

Original Article

Fostering Social Justice as Experienced by Catholic Social Action Volunteers

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Abstract

This study explored the experiences of Catholic Social Action Volunteers in fostering social justice at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Surallah, South Cotabato, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to describe their experiences, identify the challenges they encountered, and examine the coping strategies they employed to address them. The study employed a descriptive qualitative research design involving six Catholic Social Action Volunteers with three to five years of active service, who were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The findings revealed four themes describing the volunteers' experiences: (1) commitment to service and social responsibility, (2) inclusive and compassionate apostolate, (3) exposure to community realities and growth in ministry, and (4) opportunities for personal and spiritual growth and empowerment. Five themes emerged concerning the challenges encountered: (1) financial constraints and scarcity of resources, (2) transportation difficulties and limited access to mission areas, (3) time management and family support concerns, (4) lack of recognition and organizational support, and (5) emotional struggles arising from interpersonal conflicts. To address these challenges, the volunteers employed five coping strategies: (1) engagement in healthy activities, (2) resourcefulness and proactivity, (3) servant leadership and teamwork, (4) positive mindset and emotional resilience, and (5)

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reconciliation and self-care. The findings highlight how Catholic Social Action Volunteers navigate personal, organizational, and logistical challenges while sustaining their commitment to social justice. The study underscores the importance of strengthening institutional support, volunteer collaboration, and personal resilience to sustain parish-based social action initiatives.

Keywords: Catholic social action volunteers, social justice, parish-based ministry, volunteer experiences, coping strategies, qualitative research

1. Introduction

The Catholic Church has long affirmed that faith is inseparable from the pursuit of justice, calling every Christian to uphold the dignity of the human person and promote the common good through active participation in society. This mission is grounded in Catholic Social Teachings (CST), which provide the moral and theological framework for addressing social, economic, political, and environmental issues in the light of the Gospel. Rather than remaining a body of abstract doctrines, CST challenges believers to transform faith into concrete acts of service, solidarity, and advocacy, particularly among the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable sectors of society (USCCB, 2021). Through this perspective, the Church views social action as an essential expression of Christian discipleship and an indispensable dimension of evangelization.

The Church's commitment to social justice is embodied in the seven foundational principles of Catholic Social Teaching: the life and dignity of the human person, the call to family, community, and participation, rights and responsibilities, the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, the dignity of work and the rights of workers, solidarity, and care for God's creation. These principles provide a holistic framework that guides Catholic institutions and lay organizations in responding to contemporary social realities while fostering a culture of justice, compassion, and human flourishing (Michigan Catholic Conference, 2025). Pope Francis has consistently emphasized that authentic Christian faith is realized through concrete acts of love and service, encouraging the faithful to become active agents of social transformation rather than passive observers of injustice (Dodd, 2024). Likewise, *Laudato Si'* highlights that the Church's commitment to justice extends beyond interpersonal relationships to include ecological responsibility, recognizing care for creation as an integral aspect of promoting the common good (Klein & Lacznia, 2021).

At the Parish level, Catholic Social Action Volunteers play a pivotal role in translating these principles into meaningful community engagement. They serve as the

Church's frontline agents in implementing programs that address poverty, social inequality, disaster response, community development, environmental stewardship, and the protection of human dignity. Through their voluntary service, they bridge the Church's social teachings with the lived realities of individuals and communities, making the Church's mission visible through compassionate action (Passenant et al., 2019). Their work reflects Pope Francis' vision of a missionary Church that accompanies people in their struggles and responds to human suffering through solidarity and service.

Despite the extensive body of literature on Catholic Social Teaching and the Church's social mission, existing scholarship has largely focused on theological foundations, institutional programs, and macro-level analyses of social justice initiatives. Comparatively little attention has been given to the experiences of Catholic Social Action Volunteers who implement these teachings at the grassroots level, particularly within individual parish communities. Existing studies provide limited understanding of how volunteers experience their ministry, navigate the challenges of parish-based social action, and sustain their commitment amidst personal, organizational, and community-related difficulties (Dodd, 2024). This lack of localized, experience-based research represents a significant gap in the literature, especially within the Philippine parish context where volunteerism remains central to the Church's social ministry.

