker: Hopes and Fears (15 minutes)
  - Activity: Pair participants and ask them to share one hope and one fear for the future of their parish (3 minutes each).
  - Prompt: “What’s one thing you love about our parish, and one thing that worries you?”
  - Group Share: Invite a few pairs to share with the larger group. Write key themes on a flip chart (e.g., declining attendance, lack of youth, financial struggles).
  - Facilitator Note: Connect responses to the material’s emphasis on naming challenges to create a shared purpose.
- Reflection: Understanding Challenges (20 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Summarize the challenges from the material (secularization, declining vocations, attendance, income) and the need to reframe them as opportunities for being church today.
  - Small Group Discussion (15 minutes): Divide into groups of 4-5. Provide handouts with the question:
    - “What specific challenges does our parish face, and what might be their root causes?”
    - Encourage groups to list 2-3 challenges and possible causes.
  - Facilitator Note: Guide groups to avoid quick fixes and focus on understanding the “why” behind challenges.

- Building Agency (30 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Explain Agency from the CARITAS model—empowering individuals to act collaboratively rather than relying on a few leaders. Highlight the point about decentralization to prevent disintegration.
  - Group Activity (25 minutes): In the same small groups, discuss:
    - “What could you personally do to help address one of the challenges we’ve identified?”
    - “How can we encourage others in the parish to take ownership of these challenges?”
    - Groups write 1-2 ideas on sticky notes to share with the larger group.
  - Facilitator Note: Emphasize co-responsibility and the spiritual call to active participation in Christ’s mission.
- Large Group Synthesis (20 minutes)
  - Collect sticky notes and cluster similar ideas on the flip chart.
  - Discuss: “What patterns do we see? How can we move from concern to action as a community?”
  - Highlight the importance of shared effort, referencing the material’s call for a synodal church where all contribute.
- Closing Reflection and Prayer (15 minutes)
  - Invite participants to reflect silently: “What’s one step I feel called to take?”
  - Closing prayer: Use a quote about the baptized taking active responsibility, or pray for the courage to act.
  - Homework: Ask participants to reflect before the next workshop on what roles they might be interested in within the parish.

#### Key Outcomes:

- Participants identify specific challenges and their root causes.
- A sense of agency is fostered, encouraging parishioners to see themselves as active contributors.
- The group begins to build a shared purpose rooted in faith.

## Workshop 2: Exploring Roles and Gaining Insights

Objective: Explore diverse roles within the parish and reflect on shared insights to transform perceptions (often limited) into broader perspectives.

Duration: 2 hours

Agenda:

- Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 minutes)
  - Recap Workshop 1: Review the challenges and agency ideas from the previous session.
  - Opening prayer: Reflect on 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (diversity of gifts) or a prayer for discernment.
  - Introduce today's focus: Roles and Insights from the CARITAS model.
- Icebreaker: Gifts and Talents (15 minutes)
  - Activity: In pairs, participants share one skill, talent or passion they bring to the community (e.g., organizing, teaching, hospitality).
  - Prompt: "What's something you enjoy doing that could benefit our parish?"
  - Group Share: Invite a few to share. Note diverse gifts on a flip chart.
  - Facilitator Note: Connect to the material's emphasis on roles aligning with individual strengths and parish needs.
- Exploring Roles (30 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Explain Roles from the CARITAS model—structured responsibilities that prevent burnout and promote sustainability. Highlight examples like finance committee, pastoral council, or more specific team roles like hospitality or outreach.
  - Small Group Activity (25 minutes): In groups of 4-5, provide a handout listing parish roles (e.g., liturgy, maintenance, faith formation, outreach) and discuss:
    - "Which roles interest you, and why?"
    - "What new roles might our parish need to address our challenges?"
    - Groups list 2-3 roles they'd like to explore or create.
  - Facilitator Note: Encourage flexibility and creativity, as the material suggests roles evolve with needs.

