



ENGLISH

**2025**  
**HOLY YEAR**

**Journal**

**GLOBAL COMPACT  
ON EDUCATION**





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ON EDUCATION

**Journal**

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## PRESENTATION

The stars, on their own, appear as isolated points of light in the sky, but when viewed together they begin to form constellations, guiding our paths and offering direction and hope. The *Global Compact on Education* was born in the same way: from the coming together of many different lights which, when united, become a shared map for the future of education.

2025 was an extraordinarily intense year for the *Global Compact on Education*, a year that we can rightly call special and holy, marked by ecclesial and educational milestones of great significance. It was the year of the moving farewell to Pope Francis, who with prophetic insight launched the *Global Compact on Education* as a global response to the educational challenges of our time; and it was, at the same time, the year of welcoming Pope Leo XIV, who decisively relaunched its vision, confirming it as an authentic guiding star for the educational journey of the Church and society.

2025 was also the year of the publication of the Apostolic Letter *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, in which Pope Leo XIV proposed a reinterpretation and renewal of the *Global Compact on Education*, introducing three new priorities alongside the seven commitments originally indicated by Pope Francis. This programmatic text inaugurates a new educational season and invites everyone to share responsibility, in the awareness that educating always means looking beyond the immediate.

During this year, the Global Compact on Education has undergone further development and wider dissemination through numerous initiatives carried out in different parts of the world. Many of these were directly organised by the *Dicastery for Culture and Education*, the Prefect, the Secretaries and the GCE Committee. Once again, I was able to confirm the excellent impression I had gained in previous years: a convinced and enthusiastic commitment to this educational project, capable of involving realities that are very different in terms of history, culture and context, but united by the desire to build the future together.

A particularly significant moment was the *Youth Jubilee*, experienced as a true explosion of joy, beauty and participation. On this occasion, many young people responded to a questionnaire promoted by our Dicastery, expressing their desires, expectations and questions about the future of education. Their voices, authentic and often disarming, represent a precious resource and a clear indication of the path we are called to follow.

The Jubilee of the World of Education also featured the *Village of Educational Networks*, a space for meeting and dialogue that saw the participation of about thirty international Catholic educational networks. It was a significant experience of exchange, mutual knowledge and collaboration, which made visible the richness and plurality of the Catholic educational world at a global level.

In this context, the *Global Compact on Education* was the focus of numerous interventions, particularly during the fourth session of the International Congress on Educational Constellations. A pact with the future, where the image of constellations became a shared language and common vision.

Looking ahead to the new year 2026, there are many prospects and new developments awaiting us. Together with all of you, we wish to give concrete life to this new educational season inaugurated by the Holy Father, in which each of us is called to be a protagonist in addressing the three new priorities indicated. The *Global Compact on Education* will have a dedicated space on the website of the *Dicastery for Culture and Education*, and important new developments are also planned for the publication of the *GCE Journal*.

During this year, we also intend to intensify our focus on those areas of the world that have so far been slower to respond to the Holy Father's appeal. The new '*GCE Decalogue*' is intended to be a veritable *Magna Carta* for Catholic education in the coming years, capable of guiding educational choices, processes and policies in a time marked by profound transformations.

We would like to thank Pope Leo XIV for having taken up and relaunched the *Global Compact on Education* with vigour and entrust this journey to the intercession of St John Henry Newman, proclaimed co-patron of education and Doctor of the Church in the closing celebration of the *Jubilee of the World of Education*.

In conclusion, I extend my sincere and grateful thanks to all those who, with passion and daily dedication, devote their best energies to this mission, perhaps the most beautiful and demanding of all: educating the younger generations.

Upon all of you, your educational communities and your projects, I invoke the Lord's blessing, wishing you a journey fruitful in hope and renewal.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça

*Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education*



The Pope received an audience with the promoters of the *Écoles de Vie(s)* project, inspired by the **Global Compact on Education**

## **GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION: INTEGRAL EDUCATION**



### **ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER TO A DELEGATION OF THE BOARD MANAGING CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN FRANCE (OGEC)**

*Friday, 10 January 2025*

*Dear sisters, dear brothers, good morning!*

It is with joy that I welcome you today, promoters of the *“Écoles de Vie(s)”* project, accompanied by Bishop Philippe Christory of Chartres: Chartres, *chez-nous, chez-nous* [laughter]. Your formation project, with the Gospel and the social teaching of the Church at the centre, sheds light on a fundamental truth: every person, as fragile as he or she may be, is the bearer of intrinsic value, and we are called to “[acknowledge] each individual as a unique and unrepeatable person” (*Fratelli tutti*, 98). Every human life has an unalienable dignity. With your effort, you proclaim that no-one is useless, no-one is unworthy, that every existence is a gift from God to be welcomed with love and respect. And thank you for this!

This is what Jesus Himself teaches us by His example. In His ministry, He always went towards the sick, the rejected, those who were excluded from the society of His time. And He touched the lepers, He spoke with the marginalized and He welcomed with love those who did not seem to have a place in society. Jesus enters in to contact, “Jesus enters into direct contact with those with disabilities, since, like every form of infirmity, disabilities must not be ignored and denied. Yet Jesus not only relates to disabled persons; He also changes the meaning of their experience. In fact, he showed a new approach ... In Jesus’ eyes, every human condition, including those marked by

grave limitations, is an invitation to a unique relationship – a unique relationship – with God that enables people to flourish” (Address to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, 11 April 2024). And this is important: the relationship with God always makes people flourish again, always! Welcoming everyone with their fragilities and putting into relation a large number of actors, you embody that outgoing Church that I have often expressed a wish for, an open Church, a welcoming Church, capable of being close to everyone and of healing the wounds of those who suffer, of caressing tenderly those who are deprived of affection and raising up those who have fallen to the ground. Think that in only one situation is it acceptable to look down on someone from above, in one situation: to help them get up again. The only situation in which it is acceptable to look down on someone from above. We are required to create spaces where they may express themselves fully. We must make room for their dreams, welcome them and communicate hope to them. Your work enables them to discover that their life has meaning and that they have a unique role to play in society.

I am glad that your project is decidedly in line with the vision of education proposed in the **Global Compact on Education**: an integral education that does not merely transmit knowledge, but seeks to form men and women capable of compassion and fraternal love. In this way you contribute to an education that prepares the future, forming not only competent professionals, but also mature adults who will be the artisans of a more beautiful and more humane world, imbued with the Gospel.

In this Jubilee year of hope, I encourage you to persist with determination, because only by restoring centrality to the human person will we be able to build a truly just and solidarity-based society. Your initiative is a practical response to this aspiration: to restore to people, all people, marginalized by disabilities or fragilities, to their place within a fraternal and joyful community. May your work inspire other initiatives in support of the most vulnerable, and may your action open prospects for an integral education that the young generations urgently need.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of hope and educator of Jesus, accompany you and protect you. I bless you from my heart, with all the people you serve, the young people you form, all the families and all those who support this good project. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Thank you. ■

## THANK YOU DR MARIA BRUNA



Last December, Dr. Maria Bruna left the Department for Culture and Education on reaching retirement age. The Committee for the **Global Compact on Education** thanks her for her kind availability and collaboration with the **Education Compact** and wishes her all the best in this new phase of her life.

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## GCE JOURNAL 2024 COLLECTION PUBLISHED

In 2024, the **Global Compact on Education** celebrated its fifth anniversary. A significant milestone that provides an opportunity to take an initial stock of the impact this project has had in the world of education. This will be one of the main tasks of the Education Observatory during this jubilee year, in preparation for the Jubilee of Education to be held from 27 October to 2 November 2025. It will be interesting to analyse which countries have responded most enthusiastically to the Holy Father's invitation and to understand the reasons behind the different reactions.

The year 2024 also saw many initiatives related to the **Global Compact on Education** around the world. Some of these activities, selected from those reported to our Secretariat, are collected in this booklet. A more detailed description of the GCE initiatives is available in the "Information Report of the Sections" presented during the Plenary Session of our Dicastery for Culture and Education in November 2024.

Among the activities in 2024, I would like to emphasise the relevance of the celebration of the First Day

Children's World, in which the GCE Secretariat participated with a stand, as already happened during the WYD in Lisbon 2023. On these occasions, the children had the opportunity to express their dreams and wishes

on the school they imagine. Pope Francis, in the second commitment of the **Educational Pact**, invites us



precisely to "listen to the voice of children, youth and young people."

The attention of our Dicastery, in this Holy Year, is particularly focused on the Jubilee of Education. During this important celebration, an "Education Village" will be set up, an exhibition area where international educational networks will be able to present the results achieved in the first five years of the GCE and share their future prospects.

The Jubilee invites us all to be pilgrims of hope. We wish to transmit this hope to the world of schools, universities and culture. Educating, as Pope Francis constantly reminds us, is already an act of hope, since it means sowing today for

tomorrow. The **Global Compact on Education** itself is an event of hope, since it looks to the future, committing to building a renewed world through renewed education.

Five years have passed since the launch of the GCE, but today, more than ever, the world needs an **Educational Pact** capable of facing the challenges of complexity, artificial intelligence, climate change, armed conflicts and coexistence and brotherhood among peoples.

In expressing my heartfelt thanks to all those who work passionately in the world of education and culture, I extend my greetings and impart my blessing, wishing you all a Happy Holy Year.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ■

# THE BEST UNIVERSITY FOR THE WORLD



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*Here is an excerpt from the speech of the Rector of the Catholic University, where he talks about the Africa project, the **Digital Education Pact** and the inspiration for the **Global Compact on Education**..*

... If I had to summarise the essence of the programmatic lines of my rector's mandate I would resort to the formula that the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart must be the best university for the world, not simply the best university in the world. In other words, a university at the service of the world. A concept that has ancient roots. The term *universitas* - 'which contains the idea of the whole and that of the community', as Pope Francis reminds us (Bologna, 1 October 2017) - initially denoted the corporation of students and masters who jointly looked after education and culture in the cities. From there, the first universities sprang up next to cathedrals and monasteries, and in any case close to squares, markets and communication hubs. Institutions, that is, immersed in the world in which *quaestiones*, or radical questions for the world, were debated. I like to think that this original spirit has not died out and continues to nourish an idea of the university as a place of free, open and respectful encounter and confrontation, where one contributes to building the common good in the search for truth. Projecting ourselves to the present day in a - perhaps bold - parallelism, it is clear that the Milanese university system has fully benefited from its being immersed in the city by virtue of the attractiveness and propulsive force it is recognised for. Benefits that today, however, suffer from the weight of the cost of residency, an issue that calls for joint public-private action through synergies that are already taking shape between universities and institutions. Indeed, building the best university for the world means keeping the founding idea of the university alive, scrutinising, year by year, the transformations of society, the needs of the new generations, and the requirements of teaching and research.