Addressing this gap is important because understanding volunteers' experiences provides valuable insights into the realities of faith-based social action beyond institutional policies and theological ideals. Their narratives reveal how Catholic Social Teaching is lived, interpreted, and practiced within specific social and cultural contexts, and identify factors that strengthen or hinder volunteer engagement. Such understanding may contribute to the development of more responsive volunteer formation programs, stronger institutional support systems, and more sustainable parish social action ministries.

Guided by this context, the present study explored the experiences of six (6) Catholic Social Action Volunteers at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Surallah, South Cotabato, as they fostered social justice.

Specifically, this study sought to describe their experiences, identify the challenges they encountered in carrying out their ministry, and the coping strategies they employed to sustain their service.

By providing a contextualized understanding of parish-based volunteerism, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on Catholic Social Teaching, faith-based volunteerism, and parish social action, while offering practical insights to strengthen the Church's mission to promote social justice through committed lay participation.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the experiences of Catholic Social Action Volunteers in fostering social justice at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Surallah, South Cotabato. Descriptive qualitative research is appropriate for studies that seek to provide a comprehensive and straightforward account of participants' experiences within their natural settings, allowing researchers to capture the meanings individuals attribute to their actions and social realities (Doyle et al., 2020).

The design enabled the researchers to describe the volunteers' experiences, the challenges they encountered, and the coping strategies they employed while carrying out their ministry. Rather than generating a formal theory, the study focused on producing a rich, contextualized description of the phenomenon from participants' perspectives (Clark & Basko, 2025). This approach was appropriate because Catholic Social Action volunteerism is shaped by the parish's unique social, cultural, and pastoral context, requiring an in-depth understanding of volunteers' experiences that quantitative methods alone could not provide.

2.2 Participants and Sampling

The participants were six (6) Catholic Social Action Volunteers from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Surallah, South Cotabato, who were purposively selected based on their direct and sustained involvement in the parish's social action ministry. Purposive sampling was employed because the study required participants who could provide information-rich accounts based on their actual experiences of carrying out Catholic social action.

A service tenure of three to five years was established as one of the inclusion criteria. This period was considered significant because it provided participants with sufficient, sustained exposure to the parish's social action ministry while keeping their experiences focused and relevant to the parish's current practices and pastoral realities. Volunteers who had served for at least three years were expected to have encountered various dimensions of social action, including community engagement, service activities, organizational processes, and challenges associated with sustained volunteer involvement. At the same time, limiting the criterion to five years helped maintain a relatively comparable range of ministry experience among participants. It reduced the likelihood that accounts would be dominated by experiences from substantially different pastoral or organizational contexts. Thus, the three-to-five-year tenure was intended to ensure that participants had meaningful firsthand experience while maintaining sufficient homogeneity to enable a focused exploration of the phenomenon.

The six participants were selected because they met the established inclusion criteria and could provide detailed accounts of their experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. The relatively small number of participants was consistent with the descriptive qualitative design, which prioritizes depth and richness of information rather than statistical representation. Data collection and analysis were conducted concurrently, allowing the researchers to compare emerging accounts across participants.

2.3 Research Locale

The study was conducted at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Surallah, South Cotabato, Philippines. The parish actively implements Catholic Social Action programs that promote social justice through community outreach, charitable services, disaster response, livelihood assistance, environmental stewardship, and other faith-based initiatives. Its active volunteer ministry provided an appropriate setting for exploring the experiences of Catholic Social Action Volunteers.

2.4 Data Collection

Data were collected through one-on-one semi-structured interviews using an interview guide developed by the researchers. The semi-structured format allowed participants to freely narrate their experiences while ensuring that all research objectives were adequately addressed. With the participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data. Field notes were also maintained to capture non-verbal cues and contextual observations that supported data interpretation.

2.5 Data Analysis

The interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and repeatedly reviewed to achieve familiarity with the data. Initial codes were generated and subsequently organized into potential themes. The themes were reviewed, refined, defined, and named to ensure they accurately represented the participants' lived experiences. This systematic analytical process facilitated the identification of recurring patterns related to volunteers' experiences, challenges, and coping strategies.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research and voluntarily signed an informed consent form prior to participation. They were assured that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by using pseudonyms, and all interview recordings and transcripts were securely stored and used solely for research purposes. The study adhered to the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice in the conduct of qualitative research.

