članci ▪ *articles* ▪ *articuli*

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE CHURCH: ORGANISATIONAL AND PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES

Piotr JANAS

Department of Social Sciences, Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome
Largo Angelicum, 1 - 00184 Roma, Italy
janas@pust.it

Abstract

This paper explores the role of Church leaders in fostering resilience. It begins by acknowledging the contemporary context characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity; brittleness, anxiety, nonlinearity, and incomprehensibility. The Church addresses the spiritual and cultural crisis of individualism by providing a sense of community, support, belonging, and formation, particularly in virtues. Church leaders can foster personal resilience by guiding individuals when interpreting reality, developing self-awareness, and promoting a sense of responsibility. Mapping available resources, categorized as skills, supports, strategies, and sagacity (4 S's), is an effective method. Additionally, practicing virtues, as advocated by the Church, plays a crucial role in building resilience. Learning routines, resembling virtues in their curiosity-driven and ongoing nature, origin in society, contextual flexibility, focused action, and commitment to improvement, empower individuals as lifelong learners, promoting growth and resilience. The Church's approach embraces personalism, highlighting the unique, rational, and personal nature of human beings and recognizing the inherent dignity of each individual. A person-centred approach to resilience is teleological, value-based, integrative, collaborative, and responsive. Reflection and assessment are vital for intellectual development and continuous learning. Moreover, personalist resilience acknowledges the importance of cultivating relationships and receiving community support. Furthermore, the Church can foster personal resilience by enhancing its own organizational resilience. This involves prioritizing process reliability and promoting a culture of learning, adaptation, and proactivity. By doing so, trust and a sense of community are built, contributing to the personal resilience of Church members.

Key words: *resilience, personalism, virtue ethics, learning, organizational studies.*

Introduction

When discussing resilience, we refer to an experience of crisis. For the Church, struggling with crisis is not a new challenge, but rather a part of its ongoing reality throughout history. However, the Church's eschatological and prophetic vision holds that it will not be overcome by the gates of hell. This does not mean that the Church does not go through many crises, particularly those of faith. When thinking about what crises the Church faces, one may imagine a crisis of faith or other faith-related challenges such as persecution, secularization, commercialization of faith, ignorance or lack of Christian formation. Local churches in different parts of the world all have their own struggles. At the same time, based on Jesus's conversation with the Samaritan woman[1], we know that it is precisely a conversion on anthropology and human fulfilment, that is a starting point for the conversation about God, the Church and the role of faith and religion in human life.

Therefore, we focus on the anthropological perspective of resilience, derived from social sciences. Our goal is to enrich theological and pastoral perspectives and experiences of the Church[2] by incorporating insights from organizational scholarship and management science. The reader is invited to treat it as an inspiration for how Church leaders can develop an offer in the service of resilience of individuals and communities.

We begin by discussing the general qualities of the current crisis so that we can better identify the needs that arise on a personal level arising from the character of modern struggles. Next, we define resilience and how to recognize it by observing people's behaviour. Then, we look at ways in which people can learn and build their resilience by using different types of resources available to them. In particular, we touch on the philosophy of personalism and characterize a person-centred approach to building resilience. Finally, we discuss how the Church as an organization can contribute to strengthening personal resilience of people and provide an example of the importance of an organization for personal resilience.

1. Why do we talk about the resilience?

The pandemic and the war have made us realize that the world we live in is vulnerable. Moreover, one way to understand the dynamics of the modern world

---

[1]   John 4:5-30.
[2]   Cf. »Pressed in everything, but not oppressed; hesitating, but not double-minded« (2 Cor 4:8).

is to describe it as being in a permanent state of crisis. Sociologists, economists, philosophers, and theologians may point out different aspects of this crisis, such as spiritual, cultural, societal, political, economic, and environmental. All of these aspects impact the institution of the Church and the faithful.

However, as Christians, we should remember that the term crisis designates a decisive state of things or a vital point at which change must come, for better or worse[3]. Hence, when we recognize the challenging, more than threatening, nature of change, we should be more disposed to see it more as an opportunity for the Church to learn, and to reinvigorate her commitment to her mission. The Church, as a global organization with a long history of serving the spiritual and practical needs of her followers, has a unique opportunity to address these needs and provide support and guidance to those who are struggling.

Regardless of the specific aspect of crisis, we might try to draw general characteristics of the world that the Church belongs to. For over 30 years, organizational scholars and practitioners have referred to the VUCA concept that describes the current environment as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. As a result, organisations may prepare operational and strategic scenarios for Volatility: lack of stability and predictability; Uncertainty: lack of ability to foresee what major changes might be coming; Complexity: moving in ways experts have never seen before; Ambiguity: problems in understanding what is the best course of action[4].