Recalling the idea of a university that aims at universality, i.e. to everyone and to each one, has a special significance in this academic year that marks the 100th anniversary of the legal recognition of our University by the Italian State as a 'free university' through the Royal

Decree of 2 October 1924. A milestone reached a few years after the actual start of activities, made possible by the farsightedness and stubbornness of Father Agostino Gemelli, Armida Barelli and their collaborators. Over a century constitutes a precious heritage of experience, but at the same time encourages us to renew ourselves through projects, initiatives,

relationships. Today's inauguration is therefore a ritual typical of the annual cycle of academic life, but like every time it challenges us to open up new horizons.

In the face of the urgencies of our times, from inequalities to tearing polarisations, from wars to exasperated individualism, our efforts must intensify. All with the intention of enhancing ethical aspects, developing critical thinking and caring for the relational dimension. But also with the desire to foster an integral formation of the person, to enable the students' talents to be put to good use. In short, our mission as an educating community is to give life to recognisable and acknowledged educational pathways, which are able to interpret and interpret the universality of the Catholic adjective. Knowing how to continually question radical issues requires the ability to formulate questions of meaning that look to the future - without limiting oneself to providing answers to yesterday's issues - and the ability to confront dominant paradigms in order to propose a new vision. Father Agostino Gemelli himself, on the occasion of the inauguration of the academic year 1929/30, reiterated that the University 'wants to stimulate pure scientific research in its collaborators, knowing full well that in this field one must work not for today, but for tomorrow; not for our generation, but for the future; not for the personal ambition to win a famous name, but to serve knowledge' (8 December 1929). The idea of the research university, which is called upon to propose appropriate models of study and research according to the specificities of each discipline, with a spirit that is, at the same time, free and oriented towards the search for truth, can be found in these words. It is in this way that the university can make a thought-provoking contribution to the fundamental issues of each era, also through synergetic actions made possible by a network of strategic alliances with bodies and institutions. Precisely in the perspective of strategic alliances, we welcome - and extend to other universities - the appeal formulated by Pope Francis in his recent Message for the World Day of Peace to outline "new architectures", starting with the financial one, to promote cultural and structural changes. We are well aware that the objective is arduous. We know, in fact, that within the university system there are sectoral specialisations that risk generating a compartmentalisation of knowledge and a loss of a transversal horizon. What is needed instead is a greater

aptitude for interpreting the present from an integral perspective, thanks precisely to the dialogue between the humanities and applied disciplines. Every educational and cultural process is in fact the result of contamination and virtuous hybridisation. One can therefore understand the commitment of the University of Italian Catholics to enhance transdisciplinarity as an evolution of interdisciplinarity, which has always been in the foundations of our university. It echoes the Newman 'idea' of a university that, although not opposed to the teaching of practical sciences, believes that they should not be isolated from a global vision. A university, John Henry Newman asks, 'what can it teach, then, if it does not teach something particular? It teaches all knowledge by teaching all branches of knowledge' (J.H. Newman, *The Idea of University Defined and Illustrated in Nine Discourses Delivered to the Catholics of Dublin, 1852, [166]*).

A university that wants to be the best for the world cannot then disregard a further element, which, however, we struggle to focus on, or rather which we try not to address because it is delicate, or even difficult. I am referring to the educational and cultural value of a university, which is measured in its ability to form women and men of value. I am not talking about the transmission of values in a strictly pedagogical, let alone ideological, sense, but rather the intention to emphasise this dimension. When touching on aspects that affect our identity, it is always appropriate, I believe, to return to the words of our founder, who at the inauguration in 1937/38 exhorted: 'We must show the young university student what ideals he must set himself in life; we must accustom him to pursuing the realisation of these ideals through work, through sacrifice'.

To summarise, if the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart wants to be the best university for the world, it will have to be convincingly inspired by the three ideal lines just outlined: to serve knowledge with a long and integral view in order to develop new paradigms, to make the disciplines dialogue in order to avoid falling into parcelling out, to educate women and men of value in order to teach how to recognise the truth. A vision that presupposes, for its implementation, the involvement of the entire university family and takes on a broader significance because it intersects with a general reflection on the present and future of the university system. Of the many issues under discussion, I think two should take priority and both concern the protagonists of university life, namely the students. The first relates to their role: we are convinced that they are not users to whom we offer a service, as a well-established tendency would lead us to do, but rather people animated by the hope of living an educational experience that enhances their multiple intelligences, i.e. the three languages of head, heart and hands often evoked by Pope Francis. The second theme concerns their future: we believe that universities must prepare the ruling classes and generations of tomorrow in the awareness that professionalisation is in no way sufficient in itself and, above all, that it is not the only goal to be indicated as the horizon of the university course.

A university that wants to be the best for the world cannot ignore some alarming data on educational inequalities. Education is rightly considered a means of providing equality of opportunity, but the level of education often shows intergenerational persistence, i.e. it is passed on from one generation to the next, perpetuating inequalities. This is confirmed by OECD data (*Education at a glance 2024*): globally, 30% of adults whose parents have not attained secondary education persist in not

attaining that level of education. Still, due to wars, migration and poverty, some 250 million children and young people have no access to education. And it is precisely girls and young women who suffer the most. These are the symptoms of an emergency if not a real educational catastrophe, as Pope Francis has denounced.

A university such as ours cannot remain indifferent and must propose courses of action to ensure equal access to quality education, including digital education. I believe that one of these interventions calls into question the debated issue of artificial intelligence, the ambivalent nature of which has even been recognised by Geoffrey Hinton, Nobel laureate in physics for his discoveries on artificial neural networks. An ambivalence that must be addressed starting from the anthropological question, seen in relation to the so-called technocratic paradigm. The latter induces one to consider reality, goodness and truth as spontaneous outcomes of technology to the extent that it leads to the very negation of the human. Not a few risks arise from this. First of all, the capacity for action of artificial devices that sometimes leads to a veritable voluntary, perhaps unconscious, servitude on the part of users. Secondly, the impact of machines on the way we think and make decisions, such as to determine a new cognitive system in addition to the analytical and intuitive ones. Finally, the delicate aspect of the autonomy of algorithms, which introduces the issue of assigning responsibility for their choices.

The educational repercussions of the risks just



mentioned are considerable and a sectoral response, limited to a few countries or even a few individual international institutions, is not enough. Once again, an overall vision and strategic alliances are needed. What I propose, then, is an **educational pact for new technologies** and artificial intelligence.

The assumption of the Covenant is that education can benefit from the new technologies when they act as mediators, without them becoming an end in themselves. On the basis of this basic consideration, I indicate three open questions that are explored in the latest issue of our historic magazine *Vita e Pensiero*.

The first concerns teaching methods. The most demanding and pressing challenge is to understand how artificial intelligence can help refine traditional teaching methods, individualising the pedagogical approach to make it more appropriate to the context without, however, distorting the epistemological conformation of academic institutions such as ours.

The second concerns research on artificial intelligence itself. What is needed is an integrated and interdisciplinary approach that combines knowledge of technical aspects with the complexity of cognitive and social processes and contexts. From this point of view, the Catholic University is the ideal place to make the humanities and social disciplines dialogue with artificial

intelligence through courses aimed at students, as well as developers and users of artificial intelligence.

The third issue, finally, relates to investments to close technological inequalities that, in the light of the growing digital divide between countries, may generate polarisation between those who use and those who do not use artificial intelligence. According to OECD projections, the global population of university graduates is set to almost double in the current decade, reaching 300 million by 2030. In order to serve such a large number of students, taking into account the sustainability of global mobility, there is a need to allocate resources to digitisation in order to make university pathways accessible to those living in the poorest areas of the planet.

The **educational pact for new technologies** and artificial intelligence will necessarily have to involve students, researchers, institutional actors and civil society. The reference to the **Global Compact on Education** promoted by Pope Francis is evident and, in fact, our proposal fits into the groove traced by the Holy



Father.

The first test of the effectiveness of this proposal could be the Africa Plan of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart. This is an action framework, in keeping with the University's openness that I mentioned earlier, which aims to place the African continent at the heart of educational, research and third mission projects. In a spirit of reciprocity, the Athenaeum intends to broaden the pathways for the training of young Africans locally or in our country, to become an educational hub for second-generation African youth living in Europe, who are often on the margins, even though they represent a significant part of our future, and to make curricular volunteer experiences for our students increasingly systematic. The aspiration is to become the European university with the most relevant presence in Africa, through partnerships with local universities and institutions, with a view to mutual enrichment, for the integral education of people and the promotion of brotherhood and, last but not least, of peaceful social coexistence.

Although projections indicate a significant population growth for the African continent that will be associated with a significant increase in the labour force, the level of education remains low: 98 million young Africans are not in school. This is an obstacle that must be removed, not least to accompany sustainable economic development. In the spirit of mutual interest between Europe and Africa, the logic is that of a sharing of ideas, values, educational projects, far from the tendency to supply natural resources and human capital. The perspective we envision is based on *education power*, that is, the ability to help a country through incisive and respectful educational plans. Education, in fact, is the tool that more, and better, than others allows one to work with

African countries rather than for African countries, moving from a top-down to a bottom-up approach in which they too participate in defining problems and proposing solutions. From this point of view, the combination of education and growth, accompanied by solidarity, is the key to integral development and solidarity, including in the Global South. A perspective whose relevance is well understood today, in the phase of elaboration and implementation of the Mattei Plan for Africa, with which we hope to create fruitful connections.