3. Results

This section presents the emergent themes from participants' responses regarding their experiences as social action volunteers, their struggles, and their coping mechanisms in fostering social justice within Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in the Diocese of Marbel.

3.1 Lived experiences of catholic social action volunteers

Theme 1. A Commitment to service and social responsibility

The participants described their experience as an opportunity to deepen one's commitment to service and social responsibility. Volunteers viewed social action as a moral and spiritual responsibility rooted in their Christian faith and concern for marginalized communities. Participants expressed:

"First, serving the poor and caring for the needs of our brothers and sisters, especially those who are in far-flung areas is a mission." (P1)

"It is a responsibility. Because, in one way or another, even in small ways, we can help our fellow human beings... and that is truly meaningful." (P2)

"For me, we should really have love and a spirit of service toward others. What we do does not have to be something big. Even through simple acts of helping and giving our time, we are already doing something for our community." (P4)

"When we have an opportunity to help, we should not let it pass. Our work is not only for ourselves but also for the welfare of others, especially those who are most in need of assistance." (P6)

Theme 2. An Inclusive and compassionate apostolate

Participants describe their experience as a zeal for an inclusive and compassionate apostolate. The apostolate was practiced without discrimination, extending assistance to all people regardless of religion, ethnicity, or social status. Participants mentioned:

“...we conduct the activity in areas where people are poor... Not only the Catholics, but also the Indigenous Peoples (IPs)... so that we can make them feel that we are all one and that there is no discrimination.” (P1)

“For me, it does not matter what their religion is or where they come from. If they need help, we help them. What is important is that they feel that someone cares for and respects them.” (P4)

“In our Social Action activities, we try to make sure that no one feels that they are different or that they do not belong. Regardless of their background or situation in life, we give them the same love and care.” (P5)

“People have different cultures and beliefs, but for me, these should not be barriers to helping others. Our apostolate should be open to everyone, especially those who are experiencing difficulties and those who need our presence.” (P6)

Theme 3. An Exposure to Community Realities and Growth in Ministry

Participants described their experience as a pastoral desire for exposure to community realities. Community immersion strengthened volunteers' awareness of social realities while fostering personal and ministerial growth. Participants highlighted:

“You can really see the situation of the people and how our Church strives to reach out to them.” (P2)

“ You will see the reality: The roads going to the outreach areas are difficult, resulting in long travel times and the need for assistance. You really have to walk a long distance.” (P3)

“When you personally see how people live and experience their struggles, you realize that ministry is not only about what we do inside the Church. It teaches you to understand their situation, listen to their stories, and become more sensitive to their needs.” (P4)

“The difficult experiences during our outreach became a learning experience for me. Even though the journey was tiring and sometimes uncomfortable, it strengthened my commitment to ministry and helped me appreciate more the importance of being present with the people in the community.” (P5)

Theme 4. An Opportunity for Personal and Spiritual Growth and Empowerment

Participants described their experience as an opportunity for personal and spiritual Growth and Empowerment. Continuous involvement developed leadership skills, confidence, and commitment to sustaining parish social action programs. Participants verbalized:

"We really need to strengthen our social action so that we can help them more—not only here in the parish, but when you go from one village to another, that is where you can truly see their problems." (P3)

Through our Social Action activities, I learned to be more patient, understanding, and willing to serve others." (P4)

"My experiences with the community strengthened my faith and helped me become more aware of God's presence in other people." (P5)

"Serving others gave me confidence and encouraged me to use my abilities for the good of the community." (P6)

3.2 Challenges Encountered by Catholic Social Action Volunteers

Theme 1. Financial and Scarcity of Resources

The volunteers described Financial and Needed Resources as one of the Struggles encountered. Limited financial resources constrained outreach activities and program implementation. Participants mentioned:

"One challenge is the lack of resources. Sometimes, our funds and the materials we can provide are limited." (P4)

"We often depend on the funds of our GKK for our social action activities." (P5)