- Gaining Insights (30 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Explain Insights—transforming perceptions into perspectives through reflection. Highlight how this process supports a Christian worldview and sustainable mission.
  - Large Group Discussion (25 minutes): Ask:
    - “How has your involvement in the parish (or these workshops) changed your view of our community?”
    - “What conflicts or obstacles have we noticed, and how can we reframe them as opportunities?”
    - Use a flip chart to note insights, focusing on new possibilities for mission.
  - Facilitator Note: Guide the group to see challenges (e.g., conflicts) as part of the faith journey, not barriers.
- Synthesis and Planning (20 minutes)
  - Review the roles and insights shared. Discuss: “How can these roles and insights help us address our challenges?”
  - Begin brainstorming how roles could be coordinated (e.g., by pastoral council or finance committee).
  - Facilitator Note: Emphasize the material’s point about shared insight fostering adaptability.
- Closing Reflection and Prayer (15 minutes)
  - Silent reflection: “What new perspective has God revealed to me today?”
  - Closing prayer: Pray for openness to the Spirit’s guidance, using an example as a story of hope.
  - Homework: Ask participants to think about how different groups (e.g., finance committee, pastoral council) could collaborate.

#### Key Outcomes:

- Participants identify roles that align with their gifts and the parish’s needs.
- Shared insights begin to transform perceptions, opening new possibilities for mission.
- The group recognizes the importance of diverse, coordinated roles.

## **Workshop 3: Fostering Teamwork and Planning for Action and Stewardship**

Objective: Build teamwork, plan collaborative actions and commit to stewardship for a sustainable parish future.

Duration: 2 hours

Agenda:

- Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 minutes)
  - Recap Workshops 1 and 2: Review challenges, agency, roles and insights.
  - Opening prayer: Reflect on Acts 2:42-47 (community life) or a prayer for unity.
  - Introduce today's focus: Teamwork, Action and Stewardship from the CARITAS model.
- Icebreaker: Building Connections (15 minutes)
  - Activity: In groups of 3-4, participants share one way they've seen teamwork in the parish (or another community) work well.
  - Prompt: "What made that teamwork successful?"
  - Group Share: Note key elements (e.g., communication, trust) on a flip chart.
  - Facilitator Note: Tie to the material's emphasis on teamwork reflecting the Body of Christ.
- Fostering Teamwork (30 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Explain Teamwork—weaving individual efforts into a shared mission, as per the material. Highlight collaboration between groups like finance committee and pastoral council.
  - Small Group Activity (25 minutes): In groups, discuss:
    - "What could make collaboration between different parish groups or roles easier?"
    - "How can we ensure mutual respect and shared leadership?"
    - Groups propose 1-2 ideas for improving teamwork (e.g., regular meetings, clear communication).
  - Facilitator Note: Emphasize interdependence and Gospel values of service and love.

- Planning Action (30 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Explain Action—coordinated efforts that emerge from teamwork, avoiding disorganized “win-lose” scenarios.
  - Large Group Activity (25 minutes): Using insights and roles from previous workshops, ask:
    - “What’s one possible action you’d like to be part of to address our challenges?”
    - “How can we prioritize and coordinate these actions?”
    - Create a simple action plan on a flip chart, assigning roles and timelines.
  - Facilitator Note: Ensure actions are realistic and supported by team structures.
- Committing to Stewardship (20 minutes)
  - Mini-Presentation (5 minutes): Explain Stewardship - nurturing and passing forward the community’s gifts, as per the material. Highlight mentoring, resource management and sustainability.
  - Large Group Discussion (15 minutes): Ask:
    - “What legacy do you hope our parish leaves for the next generation?”
    - “How can we mentor others or manage resources to sustain our mission?”
    - Note ideas on a flip chart, focusing on long-term impact.
  - Facilitator Note: Connect to biblical principles of tending God’s gifts.
- Closing Reflection and Commitment (15 minutes)
  - Silent reflection: “What’s one way I can contribute to our parish’s legacy?”
  - Invite participants to share commitments (e.g., joining a team, mentoring).
  - Closing prayer: Use the material’s quote about the synodal church thriving through co-creation or pray for hope and endurance.
  - Follow-Up: Share the action plan with the pastoral council or finance committee for implementation.