I think it is worth remembering that Enrico Mattei's experience owes much to academics from the Catholic University, starting with Marcello Boldrini without forgetting Francesco Vito and Pasquale Saraceno. A vision fuelled by an ethical-political reflection inspired by a coherent set of values and social principles, typical of the Catholic world. The reference to Mattei is particularly important because it attributes specific centrality to the training of the local ruling class, indicating the close link between education and economic-social development in poorer areas.

The Africa Plan of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart intends to continue in the wake of this tradition by consolidating studies and educational projects - in fact, we already have 123 active projects with 40 African countries - which are the result of continuous and fruitful collaboration, agreements and alliances with universities, institutions, companies and local communities. A virtuous example is undoubtedly the University's project with the E4Impact Foundation, which has trained over time more than 1,700 entrepreneurs with MBA programmes in 20 African countries with local universities.

Our commitment is to continue and strengthen our initiatives with Africa in close synergy with the realities that already work there, from the Catholic ones to the internationally recognised ones such as UNESCO and FAO. In order to accentuate this commitment, we have decided to give voice to these realities in the *academic dies* of the Athenaeum's campuses, all of which will focus on the theme of Africa, declined from time to time according to the disciplinary specificities of each of them. It is clear that the Africa Plan will require substantial resources, but this should not intimidate us. The words of Pope Pius XI addressed to the founder Armida Barelli in June 1922, when he wished the newly founded University 'to find all those moral and material aids, of which such an important and dear initiative to Us needs', seem to be of great encouragement.

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As I draw my conclusions, I truly believe that the fate of the century we are living will depend on the role we know how to reserve for education. Because, also thanks to the opportunities offered by digital technology, it will be able to represent the real driving force for the development of serious paths to peace, for the reduction of inequalities between different regions of the planet and for the formation of women and men oriented towards the pursuit of the common good. This is the *power of education power*.

The inauguration of this academic year coincides with the first weeks of the Jubilee dedicated to hope. Education is precisely the most concrete and immediate sign of hope, especially when it aims to transform the world to make it more inclusive, fairer, more just. The family of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart is aware of such a lofty mission. And it will, without delay, play its part.

## AN EDUCATIONAL VILLAGE FOR AFRICA



On Monday 9 December, a ceremony was held in Kigali to launch the activities of the *Institut Pacte Éducatif Africain*. The ceremony was presided over by Cardinal Antoine Kambanda, Archbishop of Kigali, member of the Dicastery for Culture and Education and president of the Commission for Relations with Episcopal Conferences and Religious Congregations for the **African Education Pact**. The purpose of this body is to support the various sectors of Catholic education in Africa.

In Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, the headquarters of the *Institut Pacte Éducatif Africain* has been established. This body is the culmination of a long process led by the *Religions and Societies International Foundation*, promoter of the **African Education Pact**, the African version of Pope Francis' **Global Compact on Education**. Signed in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, on 6 November 2022, the **African Education Pact** was warmly welcomed by His Holiness, who encouraged the delegation received in audience to work to make this vision "a local reality". The main objective of this new institution is to support the different educational areas of the Church in Africa. It is mainly aimed at Catholic schools, Catholic youth movements, justice and peace commissions, family and youth commissions. [...] In his welcome address, Cardinal Kambanda outlined the vocation of this new Church institution. "The Institute of the **African Education Pact** has the vocation of being an educational village for Africa," said the prelate, referring to the African proverb that states "to educate a child, it takes a whole village", an adage already taken up by the Holy Father during the presentation of the **Global Compact on Education**. "Having received from Pope Francis the mission to work to make the **African Education Pact** a reality in our African Churches, we are launching the **African Education Pact** Institute to support the Catholic educational network in Africa in order to improve and strengthen the quality of education offered by the Church," the Grand Chancellor of the new Institute continued.

After the inaugural speech, the ceremony continued with the reading of a message from Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, addressed to Cardinal Kambanda in his capacity as Grand Chancellor of the **African Education Pact** Institute. In it, Cardinal Tolentino recounted the various important moments

of collaboration between the Dicastery and the *International Religions and Society Foundation* through the different activities, an agreement that led to the birth of the new institution. At the same time, the prelate extended an invitation to the Institute of the **African Education Pact** to participate in the "Village of Education" to be held in Rome between the end of October and the beginning of November 2025, in conjunction with the celebration of the Jubilee of Education.

Gabriel Sayaogo, Archbishop of Koupéla in Burkina Faso, as Co-President South of the International Religions and Society Foundation, spoke at the ceremony, stating that "Catholicism is an opportunity for education in Africa". According to him, since the 1994 Synod of African Bishops, the Catholic Church in Africa, understood as the Church-family by the Fathers, has been established as an opportunity on the continent to 'work together, collaborate, share and be responsible for one another, across linguistic, tribal and national boundaries'. [Dom Bernard Loret Tayart, co-chair for the North of the same foundation, emphasised that 'quality education is essential for the economic development of peoples and for democracy', adding that improving the quality of education in Africa would have a positive impact on relations between North and South. The meeting was also attended by other important delegations from this new global network for Catholic education and from SECAM, the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar.

To achieve its goal, described at the beginning of this article, the new body will focus on three areas: research, training and support for Catholic educational works across the continent. The aim is to ensure 'education that is at the service of development and coexistence in an Africa suffering from fratricidal wars, ethnic and religious conflicts, poverty, social inequalities, corruption, etc.', while increasing research to respond to the values of mutualisation, innovation and contextualisation of knowledge. [...]

Jean Paul Niyigena, Kigali, ■

<https://www.vaticannews.va/fr/eglise/news/2024-12/lancement-des-activites-de-l-institut-pacte-educatif-africain.html>

## AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL PACT AND UBUNTU

The Institut **Pacte Éducatif Africain** (IPEA), in collaboration with the *Institut de la Francophonie pour l'Éducation et la Formation*, organised an international workshop to identify the capacity-building needs of the network of Catholic schools in nine Francophone African countries that are experiencing or have experienced conflict. The workshop was held in December in Kigali, Rwanda.

The Institut **Pacte Éducatif Africain** is a body of the *International Religions and Society Foundation*. The Foundation has promoted the **African Education Pact**, the African version of Pope Francis' **Global Compact on Education**. To ensure that the main guidelines of the **African Education Pact** are implemented on the ground, the mission of the Institut **Pacte Éducatif Africain** is to support the network of Catholic schools on the African continent and other areas of people's lives, such as Catholic youth and adult movements, where the Church provides education.

The first activity of the Institut **Pacte Éducatif Africain** therefore brought together the national **Pacte Éducatif Africain** coordinators from the bishops' conferences of Burundi, Burkina-Niger, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Mali, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. Experts from the partner universities and the *Institut de la Francophonie pour l'Éducation et la Formation* also participated.

The opening Mass was presided over by Mgr Gabriel Sayaogo, Archbishop of Koupéla in Burkina Faso and Co-President South of the International Foundation for Religions and Society. Dom Bernard Lorent Tayart, Abbot President of the Alliance Inter Monastique and Southern Co-President of the International Foundation for Religions and Society, and Mgr. Jacques Assanvo Ahiwa, Archbishop of Bouaké in Ivory Coast and member of the Commission for Relations with Episcopal Conferences and Religious Congregations for the **African Education Pact**, concelebrated. In his homily, the main celebrant recalled that we can only hope for a different Africa and a better world in brotherhood. Catholic education in Africa is therefore called to make a significant contribution to this process of bringing about a new day, a better Africa reconciled with itself and with God.

[...] In his inaugural address, Bishop Jacque Assanvo Ahiwa recalled the progress made by the *Religions and Societies International Foundation* in serving the **African Education Pact**. "Today our young people face a number of abuses that Pope Francis has pointed out and denounced in his Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*," he said. Among these abuses, he cited: organised crime, human trafficking, slavery and sexual exploitation, war rape, persecution, the phenomenon of child soldiers, drug trafficking and dealing, especially in and around schools, abuse and addiction, violence and deviance, indoctrination, instrumentalisation, school pregnancies, abortion, the spread of HIV, pornography, the situation of children and street youth, and the phenomenon of immigration. "In the



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face of these dangers that threaten and destroy the youth of the world, and in particular those of the African continent, the **Education Pact** is a sure bulwark to unite and consolidate our forces in order to block everything that distorts the education of our young people," he said. The prelate invited participants to embrace the spirit of synodality. "Synodality invites us to escape from self-absorbed attitudes and complacency in order to share educational experiences in the African context. In this sense, synodality is an opportunity for our Catholic education and the Institut **Pacte Éducatif Africain** is its instrument, its workhorse."

Dom Bernard Lorent Tayart, Abbot President of the Alliance Inter Monastique and North Co-President of the International Religions and Society Foundation, stressed that Catholic schools must be safe places for children. He called on the participants to implement a protection protocol in Catholic schools against all forms of abuse against pupils. In his view, the sad experience of the Churches in Europe should serve as a lesson to the Churches in Africa not to fall into the same mistake of protecting the institution instead of protecting the victims and preventing abuse.

The nine countries gathered for the needs identification workshop count 44,160 institutions, ranging from kindergartens to primary and secondary schools. One can therefore imagine the number of African pupils attending Catholic schools, the number of teachers and the number of families entrusting the education of their children to the Church. The Catholic Church is thus one of the main partners of African states in the field of education. [...]

The workshop identified three main needs: the governance style of schools and other organisational bodies in Catholic education; in-service training for teachers and supervisors; the use of digital technology; and the identity of Catholic schools.