Furthermore, as interconnectedness and digitalisation have been accelerating, the new BANI concept tries to express the fragility and possible chaos in more intense terms. Hence, the present reality may be described as Brittle: easy to shatter, subjected to a total and sudden failure; Anxious: a constant feeling of impotence; Nonlinear: disconnection between cause and effect in time, proportion, perception; Incomprehensible: extremely difficult to understand[5].

These characteristics of our times have brought about a multitude of needs for people around the world and made some needs pre-eminently urgent. From an existential and philosophical standpoint, it is evident that an individualistic culture has become dominant, prioritizing personal interests

---

[3] Crisis as defined in https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/crisis (Accessed: 15. VI. 2023).

[4] Nathan BENNETT – James LEMOINE, What VUCA really means for you, in: *Harvard Business Review*, 92 (2014.), 10.

[5] Patricia ADAM, *Agile in ISO 9001,* Cham, 2023., 62.

over the creation of common good[6]. The most significant aspect of this individualism is the disregard for the social dimension of human existence. Therefore, we believe that the three most pressing needs that the Catholic Church can address as a consequence of the spiritual and cultural crisis of individualism are: the need for community, the need for meaning, and the need for formation, especially in virtues.

With so much uncertainty and suffering in the world, it is natural for people to feel lost, lonely, and disconnected from their faith and their communities. The Church can offer a sense of community and support, a sense of belonging and connection, as well as spiritual guidance and teachings that can help individuals find meaning and purpose in difficult times. The Church can help people navigate these challenging times, and find hope and healing in the midst of crisis. At the same time, addressing these needs contributes to fostering resilience of people and of the Church.

Personal resilience is an answer to personal challenges such as persistent, stressful situations stemming from individual conditions or events such as a job loss, illness, or global crisis. Thus, when confronted with failure or harsh conditions, we need to understand these contingencies and how to handle them. One needs to be prepared in order to know what to do, how to behave, so that we could survive. In this paper we focus on the personal perspective to building resilience. We also dedicate some attention to the organizational aspect of resilience. However, the best way to foster the organizational resilience of the Church leads through strengthening the personal resilience of her members.

2. What is resilience?

Resilience is understood as the ability to bounce back from adversity, trauma, or stress. It is the capacity to recover quickly from setbacks, adapt to change, and continue to function effectively in the face of challenges[7]. Resilient people do not have fewer disappointments than the rest of us, yet they react to pain in a strikingly different way. These people are not naive optimists and the pain they endure is real, often deeply tragic. However, they endure, and they ultimately bounce back. Without resilience, people might dwell on problems, feel

---

[6]   Alasdair MACINTYRE, *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, South Bend, 2007., 35.
[7]   Lisa CHRISTENSEN – Scott HAMMOND – Merilee LARSEN, Lost person behavior as an antecedent to resilience, in: Edward POWLEY – Brianna CAZA – Arran CAZA (eds.), *Research Handbook on Organizational Resilience*, Cheltenham, 2020., 215.

victimized, become overwhelmed, turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, and undergo a mental condition, such as depression.

There are three prominent features of resilient behaviour. Firstly, resilient people interpret information differently than others. For instance, criticism or low popularity is not a threat to one's professional standing. They accept experience as a piece of data, not as an infallible predictor of the future. Secondly, they have a sense of personal efficacy and empowerment. Although they are not delusionary about their powers, they do not surrender themselves to the whims of fate. Thirdly, they take appropriate responsibility for their role in unfortunate events without becoming compulsively and excessively responsible for everything.

These initial indications provide insights into the methods of cultivating personal resilience: by actively shaping our interpretation of reality, by developing self-awareness, and by embracing personal responsibility. At the same time, building resilience can be viewed as a continuous learning process, which aligns with the Christian concept of *docibilitas*, denoting a willingness to be taught and an inclination for learning. Learning, in this context, is an active and self-directed process that serves as the foundation for ongoing personal formation and growth.

3. How to strengthen personal resilience?

Resilience is a highly valued quality, particularly during times of adversity, when individuals are exposed to new experiences that serve as crucial learning opportunities. To optimize the learning process, we can apply Kolb's concept of experiential learning cycle, which views learning as the creation of knowledge through the transformation of experiences. This cycle involves four interconnected stages: experience, reflection, observation, and active experimentation[8]. To become effective learners, individuals must possess four essential abilities: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. At the same time, we can express the same concept of learning for resilience using the language of virtues as postulated by Christian moral teaching. Therefore, virtue ethics, advocated by the Church, provides a practical and robust framework for fostering personal and organizational resilience.

