

**Author:** Przygoda Wiesław

**Title:** THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF CHARITY WORK OF THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO CARDINAL PAUL JOSEF CORDES (Specyfika posługi charytatywnej Kościoła w ujęciu kard. Paula Cordesa)

**Source:** Roczniki Pastoralno-Katechetyczne (Pastoral and Catechetical Annals) year: 2010 number: 2(57), pages: 25-38.

**Keywords:** caritas, diacony, love of fellow humans, charity work, charity formation, caritas spirituality, Cardinal P.J. Cordes, Benedict XVI.

**Discipline:** THEOLOGY

**Language:** POLISH

**Document type:** ARTICLE

**Publication order reference (Author's office address):** Wiesław Przygoda, kierownik Katedry Teologii Charytatywnej KUL, Al. Raławickie 14, 20-031 Lublin, Poland.

**E-mail:** przygoda@kul.pl

**Abstract** When announcing the encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* on December 25, 2005, Pope Benedict XVI added momentum to the discussion of the essence and unique nature of the Church's charity work. In the discussion of such work, among others, P.J. Cordes' voice is not to be ignored, not only due to the high position he holds (President of the Papal Council "Cor Unum") but also his influential publications on charity theology, especially his latest book entitled: *Helfer fallen nicht vom Himmel. Caritas und Spiritualität* (Eng. *Those who give help do not descend from heaven. Caritas and spirituality*). In Cardinal's view, nowadays institutionalized charity work demands an insight into political, economic, sanitary, anthropological and administrative spheres as well as practical skills proved by appropriate certificates. All of this is important and necessary, yet insufficient from the perspective of the charity organizations of the Catholic Church. Only a shift from the legal paradigm to the one of faith will permit a deeper insight into human poverty. Therefore, professionalization of the forms and means should be accompanied by a greater concern for spiritual formation of people who are either professionally or voluntarily involved in the charity mission of the Church.