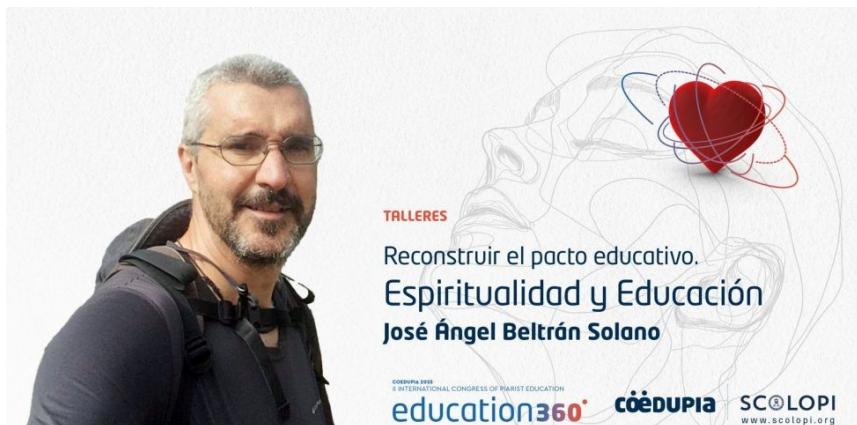
The first activity of the Institut **Pacte Éducatif Africain**, in its main mission to support Catholic education in Africa, was a great success and, from now on, this institute aims to be a large village of education on the African continent, according to the wishes of Pope Francis.

Jean Paul Niyigena, Kigali, ■

<https://www.vaticannews.va/fr/eglise/news/2025-01/rwanda-atelier-identifier-besoins-institut-pacte-educatif-africa.html>

A reflection by José Ángel Beltrán Solano on 'Spiritual Intelligence' from the spirituality of Calasanz

## REBUILDING THE EDUCATIONAL PACT. SPIRITUALITY AND EDUCATION



"Human life does not fulfil itself. Our life is an open question, an incomplete project that must continue to be realised. The fundamental question that every human being asks is: how do we realise this project of human fulfilment? How can we learn the art of living? What is the path to happiness?

I would like to begin this brief reflection with these words of J. Ratzinger because I believe they raise the fundamental question that should frame the subsequent dialogue: how do we learn the art of living? It is precisely here that, in my opinion, it makes sense to establish a dialogue to see the importance of 'spirituality' in our educational proposal.

Calasanz has already told us that 'if from early childhood the child is infused with piety and letters, we can expect his whole life to unfold happily', and it is precisely this work of 'infusing piety' that, in my opinion, is radically linked to our educational proposal. A proposal in which spirituality is (or should be) a constitutive and fundamental part of the entire educational process of each of our platforms.

Without entering into the debate on what each of us means by education for spirituality, I believe that we have a first fundamental challenge to face in implementing a proposal to work on spirituality in our educational platforms based on the work of "spiritual competence". In essence, I am referring to the capacity for "spiritual intelligence" that enables us to have deep and intimate aspirations, to aspire to a vision of life and reality that integrates, connects, transcends and gives meaning to existence.

This opens up a first field in which we must seek a proposal that is processual, transversal and radical in its importance in our strategic plans, if we really want to offer the integral education that Calasanz sought and that is also proposed in the **Global Compact on Education**:

"Our secularised societies have lost the sense of transcendence and, consequently, the ability to give meaning to life. Developing the spiritual dimension of the person is urgent if we want to educate in an integral manner. Taking care of each member of the institution/organisation itself, with particular attention to the most vulnerable, offering an integral formation that enhances all the dimensions of the person, including the spiritual one".

In my opinion, this training in the ability to give meaning to one's life is the fundamental task of all our schools today. In a society where information is now

at everyone's fingertips, education must be less and less a transmitter of content and theoretical knowledge, and more and more a promoter of bonds and places of welcome that allow us to grow as persons and to discover our place in the world according to our gifts and abilities. This is precisely the meaning of an education based on spirituality.

Cardinal Giuseppe Versaldi, Prefect of the former Congregation for Catholic Education, expresses himself in these terms in the

Vademecum of the **Global Compact on Education**: "There is an urgent need to humanise education, putting the person at the centre and creating the necessary conditions for their integral development. By giving children and young people the necessary autonomy and protagonism, it will be possible for each of them to grow internally, within a living, interdependent and fraternal community. By sharing a common destiny, it will be possible to read the complexity of reality through the prism of a new **educational pact**, which will make us rediscover the beauty of humanism inspired by the Gospel".

In a context of difficulty and polarisation, we adults need to take a step back, say less and listen more to children's needs, to allow their individual talents to manifest and flourish freely.

On the other hand, I believe we must seriously consider our educational platforms as platforms of Christian initiation, places where the experience and proposal of the Gospel are possible and constitute an important (and nuclear) part of our educational proposal.

This also implies a spirituality work, now explicit in the evangelical proposal, which must be carried out not only in our pastoral proposals of the faith groups (Calasanz Movement), but also in our school pastoral proposals and in all the networks we work within the educational framework of our platforms and presences.

I am proposing all these 'insights' from a Eurocentric perspective, which is the only one I know and which has had a lot of media resonance (especially in Spain, due to a prejudice against spirituality when approached from the Catholic school), but I am sure that contributions from other continents and cultural backgrounds will enrich the dialogue and proposals for the future that may arise from the workshop.

Jose Angel Beltran Solano

*Lay, married, three children. Member of the provincial pastoral team of Escolapios Betania. Provincial coordinator of the Calasanz movement in Bethany. Lay pastoral minister.*

28 January 2025 | News, Coedupia ■

<https://coedupia.com/fr/reconstruire-le-pacte-educatif-spiritualite-et-education/>

## 5 YEARS OF GCE: BALANCE SHEETS, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

Five years have passed since Pope Francis launched his bold and visionary proposal of the **Global Compact on Education (GCE)** in September 2019. It is therefore time to take an initial stock of the impact of this initiative in the world of schools,

universities and culture. Many activities have been developed in every corner of the planet, albeit with significant differences related to geographical and cultural contexts. This article aims to explore some preliminary hypotheses on the reasons for these different reactions, considering cultural, economic, social, political and ecclesial factors. These hypotheses, at present, require further confirmation through field research.

*Cultural and religious factors.* A first element to consider is the cultural and religious dimension. Countries with a strong Catholic tradition, such as those in Europe (Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, etc.), have historically been the driving centres of Catholicism. However, today it is Latin America and Africa that show greater vitality and dynamism in living the faith, making these regions the contexts in which the **Global Compact on Education** has found a particularly warm welcome. On the contrary, in the countries of the North Atlantic area, characterised by advanced secularisation and an orientation towards competitiveness and elitism, the GCE seems to have met with more resistance or indifference.

*Socio-economic factors.* Socio-economic conditions also played a crucial role. In contexts marked by strong educational and economic inequalities, GCE was perceived as a concrete response to real needs. In more developed countries with well-established educational systems, the urgency of comprehensive educational reform appears less felt. Understanding the correlation between socio-economic inequalities and GCE adherence will be essential to draw a clearer picture.

*Political factors.* The political landscape represents a further element of analysis. Countries with centralised governments open to international dialogue have shown more openness to the GCE than those with more nationalist orientations or based on a competitive free market. Globalisation, solidarity and communitarianism seem to favour the acceptance of the Pact, while more individualistic and protectionist ideologies may have hindered its spread. Comparing the different



political ideologies and their relation to the GCE could offer significant insights.

*Communication and ecclesial factors.* Finally, factors related to communication and the involvement of social and ecclesial networks are crucial. In some regions, dynamic

and well-organised church networks have facilitated the spread of the GCE. In others, less incisive communication, especially in North Atlantic areas, may have slowed its impact. Analysing the effectiveness of the communication networks and their organisational capacity will be crucial in assessing the success of the project.

*Towards the Jubilee of Education.* The task of studying and evaluating the impact of the GCE in the world will be entrusted, among others, to the International Observatory of the GCE, which is being set up at the Dicastery for Culture and Education in collaboration with the Alta Scuola EIS of the LUMSA University. A further opportunity for revitalisation will be offered by the Education Village, which will be inaugurated on the occasion of the Jubilee of Education in 2025. This event, a meeting point for international educational networks, will allow the fruits of the first five years of commitment to be presented and new perspectives for the future to be outlined.

After five years, the **Global Compact on Education** is more relevant than ever. In a world marked by increasing complexity, technological innovation, health emergencies and worsening conflicts, Pope Francis' vision remains a beacon of hope. As educators, we are called to be pilgrims of hope, ready to build a future founded on dialogue, solidarity and mutual care. Educating, as the Holy Father often repeats, is an act of hope: a seed planted today that will bear fruit tomorrow.

The Jubilee of Education is not just a moment of celebration, but a call to renew our commitment to a mission that is both urgent and revolutionary. In a world fragmented by divisions, conflicts and global challenges, educating means performing an act of courage: believing that change is possible, sowing hope where disenchantment reigns. We are called, today more than ever, to build bridges and not walls, and the most powerful tool for this construction is, without a doubt, education.

P. Ezio Lorenzo Bono, CSF  
Secretariat for the Global Compact on Education ■

The Vocabulary also includes the word 'Pact', wrote by the **Global Compact on Education** Secretariat

## THE VOCABULARY OF FRATERNITY: A WORD A DAY



365 words "sprung from the intelligence of the heart", as Cardinal Mauro Gambetti, President of the Fratelli tutti Foundation, defines them in the afterward to this book, chosen and rewritten by as many authors, exponents of civil and ecclesiastical institutions, believers and atheists, Nobel Prize winners, artists, journalists, prominent writers, representatives of business and the world of work, and

young digital missionaries. This book has been edited by the Foundation, which took its inspiration from Pope Francis' encyclical of the same name, the Brothers All. As symbolised by its logo, composed of people in motion forming the embrace of Bernini's colonnade, the Foundation stands on the 'threshold' between St Peter's Basilica and the city to promote fraternity and social friendship. The Vocabulary of Fraternity, therefore, aspires to operate within this horizon: in the words of the Foundation's Secretary General Francesco Occhetta, it sets itself "the task of inspiring readers to a path of inner growth and openness towards fraternity and all that is good and human". A word a day, to accompany a year of reflection and rediscover the value of being part of a community and the need to 'be human' today. Together. ■

The GCE returns to the networks

## REACTIVATION OF THE FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM PAGES OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION



In view of the Jubilee of Education, the Facebook and Instagram pages of the **Global Compact on Education** have been reactivated...