"Financial concerns are really a challenge that we encounter in our ministry." (P6)

"Sometimes, we want to help more people, but our limited resources prevent us from doing so." (P1)

"There are times when we have to make do with whatever resources are available." (P2)

Theme 2. Challenging Transportation and Access to Mission Areas

The volunteers described poor road conditions and remote communities created logistical difficulties during outreach missions. Participants expressed:

"Transportation is one challenge because sometimes the roads going to the mountains are difficult." (P2)

"The most difficult part is the road. You really have to walk a long distance." (P1)

"Tree planting was really difficult because I was the one who coordinated it. I did not expect the mountain to be that high." (P3)

"Sometimes, we have to walk far just to reach the mission areas because vehicles cannot easily access them." (P4)

Theme 3. Time Management and Family Support

Balancing ministry responsibilities with family obligations became a persistent challenge. Participants highlighted:

“One challenge is balancing time between family and volunteering.” (P1)

“Sometimes, volunteering takes time away from my family responsibilities.” (P2)

“It can be difficult to manage my schedule when family needs my attention.” (P3)

“There are times when my family does not fully understand my commitment to volunteering.” (P4)

Theme 4. Lack of Recognition and Organizational Support

The Participants highlighted that limited institutional support and inadequate recognition negatively affected volunteer motivation. Participants mentioned:

“Sometimes, it feels like your efforts are not recognized. That becomes a challenge because you can feel discouraged.” (P3)

“Sometimes, our efforts are not acknowledged by the organization.” (P4)

“We need more support and encouragement from the organization.” (P5)

“It can be discouraging when the work we do receives little recognition or support.” (P6)

Theme 5. Emotional Struggles due to Interpersonal Conflicts

The participants highlighted how Community criticism and interpersonal disagreements generated emotional stress and discouragement. Participants mentioned:

“Sometimes, it feels like your efforts are not recognized. That becomes a challenge because you can feel discouraged.” (P3)

“Sometimes, misunderstandings with others affect me emotionally and make it difficult to continue serving.” (P4)

“There are times when conflicts with fellow volunteers become stressful and discouraging.” (P5)

“Dealing with different personalities can be difficult, especially when there are misunderstandings or disagreements.” (P6)

3.3 The Coping Strategies Employed by Catholic Social Action Volunteers

Theme 1: Engagement in healthy activities

Engagement in activities that strengthen faith and relationship with God. Prayer and spiritual reflection sustained volunteers' commitment and strengthened their resilience. Participants expressed:

"I take a break so I can set aside my problems for a while. Prayer is what I turn to." (P1)

"I spend time with friends to relax and clear my mind." (P2)

"I engage in simple activities that help me reduce stress and regain my energy." (P3)

"I exercise and spend time outdoors whenever I feel overwhelmed." (P4)

Theme 2. Resourcefulness and Proactivity

The participants are becoming resourceful and proactive in solving problems. Creativity, planning, and adaptability enabled volunteers to continue their ministry despite limited resources. Participants highlighted:

"Good planning is important; we must always be prepared for what needs to be done." (P4)

"You should be ready to find a solution when problems arise." (P2)

"Be quick to think of ways to solve the problem." (P3)

"When resources are limited, we find alternative ways to continue the activity." (P5)

"We take the initiative to act instead of waiting for someone else to solve the problem." (P6)

Theme 3. Giving emphasis to Servant Leadership and Teamwork

For the participants, collaboration and mutual support strengthened organizational effectiveness and volunteer resilience. Participants mentioned:

"Helping and supporting one another among our ministry companions is important." (P5)

"Teamwork and understanding within the group help us work effectively." (P3)

"We share responsibilities and help one another whenever someone needs support." (P6)

"A good leader listens to the team and works together with everyone." (P1)

Theme 4. Positive Mindset and Emotional Resilience

The volunteers highlight embracing a Positive Mindset and Emotional Resilience. Maintaining optimism and emotional regulation helped volunteers overcome discouragement and criticism. Participants verbalized:

"I just calm myself and find ways to manage my emotions." (P2)

"I take a break and remind myself that what I am doing is for the mission." (P6)