---

[8]   David KOLB, *Experiential Learning. Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*, Englewood Cliffs, 1984., 38.

Informed by learning theory and research, we can identify six specific individual learning routines that are organized into three stages of learning. The first stage, known as readiness, encompasses two important factors: openness to experience and learning identity. Openness to experience refers to an individual's willingness to embrace new challenges and engage with unfamiliar situations, while learning identity relates to one's self-perception as a learner and the value they place on continuous learning and personal growth.

Moving to the second stage, social support plays a vital role in facilitating effective learning. This is often expressed through team learning, where individuals collaborate and interact with others in a supportive environment. Team learning promotes knowledge sharing, collective problem-solving, and exchange of diverse perspectives, all of which contribute to individual and organizational resilience.

The final stage comprises learning strategies and behaviours, which are crucial for sustaining and reinforcing resilience. Flexibility is an essential learning strategy that enables individuals to adapt and respond effectively to changing circumstances. By remaining open-minded and adaptable, learners can navigate challenges and seize new opportunities with ease. Focused action, another important behaviour, involves setting clear goals and taking deliberate steps towards achieving them. This helps individuals maintain a sense of purpose and direction in their learning journey.

Continuous improvement is the third learning behaviour within this stage. By embracing a growth mindset and seeking feedback, individuals can identify areas for development and actively work on enhancing their knowledge and skills. This commitment to continuous improvement ensures that learning remains a lifelong process, allowing individuals to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity.

Learning routines can be likened to virtues, possessing similar qualities that align them with virtuous traits. Firstly, routines exhibit a habitual character. Just as virtues are cultivated through consistent practice, learning routines are developed through repeated engagement with knowledge and skills. The regularity of these routines instils discipline and creates a foundation for continuous learning.

Curiosity plays a crucial role in both virtues and learning routines. Intellectual curiosity drives the pursuit of knowledge, while volitional curiosity fuels the desire to explore and discover. By nurturing curiosity, individuals develop a thirst for understanding and practice, enabling them to delve deeper into subjects and expand their intellectual horizons.

Moreover, learning routines contribute to the formation of a learning identity. Similar to the ongoing dynamic nature of virtuous processes, learning routines shape an individual's sense of self as a lifelong learner. They foster an identity that embraces growth, adaptability, and a commitment to expanding one's knowledge and skills.

The social dimension of learning routines further parallels virtues. Just as virtues arise from societal values and expectations, learning routines are influenced by the support and guidance of others. Society plays a key role in providing educational resources, mentorship, and collaborative learning environments that foster the development of effective learning routines.

Flexibility is another shared characteristic between learning routines and virtues. The actualization of learning routines depends on the context in which they are applied. Adaptability and the ability to tailor routines to different learning situations enhance their effectiveness, just as virtues must be adaptable to diverse circumstances.

Furthermore, learning routines exhibit focused action, similar to the teleological character of virtues. They provide a clear direction and purpose, guiding learners toward specific goals and objectives. This focused action allows individuals to channel their efforts and energies effectively, maximizing the impact of their learning endeavours.

Lastly, both virtues and learning routines embody the notion of continuous improvement. Just as virtues are an ongoing process towards fulfilment, learning routines foster a mindset of growth and progress. Through regular practice, reflection, and refinement, individuals can refine their learning routines and continually enhance their abilities.

In conclusion, learning routines possess qualities that align with virtues. Their habitual nature, curiosity-driven approach, ongoing dynamic character, societal origins, contextual flexibility, focused action, and commitment to continuous improvement make them akin to virtues in the realm of learning and personal development. Embracing and cultivating these learning routines can empower individuals to become lifelong learners, fostering a fulfilling journey of intellectual growth and self-improvement.

These individual learning routines not only contribute to personal resilience but also serve as antecedents to organizational resilience. When individuals within an organization possess the abilities and engage in the learning routines described above, they collectively foster a culture of resilience. This culture enables organizations to navigate challenges, learn from

setbacks, and continually evolve to meet the demands of a rapidly changing environment[9].