Visit the pages, follow us, subscribe and...

don't forget to like

NPO SEIBO committed to GCE expansion

## GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATIONAL VILLAGE IN JAPAN



In 2024, SEIBO Japan (Seibo means *Holy Mother* in Japanese) made significant progress in the field of Catholic education, aligning with the **Global Compact on Education** initiative.

As a Catholic-inspired NPO, Seibo Japan focuses on feeding children around the world and educating students on social enterprise. We have partnered with several schools in Japan, promoting a 'Global Village' educational programme that provides students with practical and pastoral experiences on global issues and commitments.

Seibo Japan joined EDU-Port Japan (led by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) to integrate Japanese educational culture with Catholic ethics. Under the leadership of Makoto Yamada, they applied methods such as 'Conversation in the Spirit' to facilitate workshops, improving collaboration between Catholic and missionary groups, such as Salesian and Jesuit communities.

We, Seibo Japan, showcased our educational impact through presentations at the National Society for the Study of Catholic Education, highlighting projects such as the engagement of students at Koen Women's High School (a Catholic high school in Tokyo) in social entrepreneurship through the sale of Malawi coffee. They also launched an International Baccalaureate course at St. Joseph High School to combine Catholic education with IB elements such as creativity, action and service (CAS).

Seibo Japan is also collaborating with the Catholic University of America to implement the Catholic Entrepreneurship and Design Experience (CEDE), with the aim of teaching students about vocations through practical methods based on Catholic ethics. Our vision for 2025 includes expanding the **Global Compact on Education** to more institutions and using our international network for wider influence, incorporating practical aspects of Catholic education to clarify student vocations.

Makoto Yamada, SEIBO, Japan ■



## PILLARS ON WHICH THE NEW EDUCATION PROPOSED BY THE GCE IS BASED

To download the new CIEC PowerPoint teaching material on GCE click [here](#):

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ECxKaU3OcrP70uiEdtPN\\_PviYZ0sMX/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ECxKaU3OcrP70uiEdtPN_PviYZ0sMX/view)

# SPORT IN MOTION' PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

In the context of the Jubilee of Sport of the Year 2025, which has hope as its overarching motto, the Dicastery for Culture and Education wishes to celebrate this date with an international photo competition, under the title: 'Sport in Motion'.

Sport has become one of humanity's greatest cultural events, whether it is played or watched, and has therefore become a phenomenon that the Church also wants to integrate for evangelisation (Gaudium et Spes, 61). It is therefore necessary to communicate hope to sport, making it more and more a space for humanisation. And the same applies to the reverse path: let sport be a beacon of hope for our humanity.



## Approximating three words

To this end, the Dicastery aims to bring together three words that are often estranged: youth - sport - art. If art, despite other characteristics, is an act of creativity, subjectivity and exclusivity, it also has an ethical-political function: it aims to narrate humanity and, in that narrative, to denounce its risks and prophesy its beauties (cf. Pope Francis, Address to Artists, 23 June 2023). Unfortunately, while ancient art made a historical narrative of sport, today sport is still not a popular subject in the art world. Hence, the need to introduce sport as a more present and autonomous theme in art, so that through art, we can 'think about sport beyond sport'.

For its part, photography is the art of capturing the moment in the fabric of reality, the wisdom of fixing the exact moment of a movement to communicate a certain message to us (hence the title of the competition: 'Sport in Motion'). As biblical pedagogy teaches us, it is about knowing how to see the details of reality (Ps 139:2).

For this reason, the competition aims to encourage a certain segment of society to take up this art: young people, so that they become producers of art and not just consumers of art. In this sense, the competition is aimed at photographers under the age of 25, whether professional photographers or not, so that young people can tell us about reality through their eyes, seeing what adults cannot always see, showing us that "essential which is invisible to the eyes" (The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry). "We cannot simply say that young people are the future of the world: they are the present (of the world)" (Christus vivit, 64), so we must encourage them to enrich the present with their narrative contribution. And what should they narrate?

Narrating sport as a space of hope, a content of hope and a source of hope. In other words, sport as a model

of peace, equality, fraternity... for today's society. This is the meaning of this photography competition: to be an artistic platform (photography) through which young people can narrate the hope of and in sport.

## Competition and award categories

But in addition to this general theme (Sport and Hope), the photo competition also aims to combine another underlying sub-theme from the **Global Compact on Education**. There are four pure sub-categories in the competition: sport and family (sport as a moment of family life), sport and disability (sport as a platform of inclusion), sport and politics (sport as a resource accessible to all), sport and ecology (the relationship of sport with the elements of nature).

- Registrations can be made by e-mail ([sportinmotion@dce.va](mailto:sportinmotion@dce.va)) and further information (regulations) are available on the Department's website: [www.dce.va](http://www.dce.va)
- The deadline for participation ends on 30 April 2025 and the winners will be announced at the Jubilee of Sport (14-15 June 2025). The winners will be awarded a meeting with the Holy Father, a visit to the Vatican Museums, a workshop in the Osservatore Romano newspaper and international exposure of the photos in the Holy See's media.
- This competition will have Osservatore Romano, **Global Compact on Education**, Fondazione Pontificia Gravissimum Educationis and Athletica Vaticana as partners.

## Patron of the competition: Giovanni Zenoni

Giovanni Zenoni, born in 2002, is a young sports and photography enthusiast who spends most of his time behind the lens of a camera. Some of his shots were selected as sports photo of the year in the 'Cycling' category in 2022, 'Aquatics' in 2023 and received two special mentions in the 'Winter sports' category in 2024. He was listed among the top 10 'Young Reporters under 30' by the International Sports Press Association and won the 'Young Promise' award from the National Union of Sports Veterans. He collaborates with various agencies and influential brands, and his photos have already been published in major national/international newspapers and magazines.

Giovanni Zenoni, as well as being godfather of the competition, will be part of the jury for the same and also take some photos for the Sports Jubilee.

## FOR REGISTRATIONS:

<https://www.dce.va/it/news/2024/concorso-di-fotografia.html>

In future issues of the GCE *Journal* a monthly update on the Jubilee of Education

## EDUCATION JUBILEE ANNOUNCEMENT



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We are pleased to announce that the Dicastery for Culture and Education is overseeing the preparation of the Jubilee of the Educational World, to be held in Rome from October 27 to November 2, 2025. The entire week will be dedicated to schools and universities, including ecclesiastical faculties: a true constellation of hope, to orient and illuminate the educational journey of the new generations.

This Jubilee will be a unique opportunity, globally, to reflect on the importance of education as a fundamental tool for human growth, which stems from the awareness of a common belonging and the vision of a shared destiny. During this week, we will explore key issues for the future of education, through lectures, debates, and cultural and spiritual encounters, involving experts, educators and students.

We look forward to seeing you in Rome, to live together an intense experience of listening, dialogue and renewal.



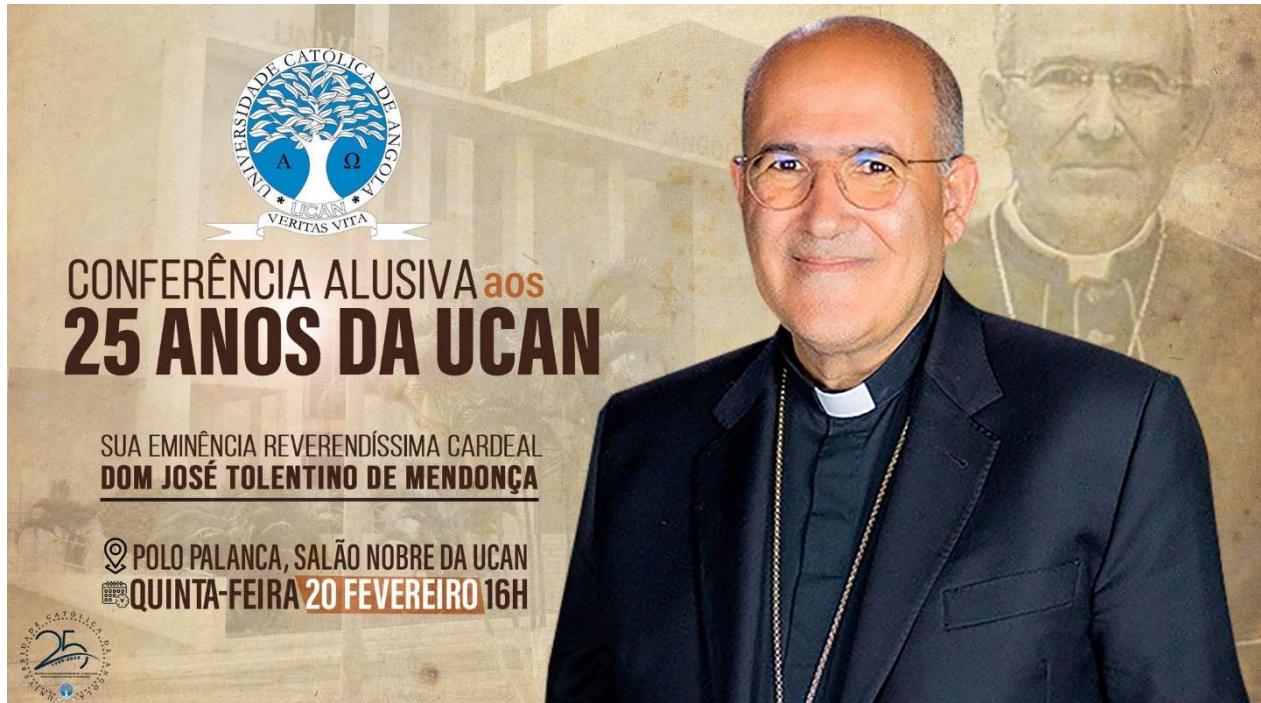
GLOBAL COMPACT  
ON EDUCATION

Dicastery for Culture and Education

Journal

ENGLISH - February 2025

Address by His Eminence J.T. De Mendonça, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the UCAN  
**THE UNIVERSITY A REAL GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION**