"I try to focus on the positive things rather than the problems I encounter." (P1)

"Even when I feel discouraged, I remind myself to stay positive and continue serving." (P3)

Theme 5. Reconciliation and Self-Care

The volunteers highlight the importance of working on reconciliation and practicing Self-Care. Dialogue, forgiveness, and intentional self-care promoted healthy relationships and long-term ministry engagement. Participants expressed:

"I take the initiative to approach them and make the first move to reconnect." (P2)

"It requires a lot of patience and proper communication to build a connection and talk things through." (P3)

"When there is a misunderstanding, I choose to talk to the person and settle the issue calmly." (P4)

"I also make time for myself to rest and regain my strength so I can continue serving." (P5)

4. Discussion

The participants' experiences show that Catholic social action is understood as a multidimensional ministry of service, inclusion, encounter, and transformation. Their involvement goes beyond providing material assistance; it involves responding to the needs of poor and marginalized communities, reaching distant mission areas, and extending assistance regardless of religion, culture, or social condition. This demonstrates that social action is experienced as a concrete expression of Christian responsibility toward others. Such an understanding is consistent with Apostolicam Actuositatem, which emphasizes the responsibility of the laity to bring Christian values into the social order and respond to concrete human needs (Second Vatican Council, 1965). The participants also described social action as an inclusive and compassionate apostolate. Their willingness to serve Catholics, Indigenous Peoples, and others without discrimination reflects an understanding of human dignity that

transcends religious, cultural, and social boundaries. This is consistent with Fratelli Tutti, which calls for fraternity and social friendship that recognize the dignity of every person and promote solidarity beyond differences (Francis, 2020). Furthermore, the volunteers' direct exposure to remote communities, difficult roads, long journeys, and the actual living conditions of people deepened their understanding of social realities. Their experiences indicate that encounter with communities becomes a source of formation. By seeing and listening to people's concrete situations, volunteers become more aware of the realities that social action seeks to address. This corresponds to *Christus Vivit*, which emphasizes encounter, accompaniment, listening, and going beyond familiar environments to engage people and their realities (Francis, 2019). This shows that social action contributes to personal, spiritual, and ministerial growth. Through service, participants developed greater awareness, compassion, responsibility, and willingness to serve. Thus, the relationship between the volunteer and the community is reciprocal: volunteers serve the community, while their encounters with the community also form them as persons and ministers. As *Apostolicam Actuositatem* affirms, participation in the apostolate contributes to the formation of Christians for their mission (Second Vatican Council, 1965).

The participants identified challenges that were material, geographical, familial, organizational, and relational. These include financial limitations, resource scarcity, difficult transportation and access to mission areas, competing family responsibilities, insufficient organizational recognition and support, and interpersonal conflicts. These findings demonstrate that commitment to social action alone does not guarantee the sustainability of ministry; volunteers also require adequate resources, institutional support, healthy relationships, and structures that enable them to serve effectively. Financial limitations were particularly significant, as inadequate funds and materials restricted the volunteers' ability to respond to community needs fully. Similarly, difficult roads, long distances, and geographically isolated communities made outreach physically demanding. These experiences highlight the concrete conditions that influence the Church's social mission. *Evangelii Gaudium* calls the Church to move beyond comfortable and familiar settings and to reach people where they are, while *Laudato Si'* emphasizes attention to the concrete social conditions affecting vulnerable communities (Francis, 2013, 2015). The participants also experienced difficulty balancing ministry with family responsibilities. Their experiences demonstrate that lay volunteers perform social action while simultaneously fulfilling responsibilities within their families and occupations. This reflects the lay vocation described in *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, in which apostolic activity is lived within the ordinary circumstances of family, work, and community life (Second Vatican Council, 1965). Another challenge involved limited recognition and organizational support. Participants expressed discouragement when their efforts were not adequately acknowledged or supported. This indicates that sustainable ministry requires more than individual commitment. Formation, encouragement, communication, resources, and shared responsibility are important organizational conditions for sustaining volunteers. Likewise, interpersonal misunderstandings and conflicts created emotional

strain, showing that ministry is also deeply relational. Fratelli Tutti emphasizes dialogue, reconciliation, and social friendship as important means of overcoming division and strengthening relationships (Francis, 2020).

