

# PLAYING MARBLES WITH DIAMONDS:

## Carith's Mission to Protect the Priceless Legacy of Catholic Healthcare

Sierra Leone is a nation of stark contrasts. Its land, rich with untapped mineral wealth, is home to people whose daily lives are defined by abject poverty. According to global estimates, Sierra Leone's per capita income is one of the lowest in the world. Yet beneath the dusty roads and crumbling infrastructure lies a wealth that has shaped empires.

In a small village on the outskirts of Freetown; the capital city of Sierra Leone, a group of seven children gathered as they did every afternoon. Their game was simple: a lively competition of marbles played not with glass or clay spheres, but with small, jagged stones plucked from the roadside. They were stones, rough and gray, scavenged from the cracked roads and overgrown fields. Laughter rang out as they crouched low and flicked their prized "marbles" across the dirt.

One day, a Westerner, an experienced gem trader visiting on a humanitarian mission, happened to pass by. Something caught his trained eye. Kneeling down, he studied the children's stones more closely. What they saw as ordinary pebbles, he instantly recognized as something extraordinary; raw, uncut diamonds, camouflaged by the grit and grime of the street.

Calmly, he offered each child \$100 in exchange for their handful of "marbles." For these children, \$100 was a lifetime of riches. The man walked away with what would later appraise for millions of dollars in the renowned Hatton Garden diamond district in London.

### THE MATRIX

This same principle lies at the heart of Carith's mission. In today's volatile healthcare landscape, the real estate and infrastructure of Catholic healthcare institutions built with love, faith, and sacrifice over generations are often viewed by the world as little more than aging assets or liabilities.

To the untrained eye, they may seem like relics of a bygone era. But to those



Trish Gathers and Bishop Richard Henning, Archbishop of Boston

who understand their worth, these facilities are living legacies: places where dignity, compassion, and care for the underserved thrive. Carith was founded to ensure that these sacred spaces are never mistaken for "common stones."

Carith Ministries exists to safeguard these treasures—not just the buildings, but the communities, ministries, and values they represent. Our purpose is to steward and sustain these institutions so they remain vibrant beacons of faith-based care for generations to come.

According to Trish Gathers, President and CEO of Carith Ministries, "The most priceless treasures can remain unrecognized and unprotected when we fail to comprehend their true value." She further emphasized, "In a world that readily overlooks hidden value, Carith Ministries stands steadfast in safeguarding the sacred legacy of Catholic healthcare before it is lost to those who cannot perceive its worth." Gathers warned, "We risk playing marbles with the legacy of Catholic healthcare. Carith is aware of what we hold, and we recognize its value."

The most priceless treasures are often erroneously perceived as mere stones until someone takes action to protect them. This is Carith's calling.

### THE RESONANCE

The world sees aging buildings, regulatory challenges, and shifting market forces. They see "stones." But those of us called to this mission know better: these sacred facilities are the diamonds of compassionate care, community service, and the Gospel in action—the 7 beatitudes in action.

At the recent Redemptoris Mater Seminary Gala the Archbishop of Boston, Bishop Richard Henning, delivered a compelling address that drew upon Church history to illuminate present challenges and opportunities. Speaking of the fall of Rome and the centuries-long rebuilding led by monastic communities, he reminded attendees that even in ruin, the seeds of renewal are planted by those who choose to build.

"God is never the one who destroys," he said. "He raises up—always through those who believe, serve, and persevere."

This vision of restoration deeply aligns with the mission of Carith Ministries.

### THE CARITH IS CALLING - JOIN THE MISSION

At Carith, we believe the time to act is now. We invite partners, benefactors, and communities of faith to stand with us in safeguarding the sacred spaces of Catholic healthcare. Together, we can ensure these beacons of hope and healing are not mistaken for mere "stones," but recognized, cherished, and preserved as the living diamonds they are. Join us in this mission to protect the legacy, expand the ministry, and secure a future where compassion and care remain at the heart of our shared calling.

The children in Sierra Leone unknowingly held their nation's fortune in their small hands. Carith will not let



us make the same mistake with Catholic healthcare. We know what we hold. And we know it's worth it.

The mission-driven footprint of these ministries risks being lost to secular markets and repurposed for uses far removed from their founding vision.

It's time to recognize, protect, and preserve Catholic healthcare.

### Partner With Us

The mission of safeguarding Catholic healthcare ministries for future generations depends on those who believe, serve, and persevere. To give, partner, or learn more about how you can help protect these sacred spaces, visit [www.carith.org](http://www.carith.org) or call +1 518-728-5234.

Together, we can transform overlooked "stones" into lasting "diamonds" of care and compassion.

Carith Ministries is sponsored by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. Just like their sister ministries; the Carmelite System Inc., a Catholic not-for-profit health system that provides the platform that involve increasing the availability of geriatric care.

Located in New York, Massachusetts, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Kentucky, and Illinois.

With over 3,500 employees and 120 Sisters who continue to serve throughout our communities, which are located in seven states and Ireland.

Learn more : (<https://www.carmelitesystem.org/>)

email: [pgather@carmelitesystem.org](mailto:pgather@carmelitesystem.org) or call +1 518-728-5234.



Carmelite Sisters of the Aged and Infirm: L- R: Sr. Peter Di Maria, Sr. Kevin Patricia Lynch, Sr. Margaret Costello, Mother Mary Rose Heery, Sr. Philip Ann Bowden, Sr. Anthony Veilleux, Sr. Diane Mack, Sr. Anne Brown