## CONFERÊNCIA ALUSIVA aos 25 ANOS DA UCAN

SUA EMINÊNCIA REVERENDÍSSIMA CARDEAL  
**DOM JOSÉ TOLENTINO DE MENDONÇA**

POLO PALANCA, SALÃO NOBRE DA UCAN  
QUINTA-FEIRA 20 FEVEREIRO 16H



### MAKING THE UNIVERSITY A LABORATORY OF HOPE

SPEECH ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
UCAN (CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF ANGOLA)

His Excellency Mr Magnificent Rector  
Your Magnificent Rector  
Dear Authorities and Members of the Academic  
Community  
Mr Apostolic Nuncio and Bishops  
Authorities present  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen

As a place where individuals find the favourable conditions to develop the fundamental skills of their humanity, the university is also an extraordinary collective adventure, a dream that unites so many subjects, a true **global compact on education**. This communitarian character is already coined in the name that gives it its origin, the Latin term *universitas*, which originally described the corporation of teachers and their students, "freely associated in the same love of knowledge", as the Apostolic Constitution *Ex corde Ecclesiæ* reminds us, which is a sort of magna constitution for Catholic universities. The very idea of

a university would not be understood without the realisation of this alliance, which in the beautiful definition of St Thomas Aquinas is a *societas amicorum* (a society of friends).

The twenty-five years of UCAN are a living document of how together we can achieve a greater good, which then translates into a better future in the service of all. My thoughts go back to that day on 22 February 1999, when 349 students and 14 teachers gave birth to this institution of which the Church is proud and in which Angolan society recognises itself: UCAN. The symbol of the *Mulembeira* that you have chosen as the emblem of your university represents this faith in the strength of the community united and in the new generative capacities that it is capable of giving birth to. This is what one of Angola's classic authors sang:

*"perhaps one day  
when bougainvilleas bloom happily  
when the bimbos sing hymns at dawn among the  
weeds  
when the shade of the mule trees will be better  
when all of us who suffer alone will find ourselves  
equal  
as before  
maybe we will put  
the pains, the humiliations, the fears  
desperately on the ground*

(...)  
*and united in our anxieties, adventures and hopes  
let's make a big challenge...*"

Thank you for this great and beautiful challenge that UCAN represents.

The university is a community of people who live in close mutual interaction, producing synergies without which the educational and ecclesial project is not effective. Its richness only manifests itself when it enhances all those who make up the educational reality and becomes a true corporation. Indeed, anyone working in a university knows the vital importance of all its members. Teachers and researchers must be of the highest scientific and human quality. But it is also true that, every year, the performance of the students is decisive for the university's qualification. And how often one of the keys to a positive community environment is the administrative assistant in the secretariat who knows how to serve with competence and friendliness, or the person who serves in the canteen during the lecture break, and does so with a kindness that is good for everyone! The university is built by everyone. Let us listen to what our dear Pope Francis says: "let us take up the challenge to discover and transmit the 'mystique' of living together, of meeting, holding hands, supporting each other... in a true experience of fraternity" (E.G. 87). The university is a great workshop of encounter; it prepares protagonists capable of reinventing themselves in openness to otherness; it is maintained by people who believe in the beauty of fraternity. The university community is founded on mutual listening and the co-responsible exercise of collaborative practices. In this way, it creates networks that persist and are enriched. In this way, it fosters a rapprochement of knowledge to address the complex challenges of the present through inter- and trans-disciplinarity. The university is always called upon to embrace universality.

In his 'Writings on the University', Cardinal John Henry Newman argued that what is proper to university knowledge is the 'faculty of seeing many things at once as a whole and of bringing them one by one to their true position in the universal system, realising their value and determining their mutual dependence'. The university is a house of dialogue between knowledge, offering us the vision of a multifaceted wisdom that knows how to value all its aspects and faces. It generates relationships, interconnections, systems and communities. That is why it is understandable, for example, that a theme that is never missing when Pope Francis speaks of the university is that of hope. One would almost think that they are synonymous terms. In the apostolic exhortation *Evangelium Gaudium*, which defines the programme of his pontificate, the Pope makes a decisive appeal: "Let us not allow hope to be stolen from us!" (no. 86). It is an exhortation not to be discouraged by the difficulties of each historical season, but rather to look them in the face, enlightened by a fundamental and shared confidence. Instead of globalising fear and uncertainty, Francis urges us to 'globalise hope'. University students know that their task is to be guardians and sentinels of hope, against the 'deceptive existence offered by the merchants of nothingness'. Those who live in the university world cannot afford not to have hope. "Man

cannot live without hope and education is a generator of hope. In fact, education gives birth, it makes one grow, it is part of the dynamic of giving life. And the life that is born is the most sparkling source of hope..." - insists the Holy Father.

Communities of knowledge and of the future, as this university is, have hope as their mission. And hope is not to be confused, as Francis insists, with 'a superficial optimism... but above all it is knowing how to take risks in the right way' and for the right reasons. It is true that we are in the vortex of an epochal



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change with unprecedented horizons that we are called upon to explore, with the dawn of the age of the algorithm and artificial intelligence. An objective aspect of this new era is found in the need for ethical definition in new areas, from bioethics to ecology and responsibility towards future generations in the management of the planet's resources. The future obliges us to have an integral vision of reality, to cultivate a systemic hermeneutics and to realise that everything is interconnected, in an inseparable interconnection, because the adventure of the human person goes hand in hand with the destiny of the whole of creation. This is why we must deepen in common that hope that comes from an integral humanism, which places the human person firmly at its centre. And here universities play a decisive role, showing how hope is not a chimera, but a concrete dynamism, a labour of love, a doing, a commitment. Visiting the iconic University of Bologna, Pope Francis asked the university world to become a true bridge in this polarised world. And he did so with these words that I would like to hear echoed in our hearts today: "How beautiful it would be if university classrooms were sites of hope!"

One day, a friend asked the writer Franz Kafka the following question: "Does hope exist?" Kafka is said to have replied: 'Yes, there is hope, and infinite hope, but not for us'. Well, a project like UCAN exists to counter the temptation of pessimism and say that, on the contrary, there is hope for us, which belongs to us. UCAN confirms young Angolans as protagonists of hope in their country, empowering them to serve the community and realise their dreams. UCAN feels responsible for the dreams of generations and is called to realise them, to carry them forward. Thank you, bishops of Angola, for your commitment to this project of higher education, which I know is deeply rooted in your hearts and is a resource that reflects the mission of the Church and the just expectations of the human community, because "educational communities have a fundamental role, an essential role in the construction of citizenship and culture!" I recall the incipit of the famous Encyclical *Mater et Magistra* of St. John XXIII: "Mother and teacher of all peoples, the universal Church was founded by Jesus Christ, so that all, coming into her bosom and into her love throughout the centuries, might find the fullness

of a higher life and a sure pledge of salvation". To this Church, "pillar and foundation of the truth" (cf. 1 Tim 3:15), her most holy Founder has entrusted a twofold mission: to beget children, educate and direct them, guiding with maternal solicitude the lives of individuals and peoples, whose high dignity he has always unselfishly respected and defended".

In the Bull of Indiction of this Holy Year, Pope Francis proposes to pay attention to "the need for a social alliance in favour of hope, which is inclusive and works for a common future". I believe that UCAN also exists in the name of this social alliance in favour of hope. My wish is that it becomes more and more, as



the years go by, a great school of hope.

In a contemporary world that appears globalised and fragmented, the task of a Catholic university is to actively explain the reasons for hope, to become the teacher and servant of a Christian humanism capable of inspiring reality. There is no doubt that the future requires an integrated and hopeful vision, in which knowledge, education, spirituality and ethics truly have a place. It is not enough for us to be a good university, to compete in the rankings, to get good grades from evaluation agencies. This is very important, of course, but we must have the courage to recognise that it is not enough. The purpose of Catholic universities, as the Second Vatican Council makes clear in its Declaration *'Gravissimum educationis'*, no. 10, is to ensure 'a public, constant and universal presence of Christian thought [...] and to form students so that they become men and women truly distinguished by knowledge, ready to carry out responsible tasks in society and to bear witness to their faith before the world'. This is why Catholic universities, as St John Paul II wrote, are an expression of the heart of the Church (*Ex-corde ecclesiae*).

The main resource must therefore always be the human person. He is our most precious asset. We must therefore strengthen an integral anthropology that puts the human person at the centre of all processes. The greatest investment can only be the human one, that is, the investment in the formation of each person so that he or she can develop his or her cognitive, creative, spiritual and ethical potential and

thus make a qualified contribution to the common good.

Universities, and in particular Church universities, are located at a crossroads of cultural, scientific, social and religious possibilities. They do not live for themselves, as if they were impermeable bubbles of reality. On the contrary, they develop the more they become capable of listening, of co-responsibly exercising collaborative practices, of generatively bringing people and cultures together. This requires creative intelligence, but also a discernment that cannot be partial or improvised, but based on one's own values. The university is called upon to open up to innovation, but to do so while remaining faithful to its own identity and values. Openness to the future, in an institution that makes the search for truth and its transmission its way of existence, should be considered normal. Catholic universities must indeed engage in dialogue with the new, work intensively on current issues and problems, and position themselves as great laboratories of tomorrow. But this vocation to innovation must be accompanied and supported, as *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* reminds us, by a "clear awareness" (no. 7) of their own nature and identity. Catholic University Who are you? Why do you call yourself that? In fact, the 'Catholic' in its name is not a mere adjective, but a substantial quality that animates and gives perspective to the life of the academy in all its parts, in all its details; to the way it understands itself and the service it wants to give to all, without excluding anyone. Being "Catholic" is a way of proceeding with ethical correctness, a sense of justice, transparency and truth, accepting the words of Jesus who says: "He who is faithful in a little is faithful also in a lot, and he who is unjust in a little is unjust also in a lot" (Lk 16:10). The catholicity of a university is expressed, in short, in the "combined effort of intelligence and faith that enables human beings to reach the full measure of their humanity" (No 5). In this permanent dedication to ensuring that in all spheres of knowledge the link with the greatest truth, which is that of God, is realised. And here I would also like to emphasise the importance of university pastoral work, which is an aggregator of community in the life of the academy, and also an opportunity to deepen and celebrate the faith, experiencing the joy of living it together and the responsibility of witnessing in the intellectual space the radiant dynamism of the Gospel. Francis challenges the university "to be a sign of a young Church, alive and on the move". The university pastoral plays a crucial role in this, as witnessed in many places by the extraordinary examples of missionary and voluntary activities. These represent a laboratory of gift, an apprenticeship of concrete gift, which "prevents the divorce between reason and action, between thinking and feeling, between knowing and living, between profession and service..., overcoming every antagonistic and elitist logic of knowledge".