**Key Outcomes:**

- Participants commit to collaborative teamwork and specific actions.
- A clearer understanding of the CARITAS model is voiced.
- The group embraces stewardship as a call to sustain and pass forward the parish's mission.

## **Additional Resources for Facilitators**

- Handout Template:
  - Include the CARITAS model diagram and key questions for each workshop.
  - Provide space for participants to jot down reflections and ideas.
- Visual Aids:
  - A sketch of the CARITAS model for reference.
  - Use a chart to outline development opportunities from Workshop 3.
- Follow-Up Suggestions:
  - Schedule a follow-up meeting if needed.
  - Encourage the pastoral council or finance committee to support new roles and teams.
  - Share success stories to inspire hope.
- Spiritual Anchors:
  - Use Scripture passages (e.g., John 15:12-17, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Acts 2:42-47) to ground discussions.
  - Incorporate prayers or reflections from the material, such as St. Pope John Paul II's call to active responsibility.

## **Tips for Success**

- **Adapt to Your Parish:** Tailor examples to local challenges and existing roles (e.g., specific committees or ministries).
- **Encourage Participation:** Use small groups to ensure quieter voices are heard, aligning with the synodal emphasis on every voice contributing.
- **Balance Structure and Flexibility:** Follow the CARITAS model but allow room for organic ideas from participants.
- **Foster Hope:** Regularly reference the material's message of hope and the potential for renewal through co-responsibility.
- **Address Resistance:** If participants resist change, affirm their feelings and redirect to small, manageable steps.

This toolkit equips facilitators to guide parishioners through a transformative process, turning challenges into opportunities for growth and renewal. By following the CARITAS model, participants can build a stronger, more collaborative faith community, rooted in shared responsibility and hope.

## **A Theological and Spiritual Reflection on the CARITAS Model**

The CARITAS model, as outlined in the Diocese of Ferns' synodal journey, offers a profound and practical framework for addressing the challenges facing the Church today—secularization, declining vocations, falling attendance, and diminishing resources. Rooted in the synodal call to listen, discern, and act together, this model resonates deeply with the Catholic tradition's emphasis on communion, mission, and the universal call to holiness. This reflection explores how CARITAS aligns with Catholic theology and spirituality, inviting the faithful to live out their baptismal call as co-responsible stewards of a vibrant, faith-filled community.

### **Challenges: Naming Reality in the Light of Faith**

The first step of CARITAS - identifying challenges - echoes the prophetic tradition of confronting reality with honesty and hope. In the Catholic tradition, naming challenges is not merely a pragmatic exercise but a spiritual act akin to the *examen*, where we discern God's presence amid difficulties. The struggles of declining attendance or youth disengagement are not merely sociological phenomena but invitations to trust in God's providence. As Psalm 23 reminds us, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want*," even in the valley of uncertainty, God guides His people. By naming challenges, parishes engage in a synodal act of truth-telling, trusting that the Holy Spirit is at work, transforming obstacles into opportunities for renewal.

### **Agency: The Baptismal Call to Co-Responsibility**

The emphasis on agency reflects the Second Vatican Council's teaching that all the baptized are called to active participation in the Church's mission (*Lumen Gentium*, 33). In Catholic theology, agency flows from the grace of baptism, which anoints each believer as priest, prophet, and king. CARITAS' call to empower individuals and groups to act mirrors Christ's invitation to His disciples: "*You are the light of the world*" (Matt 5:14). By fostering co-responsibility, parishes embody the Pauline vision of the Body of Christ, where "*each part is working properly*" (1 Cor 12:27). This step challenges the faithful to move beyond passivity, trusting that the Spirit equips each person for the mission entrusted to them.