The participants' coping strategies reveal a holistic pattern of resilience that is spiritual, practical, communal, emotional, and relational. In responding to the difficulties of ministry, they relied on prayer and spiritual reflection; resourcefulness and proactive problem-solving; teamwork and servant leadership; emotional regulation and positive thinking; and reconciliation and self-care. Prayer emerged as an important source of strength. Participants described turning to prayer, taking time to calm themselves, and reconnecting their activities with the mission. This demonstrates that spirituality provides meaning and motivation amid difficulties. *Deus Caritas Est* emphasizes the importance of prayer for those engaged in charitable activity so that they may draw strength from Christ and avoid discouragement (Benedict XVI, 2005). Similarly, *Evangelii Gaudium* stresses the importance of an interior life that sustains missionary commitment amid fatigue and difficulty (Francis, 2013). The participants also demonstrated resourcefulness and initiative by carefully planning, adapting to limitations, and finding alternative ways to carry out their activities. Their response indicates that coping involves not only endurance but also practical problem-solving. This reflects the active responsibility of the laity in carrying out the Church's mission in concrete circumstances and with available gifts (Second Vatican Council, 1965). Teamwork and servant leadership likewise provided an important source of support. Sharing responsibilities, helping one another, listening to team members, and working toward common goals reduced individual burdens and strengthened collective resilience. This reflects the communal and collaborative nature of the apostolate emphasized in *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Second Vatican Council, 1965). The participants' use of positive thinking and emotional regulation further enabled them to manage discouragement and remain focused on their mission. Rather than allowing criticism or difficulties to determine their response, they attempted to calm themselves, take a break, and maintain a constructive perspective. This corresponds with *Evangelii Gaudium*, which recognizes the difficulties experienced by missionary workers while emphasizing perseverance and missionary joy (Francis, 2013). Finally, reconciliation and self-care helped participants sustain both their relationships and their capacity for continued service. Approaching others after misunderstandings, communicating openly, exercising patience, and allowing time for rest demonstrate that sustainable ministry requires attention to both relationships and personal well-being. Fratelli Tutti highlights dialogue, forgiveness, reconciliation, and social friendship as important foundations for overcoming division and rebuilding relationships (Francis, 2020).

5. Conclusion

This study indicates that the experiences of Catholic social action volunteers are a transformative vocation that extends far beyond the act of providing charitable

service. It is a holistic journey that shapes volunteers spiritually, emotionally, socially, and personally as they respond to the realities of poverty, injustice, and human suffering. The findings reveal that volunteers willingly sacrifice their time, financial resources, personal comfort, and family life in pursuit of the Church's mission, demonstrating that authentic service is rooted in self-giving love rather than personal gain. Despite experiencing significant challenges such as financial constraints, transportation difficulties, limited organizational support, interpersonal conflicts, and emotional exhaustion, social action volunteers continue to persevere because they anchor their mission in faith, prayer, and a profound sense of God's calling. Moreover, the findings suggest that social action ministry is not merely an avenue for community assistance but also an effective instrument for personal formation and discipleship. Through direct engagement with marginalized communities, volunteers develop deeper social responsibility, servant leadership, compassion, resilience, resourcefulness, teamwork, and spiritual maturity. These transformative experiences enable them to move beyond occasional acts of charity toward a sustained commitment to justice, solidarity, and the common good. The integration of Catholic Social Teaching with lived community experiences reinforces the volunteers' identity as agents of social transformation and active participants in the Church's evangelizing mission. Finally, the study highlights that the sustainability of Catholic Social Action ministries depends not only on the dedication of volunteers but also on the commitment of Church institutions to provide adequate formation, organizational support, financial sustainability, emotional accompaniment, leadership development, and opportunities for spiritual renewal. Investing in these support mechanisms will enable volunteers to flourish in their vocation, prevent burnout, and strengthen their capacity to serve communities effectively. Ultimately, Catholic Social Action ministry emerges as a powerful expression of lived faith, one that transforms both the volunteers and the communities they serve while advancing the Church's mission of justice, compassion, and human dignity.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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