Forming elites is also the mission of a Catholic university, competent elites who serve the common good, but it must do so without becoming elitist. It must be socially inclusive, open and welcoming, seeking to ensure that opportunities reach those who need them. Knowledge that is captured by a purely elitist logic is like a tool that could be useful for social

construction, but is rejected. I am always moved by a poem by the beloved Cardinal Dom Alexandre Nascimento, who at one point says: 'These are erudite people who have read Kant, know Spinoza.../What they do not suspect, of course, is that they have a dead soul.../ Another thing is these people of mine, these suffering people/ People of the 'mato' and the 'chimboco' of Luanda,/ Old Mutudi, Aunt Ximinha;/ People who laugh, because they know what it means to cry'.

This requires not only creative intelligence, but also emotional intelligence, which is required of the university ecosystem as a whole today. Universities are not only expected to imitate the current world, replicating models that conform to social inequality, exclusion, poverty and lack of horizons and meaning. Universities are expected not only to keep alive the memory and depth of the great questions, but also to be probes and cradles of tomorrow, birthing rooms for societies with more opportunities for all, with less inequality and more redistribution of the goods of science, earth and spirit.



The Scottish philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre represents the course of our existence as a relay race: if one of the competitors loses the baton, there is no passing of the baton that gives meaning to the race. One of the worst threats to a society, MacIntyre concludes, is to lose the narrative of those humanistic values, that capital of dreams and hopes, that commitment to affirming the dignity of the human person that has brought it this far. Otherwise, everything becomes obscure and uncertain, education takes on the appearance of a do-it-yourself approach, the corporate dimension emerges too much, and the affirmation of a humanist project, conceived in a creative and multifaceted manner, shrinks, and we end up slipping into a pedagogical nihilism now disguised as technocratic efficiency.

Speaking to university students during World Youth Day in Lisbon, which was attended by many young Angolans, Pope Francis also said on this subject: "The university that is committed to forming the new generations, it would be a waste to think of it only as perpetuating the current elitist and unequal system of the world with higher education continuing to be a privilege of the few. If knowledge is not accepted as a responsibility, it becomes sterile. If those who have received higher education - which remains a privilege in the world today - do not strive to give back what they have benefited from, it means that they have not fully understood what was offered to them. I like to think that in Genesis, the first questions God asks man are: "Where are you?" (3:9) and "Where is your brother?" (4:9). It would do us good to ask: Where am I? Do I remain closed in my own world or do I accept the risk of leaving my securities to become a

practising Christian, a craftsman of justice, a craftsman of beauty? And let us also ask ourselves: where is my brother? Experiences of fraternal service (...), which arise in academic circles, should be considered indispensable for anyone passing through a university. In fact, a degree should not be seen only as a licence to build personal well-being, but as a mandate to dedicate oneself to a more just society, a more inclusive society, in other words, a more developed society'. it is a mandate that should unite us. It is a mandate that should unite us all.

Twenty-five years is undoubtedly a date to be thankful for. St Thomas Aquinas, who reflected philosophically on what gratitude represents, explained that it consists of three degrees. The first is to ask the benefactor to acknowledge (*ut recognoscat*) the good received. And that is why we are here, to recognise in a choral way the great good we have received through this university. The second degree asks the recipient to clearly express their gratitude in the form of a compliment or praise (*ut gratias agat*). If I interpret the sentiment of this assembly correctly, we are all praising what UCAN is and the potential that pulsates within it. But gratitude, as St Thomas said, does not end there. Gratitude is only fully realised with the assumption of responsibility: that is, the duty to give back to others the good received according to possibilities and circumstances. The awareness of having received something seriously binds us to return the gift: "Freely you have received, freely you must give" (Mt 10:8).

This is what we Portuguese say, for example, with the word obrigado. It is actually a curiosity of our common language, because Portuguese is one of the few languages in which the common formula of gratitude also alludes to the responsibility of giving back. By saying thank you, we assume that we have become obliged. This is how those who pass through UCAN must feel. Indeed, restitution is in the DNA of a university, which has a triple facet in which it expresses itself. It expresses itself in teaching, because it is a school of knowledge transmission. It expresses itself in research, because it is a laboratory, a factory of questions, a place of constant research. The university does not live by repetition. It lives by seeking and innovating. But a university realises its vocation and mission in giving back and in giving. We too must give back. We must be a gift. I look at you and think: 'What a wonderful gift!'

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ■



**GLOBAL COMPACT  
FOR EDUCATION**

**Journal**

Nb. The English translation of this Journal of the GCE was done automatically.  
For any inaccuracies, please refer to the original Italian edition.

# A GLOBAL COMPACT ON BEAUTY



*On the occasion of the Jubilee of the Artists, the 'Manifesto on the Transmission of the Religious Cultural Code' was released at the end of the international meeting 'Sharing hope - Horizons for Cultural Heritage' organised by the Dicastery for Culture and Education and the Vatican Museums in the conference room of the Pontifical Collections.*

## MANIFESTO ON THE TRANSMISSION OF RELIGIOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE

We, directors, curators, academics and representatives of global museum and exhibition institutions, or those involved in heritage and art, join together in this manifesto to reaffirm our commitment to the promotion of religious cultural heritage as a universal code of hope, peace, dialogue and reflection.

We recognise that our institutions are not only custodians of memory, but key players in decoding, transmitting and reinterpreting the profound meanings of religious and artistic heritage as a code of inspiration for new generations. In an era of rapid change, we are witnessing a complex evolution in the relationship between young people and cultural heritage, marked by challenges but also extraordinary opportunities. Our commitment, reaffirmed during the meeting *Sharing Hope*.

### FROM THE MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE "GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION

21-9-2022

The first thing I want to say to you, dear young people, is this: *bring out your beauty!* Not the one according to the fashions of the world, but the real one. In a world suffocated by so much ugliness, may you bring that beauty that has always belonged to us, from the first moment of creation, when God made man in his own image and saw that he was very beautiful. This beauty must be spread and defended. Because if it is true, as Prince Myškin said in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, that beauty will save the world, we must be vigilant so that the world saves beauty. To this end, I invite you to enter into a '**global compact on beauty**' with all the youth of the world, because there is no education without beauty. "You cannot educate without inducing beauty, without inducing the heart to beauty. Forcing the issue a little, I would dare say that an education is not effective if it does not know how to create poets. The path of beauty is a challenge that must be faced' ([Address to participants at the conference on 'Education: the global compact'](#), 7 February 2020)



*Horizons for Cultural Heritage*, focuses on contemporary interpretation of heritage and education with the aim of building bridges between the past and the future.

### 1. Accessibility and decoding

In the age in which we live, there is a growing cultural disconnect. However, there is also a growing curiosity when cultural heritage is made accessible through contemporary languages and tools.

We strive to make religious heritage a living and meaningful experience that speaks to the imagination and deep questions of the new generations. It is not just about preserving the past, but making it relevant to our common future.

### 2. Inclusion and innovation in cultural languages

We recognise that social media and digital platforms have radically transformed access to culture. For new generations, these technologies provide immediate and immersive access to heritage. However, we need to overcome the superficial approach often associated with digital enjoyment. We are committed to implementing interactive narratives, storytelling and participatory activities to increasingly make religious heritage a source of creative and spiritual inspiration.

### 3. Education for active and deep involvement

Education is the key to creating a lasting relationship between the religious heritage and the new generations, who must be encouraged not just to observe, but to interact with the works, discovering their spiritual and cultural significance, and in particular the value of the symbolic dimension. We recognise, in this perspective, the importance of silence and the need to stem the massification that undermines the value of art fruition. By establishing a '**global compact on beauty**' (Pope Francis), we commit ourselves to promoting initiatives such as projects and creative activities that can stimulate a profound and formative dialogue with heritage.

### 4. Artificial intelligence and bridges to the future

Artificial intelligence and digitisation offer extraordinary possibilities to bring new generations closer to religious cultural heritage. Virtual reality, interactive applications and intelligent algorithms

can be used to create personalised and immersive experiences.

We want to strive so that, through these technologies, new generations can not only explore the past, but also contribute to its reinterpretation with creativity and sensitivity, knowing that 'no algorithm can replace poetry, irony and love' (Pope Francis).

### 5. Awareness and recontextualisation

In processes of cultural transmission, the recontextualisation of heritage has always been a practice considered normal. New generations need to be enabled to critically question the meaning of works, their historical context and ethical issues related to provenance. De-culturation erodes traditions fundamental to peoples' identities, making it difficult to transmit an authentic cultural code, without reducing it to aesthetic display or a simplified narrative.

We strive to balance conservation and interpretation, avoiding extrapolating art objects from their original hermeneutic horizon and recognising the limits of the power dynamics that influence the construction of exhibition knowledge.

### 6. Cultural sustainability

Safeguarding religious heritage with sustainable practices that protect both the environment and the cultural context from which it originates is now a must. Indeed, the transmission of this code must take place with respect for natural resources and the dignity of the peoples who generated it.

We are committed to the defence of religious heritage, including stories of local communities, popular traditions and religious minorities that have enriched its historical and artistic expression.