### **Roles: The Diversity of Gifts in the Body of Christ**

The identification of roles in CARITAS aligns with St. Paul's teaching on the diversity of charisms: "*There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit*" (1 Cor 12:4). Catholic spirituality celebrates the unique contributions of each member of the Body of Christ, recognizing that every role - whether in liturgy, pastoral care, or maintenance - serves the common good. The model's emphasis on shared roles counters the risk of clericalism, reflecting Pope Francis' call for a synodal Church where all are protagonists in mission. By aligning roles with individual strengths and community needs, CARITAS fosters a spirituality of service, rooted in Christ's example of washing the disciples' feet (John 13:14-15).

### **Insights: A Synodal Journey Toward a Christian Worldview**

The step of gaining shared insights through reflection resonates with the Ignatian practice of discernment, where the community seeks God's will together. Catholic

theology teaches that faith seeks understanding (*fides quaerens intellectum*), and CARITAS' call to transform perceptions into perspectives invites parishes to adopt a Christian worldview together in a shared space. This process mirrors the Emmaus journey (Luke 24:13-35), where the disciples' eyes were opened through dialogue and encounter with Christ. By fostering openness to shared insights, CARITAS ensures that parishes remain responsive to the Spirit, adapting to changing circumstances while staying rooted in the Gospel.

### **Teamwork: A Spirituality of Communion**

Teamwork, as envisioned in CARITAS, embodies the Catholic understanding of *communio*, the unity of the faithful in the Body of Christ. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that the Church is “*a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*” (CCC 810). By weaving individual efforts into a cohesive mission, CARITAS reflects the Trinitarian love that binds the Church together. Collaborative teamwork between finance committees, pastoral councils, and various teams mirrors the Gospel call to love one another (John 13:34). Spiritually, it fosters a communion that counters isolation and division, embodying the Church as a sign and instrument of unity (Lumen Gentium, 1).

### **Action: Faith in Motion**

The call to action in CARITAS reflects the Catholic principle that faith must be lived out in works of love (James 2:17). As St. John Paul II emphasized, the Church of the Third Millennium must encourage the baptized to take active responsibility for its life. Action, coordinated through shared leadership and supported by parish structures, becomes a sacramental expression of faith, making visible Christ's call to serve: “*Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me*” (Matt 25:40). By prioritizing collaborative action, CARITAS ensures that initiatives are not fragmented but flow from a unified mission, grounded in prayer and discernment.

### **Stewardship: Tending God's Gifts for Future Generations**

Stewardship, the final step, is deeply rooted in Catholic social teaching, which calls the faithful to be stewards of creation and the Church's mission (CCC 2415-2418). This step reflects the parable of the talents (Matt 25:14-30), where God entrusts gifts to His people, expecting them to bear fruit. By mentoring leaders, nurturing youth, and managing resources wisely, parishes embody the biblical call to “*cultivate and care for*” God's gifts (Gen 2:15). Spiritually, stewardship is an act of hope, ensuring that the Church remains a vibrant witness to Christ for future generations. It is a legacy of love, rooted in the Eucharistic call to offer all we have for the glory of God.

### **Conclusion: A Synodal Church**

The CARITAS model is a prophetic response to the challenges of today's Church, embodying the synodal vision of a people walking together in faith, hope, and love. Theologically, it reflects the Catholic understanding of the Church as the People of God, called to live out their baptismal vocation in communion and mission. Spiritually, it invites parishes to trust in the Holy Spirit, who “*renews the face of the earth*” (Ps 104:30). CARITAS is not merely a strategy but a way of being Church - a

way that transforms challenges into opportunities for growth, fosters co-responsibility, and builds a legacy of faith.

In the words of Pope Francis, “*Synodality is what God expects of the Church in the third millennium*” (Address, October 17, 2015). Through CARITAS, the Church becomes a living sign of caritas - God’s love - poured out for the world. This reflection invites all Catholics to embrace the CARITAS model as a spiritual and theological roadmap, trusting that, as St. Paul reminds us, “*God is able to make every grace abundant for you*” (2 Cor 9:8). Let us step forward together, with hope and courage, to build a Church that radiates Christ’s love for all generations.