Another way to organize the reflection on fostering personal resilience, revolves around a person's skills, supports, strategies, and sagacity. This model structures the available resources that a person can tap into. At the same time, the framework draws on learnings from similar challenges in the past and focuses on developing awareness of what is available to stay resilient during a crisis. Therefore, in times of a setback there are 4 types of resource available (4 S's): skills that a person has, supports they can call on, strategies they apply, and sagacity they can hold onto[10].

Skills are things that a person can access at times of need. These can range from the ability to manage money really well to the ability to keep positive in the face of disaster, or to keep a sense of perspective. Recognizing one's own skills builds self-belief. It boosts the trust we have in our own actions and our capacity to deal with whatever comes our way.

Supports are the pit props that keep the person standing when it would be easier to fall down. These include our faith, good friends, family, prayer. It means recognizing the social dimension of our being and referring to what brings us closer to fulfilment. What helps people through challenging times is the availability of emotional support, so that we know we are not facing things alone and are being listened to. It is equally important to be able to offer support to others, as it validates our worth.

Strategies are those actions that a person takes to support the goal of moving away from the feelings and thoughts associated with the present difficulty. The ability to manage one's emotional reaction to crisis is crucial, not to panic or break down and to maintain the ability to make use of one's resources. The strategies can include prayer, imposing a daily time-table to prevent too much time for thinking, volunteering to remind ourselves that we have things to offer to others, or doing sports to release tension. It is also about seeing the bigger picture.

When we are under pressure, emotions become heightened and more volatile, with negative emotions often dominating how we assess the world and ourselves. Being able to manage our emotions helps us retain a sense of

---

[9] Christopher KAYES – Jeewhan YOON, Learning routines that build organizational resilience, in: Edward POWLEY – Brianna CAZA – Arran CAZA (eds.), *Research Handbook on Organizational Resilience*, 207-208.

[10] Carole PEMBERTON, *Resilience. A practical guide for coaches*, Maidenhead, 2015., 102.

perspective, and to view problems at their correct size, rather than becoming overwhelmed by them.

Sagacity is the wisdom and insight that a person holds onto. It can come from the Bible, spiritual writings, philosophy, literature and poetry, family traditions or learning from one's own experience. The character of a person's mindset has a significant impact on one's motivation, and then on resilience.

Overall, to develop personal resilience, it is important to assess and identify our available resources. During times of crisis, even challenging experiences can provide valuable learning opportunities. Additionally, supporting others who are facing difficulties can enhance their awareness and resilience. At the same time, considering the social dimension helps us break free from the culture of individualism. By fostering a sense of community and interconnectedness, we can cultivate a more resilient society and the Church.

4. What characterizes a person-centred approach to building resilience?

The concept of personalism emerges as a potential antidote to the prevailing culture of individualism that dominates contemporary mindsets. Personalism is a philosophical perspective rooted in both neo-Aristotelian and Thomistic traditions, which places emphasis on the unique, rational, and personal nature of human beings. Central to this perspective is the belief in the inherent dignity and value of each individual person. Personalism asserts that human beings possess a rational soul and are endowed with the capacity for rational thought and free will. Moreover, it highlights the significance of personal relationships and the value of community, often attributing an important role to God in human life[11].

Adopting a person-centred approach to building resilience aligns with the principles of anthropology that is based on personalism. This approach prioritizes the strengths, needs, and goals of the person. It is teleological in nature, meaning that it is focused on recognizing and pursuing one's purpose and meaning in life, with the ultimate aim of achieving human flourishing. A key aspect of this approach is its value-based orientation, seeking to develop an awareness of what is personally important and virtuous. It encourages the practice of virtues, particularly prudence, as an integral part of character development. Additionally, the person-centred approach promotes the integration of intellectual reflection and informed emotional responses, striving for

---

[11] Jacques MARITAIN, *The Person and the Common Good*, New York, 1947., 23-38.

a harmonious balance between the two. It also emphasizes collaboration and the importance of working with others, while seeking support from the community. Importantly, this approach is responsive rather than reactive, recognizing the dynamic nature of resilience.

Within the framework of personalist resilience, the intellect plays a significant role. The process of reflection and assessment is highlighted as a means to strengthening personal resilience. This involves actively engaging in self-reflection, introspection, and evaluation of one's experiences and actions. By continuously learning and growing from these reflections, individuals can enhance their resilience and develop a purpose-driven orientation. This orientation involves aligning one's actions and decisions with a clear sense of purpose, enabling individuals to navigate challenges and setbacks with resilience and determination. Furthermore, personalist resilience underscores the importance of cultivating relationships with others. Recognizing the intrinsic value of social support, personalist resilience recognizes that strong connections and support systems play a vital role in building and maintaining resilience.

The principles of personalism give raise to the practice of virtues and align with both Kolb's concept of experiential learning and the 4Ss classification of resilient resources. Personalism, with its emphasis on the unique and personal nature of human beings, resonates with the idea of experiential learning, which involves actively engaging with experiences to acquire knowledge and develop skills. Additionally, the 4Ss classification of resilient resources, which includes skills, supports, strategies, and sagacity, corresponds to the multifaceted nature of personalist resilience. Personalism recognizes the importance of personal relationships, the cultivation of virtues, and the integration of intellectual reflection, all of which are encompassed within the 4Ss framework. Thus, the alignment between personalism, experiential learning, and the 4Ss classification reinforces the argument for personalism as a comprehensive approach to building resilience.

5. What organisational steps must be taken in order to build resilience?

A positive approach to organizational resilience builds on the premise, that experience serves as the basis for learning, and that learning can serve as the foundation for positive organizational processes[12]. We have demonstrated

---

[12] Christopher KAYES – Jeewhan YOON, Learning routines that build organizational resilience, 205.

how personal learning routines i.e., curiosity, learning identity, social support, flexibility, focused action, and continuous improvement, all support organizational resilience.

According to the United Nations' definition, resilience is »the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions«[13]. Resilience allows an organization to anticipate and prepare for potential difficulties, adapt to changes and challenges as they arise, and assess and evaluate their responses to ensure continuous improvement. These practices can be structured around three key areas: product or service excellence, process reliability, and people behaviour[14].

For the Church, it may be particularly important to focus on strengthening processes and people in order to build resilience. Process reliability involves ensuring that the organization's systems and processes are efficient, effective, and of high quality. This helps to minimize the occurrence of errors and issues, and ensures that the organization is able to continue operating smoothly even in the face of challenges. As a consequence, the institution fosters trust among its members.

People behaviour is also crucial in building resilience within an organization. This includes fostering a positive and supportive culture, as well as promoting learning, adaptation, and flexibility among team members. By building a team of individuals who are proactive and adaptable, the organization is better able to face and overcome any difficulties that may arise. Here, we can apply the above-presented postulates of building personal resilience. Both the leaders and the faithful are all called to responsibly develop their resilience, given they all build the Church.

The focus on enhancing process reliability and people behaviour not only strengthens the organizational resilience of the Church, but it also nurtures personal resilience. The personalist approach adopted in building resilience within the Church plays a vital role in fostering trust and a sense of belonging, which are key factors in resilience. These findings align with a global study

---

[13] UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION, Resilience, in: https://www.undrr.org/terminology/resilience (Accessed: 15. VI. 2023).

[14] BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION, *Organizational Resilience: Harnessing experience, embracing opportunity* (2016), https://www.bsigroup.com/LocalFiles/en-US/Whitepapers/Organizational-Resilience/BSI-whitepaper-harnessing-experience-embracing-opportunity.pdf (Accessed: 15. VI. 2023).

on resilience and engagement[15], where trust emerged as the most significant driving force behind both engagement and resilience[16]. Conversely, feelings of loneliness or a lack of belonging have a negative impact on engagement and resilience[17]. Therefore, the Church has the potential to become a resilient and trustworthy community and institution, capable of fostering both organizational and personal resilience.

Conclusions

This paper discusses ways in which Church leaders can foster resilience in people. It begins by sketching the context of crisis in modern times, which can be characterized as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous; or brittle, anxious, nonlinear and incomprehensible.

At the same time, the Church sees a crisis as an opportunity to address the needs of her members and renew her commitment to the service of resilience by providing support and guidance to those who are struggling. In particular, the most pressing needs that the Catholic Church can address as a consequence of the spiritual and cultural crisis of individualism are the need for community, the need for meaning, and the need for formation, especially in virtues. The Church can offer a sense of community, support, belonging and connection, as well as spiritual guidance and teachings that can help individuals find meaning and purpose in difficult times. Furthermore, addressing these needs contributes to fostering resilience in people and in the Church.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity, trauma, or stress and recover quickly from setbacks, adapt to change, and continue to function effectively in the face of challenges. Resilient people are characterized by the capacity to interpret information in a positive way, by having a sense of personal efficacy and empowerment, and by taking appropriate responsibility for their role. Hence, Church leaders can foster personal resilience by working on how individuals interpret reality, developing self-awareness, and encouraging taking responsibility. This can be done by mapping 4 types of available

---

[15] Marcus BUCKINGHAM, The Top 10 Findings on Resilience and Engagement, in: *MIT Sloan Management Review* (1. III. 2021.), https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/the-top-10-findings-on-resilience-and-engagement/ (Accessed: 15. VI. 2023.).

[16] Employees who reported that they completely trust their team leader were 14 times more likely to be fully engaged.

[17] Those who reported being on a team were 2.6 times more likely to be fully engaged and 2.7 times more likely to be highly resilient than those who did not identify as team members.

resource (4 Ss): skills that a person has, supports they can call on, strategies they apply, and sagacity they can hold onto. Moreover, the practice of virtues, postulated by the Church, is the efficient way to build up resilience.

Learning routines with their curiosity-driven approach, ongoing dynamic character, societal origins, contextual flexibility, focused action, and commitment to continuous improvement make them akin to virtues in the realm of learning and personal development. Embracing and cultivating these learning routines can empower individuals to become lifelong learners, fostering a fulfilling journey of intellectual growth and resilience.

In doing so, the Church offers a personalist view. Personalism emerges as a compelling antidote to the culture of individualism that characterizes the contemporary society. The personalist perspective emphasizes the unique, rational, and personal nature of human beings, placing value on the inherent dignity of each individual. Adopting a person-centred approach to resilience aligns with personalist principles and focuses on the individual's strengths, needs, and goals. It is teleological, value-based, integrative, collaborative, and responsive. The intellect plays a crucial role in reflection and assessment, fostering continuous learning and growth. Moreover, personalist resilience recognizes the significance of cultivating relationships and receiving support from the community. By embracing personalism and adopting a person-centred approach to resilience, individuals can nurture their resilience, enhance their overall well-being, and thrive amidst the challenges of the modern world.

The Church may also foster personal resilience through strengthening her own organizational resilience. In this aspect, she may focus on process reliability and on promoting a culture of learning, adaptation, and proactivity. As a result, she can build trust and a sense of community, which contributes to the personal resilience of her members.

Sažetak

IZGRADNJA OTPORNOSTI U CRKVI: ORGANIZACIJSKA I OSOBNA PERSPEKTIVA

Piotr JANAS

Fakultet društvenih znanosti Papinskog sveučilišta svetog Tome Akvinskog u Rimu
Largo Angelicum 1, IT - 00184 Rim
janas@pust.it

Članak istražuje ulogu crkvenog vodstva u izgradnji otpornosti. Rad polazi od suvremenog okvira koji se definira kao nestabilan, nesiguran, kompleksan i dvosmislen; i koji je obilježen kao krhak, anksiozan, nelinearan i nejasan. Crkva odgovora na duhovnu i kulturnu krizu individualizma tako što pruža osjećaj zajedništva, podrške, pripadnosti i formacije, posebno u vrlinama. Crkveno vodstvo može poticati osobnu otpornost usmjeravajući pojedince u tumačenju stvarnosti, razvijanju samosvijesti i promicanju osjećaja odgovornosti. Mapiranje dostupnih resursa, kategoriziranih kao vještine, podrška, strategije i mudrost (4S's - skills, supports, strategies, sagacity), učinkovita je metoda. Također, prakticiranje vrlina, kako ih zagovara Crkva, igra ključnu ulogu u izgradnji otpornosti. Rutine učenja, koje nalikuju vrlinama zbog svoje usmjerenosti prema znatiželji, stalne prirode, društvenog porijekla, kontekstualne fleksibilnosti, usmjerenosti na djelovanje i predanosti napretku, osnažuju pojedince za cjeloživotno učenje, promovirajući rast i otpornost. Pristup Crkve zagovara personalizam, ističući jedinstvenu, racionalnu i osobnu prirodu ljudskih bića te priznajući prirodno dostojanstvo svakog pojedinca. Pristup otpornosti usmjeren na osobu je teleološki, temeljen na vrijednostima, integrativan, suradnički i responzivan. Refleksija i procjena ključni su za intelektualni razvoj i kontinuirano učenje. Isto tako, personalistička otpornost priznaje važnost razvijanja odnosa i podrške zajednice. Crkva može poticati osobnu otpornost time što unaprjeđuje vlastitu organizacijsku otpornost, što uključuje prioritiziranje pouzdanosti procesa i promicanje kulture učenja, prilagodbe i proaktivnosti. Time se gradi povjerenje i osjećaj zajedništva, što doprinosi osobnoj otpornosti članova Crkve.

Ključne riječi: otpornost, personalizam, etika vrlina, učenje, istraživanje organizacija.