### 7. Custody and transmission in times of crisis

Young people must be seen not only as users, but as active custodians of the religious cultural heritage, protagonists capable of facing the challenges of a world in crisis. Conflicts, climate change and global crises make it urgent to reflect on the preservation and enjoyment of heritage, highlighting its value as a witness of faith, resilience and hope. In this sense, we are also committed to strengthening the international networks that unite us.

At a time of great cultural, political and social challenges, we consider it crucial to bridge the gap between tradition and the present in a creative way. Museums, universities and other institutions, today more than ever, are called upon to respond with creativity, responsibility and vision. This manifesto intends to recognise and enhance the active role of new generations as protagonists of cultural transmission, encouraging them to see religious heritage as a living resource and a starting point for imagining the future.

## THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION IS A TRUE ACT OF LOVE AND TRANSFORMATION

*To celebrate the 125th anniversary of the start of the educational mission of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Brazil, SAGRADO - Rede de Educação held an International Congress on 19, 20 and 21 February in Curitiba, Paraná. The event was attended by more than 600 educators from the educational units run by the Institute of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, sent a video message to the delegates reminding them of the Institute's values aimed at the integral formation of students.*



Reverend Sisters Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, educators, professionals of the Sacred Education Network,

I am very happy to address each of you at this very significant International Congress,

on the occasion of the anniversary of your presence in Brazil. It has been 125 years of dedication, love and service to the field of education and human and Christian formation. I thank you therefore for all your work.

You are gathered under the inspiration of the Heart of Jesus to reaffirm your educational mission as a true act of love and transformation, enlightened by the values and principles that guide the work of SAGRADO - Rede de Educação.

We cannot help but recall the words of Pope Francis in his encyclical *Dilexit Nos*, where he invites us to contemplate the Heart of Jesus as a living symbol of God's infinite passion for every human being. This love and trust, which overflow from the Heart of Christ, must also be the essence of our educational activity. We educate, therefore, not only with our hands and minds, but also with our hearts. The Pope continually emphasises the interconnection between mind, hands and heart. Just as the Heart of Jesus welcomes, loves and transforms, so we educators are called to form human beings in an integral way, promoting the integration of knowledge, values and faith. The pedagogical proposal of SAGRADO - Rede de Educação is a practical realisation of this vision. By combining academic excellence with human and Christian values, you offer students not only an academic formation, but also a horizon of meaning for their lives. In the integral formation promoted by your Network, cognitive, socio-emotional, ethical and spiritual skills stand out, enabling our young people to be protagonists in a world marked by complexity and growing challenges. To the participants of the International Theology Congress a month ago, the Holy Father Francis expressed the wish that we all move away from the logic of simplification, because reality is complex, it requires pondering, discernment and answers that inhabit this complexity. The same invitation applies to educators, so that they know how to educate to interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity in a logic of complexity.



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The pedagogical proposal of your Institute emphasises three pillars:

1. *The centrality of the human being*: inspired by Clelian values, you are dedicated to the formation of people who recognise in themselves the dignity of children of God and who are capable of living daily according to Gospel values: compassion, tenderness, solidarity and forgiveness. This is the legacy left by your foundress Mother Clelia Merloni, which lives on in every school of the Network and coincides with the first objective of the **Global Compact on Education** established by Pope Francis. The Holy Father said: "Put the human person at the centre of every educational process, highlight their specificity and capacity to relate to others, against the throwaway culture."

2. *Innovation in the service of education*: the adoption of innovative hybrid methodologies, such as *Maker Culture* and *Hybrid Teaching*, reflects a commitment to teaching that goes beyond traditional practices. These approaches allow students to experience lively, active, creative and fun learning, developing autonomy and responsibility. But, as the Holy Father also reminds us, technology and innovation only make sense if they are put at the service of human beings and the building of a more just and inclusive world.

3. *Spirituality as a transforming force*: In a world that often neglects the spiritual aspect of life, you offer a living testimony that faith is not an ornament, but a force capable of transforming hearts and minds. Through the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus, you teach that true knowledge comes from the wisdom that comes from love and that education is above all an act of hope.

Dear friends, your work in the schools of the 'Rede Sagrado' goes far beyond the transmission of content. It is a true ministry, a mission that touches the heart of human life. By forming conscious, free citizens committed to transforming the world, you respond positively to Jesus' call to "go and teach" (Mt 28:19).

May this International Congress be an opportunity to reinvigorate your passion for education, be a season of spiritual renewal, exchange of knowledge and strengthening of the bonds that are so important. May the Heart of Jesus, inexhaustible source of love, continue to inspire and sustain your educational and human work.

To all of you, my sincerest thanks, prayers and best wishes for a blessed and fruitful Congress. We hope you will send us the results of this important initiative.

With great esteem, I greet you warmly and send you my blessing.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and ■

CIEC launches 4 training volumes on the 7 commitments of the GCE for students from pre-school to secondary school

## FOR A MORE CARING, JUST AND SUPPORTIVE SOCIETY

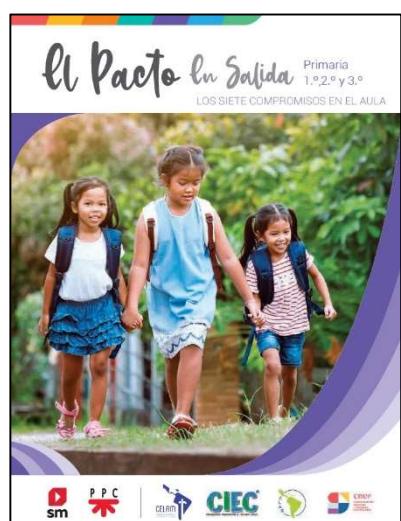


Pope Francis reminds us that "education is always an act of hope that looks to the future from the present". Therefore, with the aim of renewing education to build a society that is more supportive, just and attentive to the care of each person and the common home, he proposed the **Global Compact on Education (GCE)**.

This book is a valuable tool designed to introduce children and young people to the core values of the EYP. Its main purpose is to facilitate children's understanding and appropriation of the seven EYP commitments

through reflections and activities designed specifically for their educational level.

Structured in seven units, it begins with a reflection inviting children to understand the importance of each



commitment. This is followed by concrete activities that encourage them to incorporate these values into their daily lives, reinforcing learning through practical actions. In this way, children are not just

passive recipients, but active protagonists of their education, capable of contributing to the transformation of the world starting from their daily reality.

The role of the teacher is central to this process. The teacher not only teaches, but inspires, accompanies and shapes values, becoming a true agent of transformation.

Through their work, teachers have the opportunity to sow hope in children and the commitment needed to build a better society.

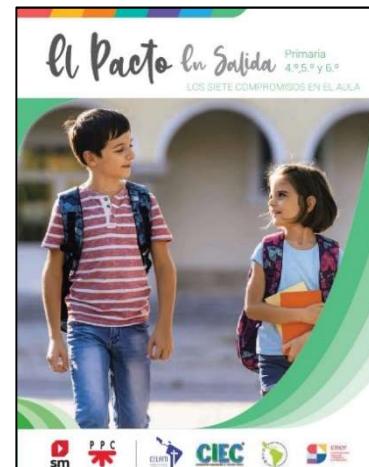
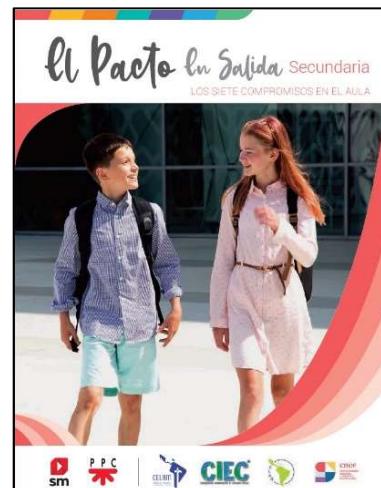
This book emphasises the importance of teachers as facilitators of learning that is not limited to the classroom, but extends to life. Children and young people, as well as teachers, are key players in the

implementation of the EYP. Children and young people, with their capacity for learning, creativity and sensitivity, are the driving force for change towards a more caring world. Teachers, for their part, have a responsibility to lead this journey, promoting

education that transforms minds and hearts.

This book is an invitation to all educators to join the 'educational village' proposed by Pope Francis, taking on the common task of sowing in the new generations the values necessary for a more human, caring and peaceful world.

This book is a valuable guide on the way to be part of this educational change.



Dr Emilce Cuda  
Secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America - Holy See

You can download these texts in Spanish at this link: <https://ciec.edu.co/el-pacto-ensalida/> ■

Conference in Catanzaro EYP by the diocesan school pastoral and the Catholic Union of Teachers

## HOW TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION

The convention on the **Global Compact on Education** held this morning in the convention hall of the Biodiversity Park in Catanzaro opened and closed with prayers and thoughts addressed to Pope Francis. It could only be so, not only because its main promoter was the Archdiocese, but because the original and original inspirer of the Pact has been, since 2019, the Holy Father himself, to whose state the prayers led by Monsignor Claudio Maniago were addressed. The archbishop took his cue from the Word of today's liturgy, from the passage in Mark in which the disciples call for reprimands for those who, not of their group, were casting out demons in the name of the Lord. A random passage, therefore, not chosen on purpose, but as is often the case for the day of study that was opening, because the widest possible involvement - 'whoever is not against us is with us' - is the basis of hope with which to look to the future.



He did not follow the proceedings, Monsignor Maniago, because as he was in charge in Crotone he had moved to Cutro to celebrate the Eucharist in memory of the victims of the massacre whose anniversary falls today. Otherwise he would have listened attentively to what the illustrious Professor Domenico Simeone, Professor of General and Social Pedagogy and Dean of Education Sciences at the Catholic University of Milan, author, among other things, of a recent book published by San Paolo with the same title as the conference: '**The Global Compact on Education**', would have said to the teachers of all levels in the hall. The conference, to tell the truth, adds to the title the apostile 'the challenge'.

"Because it is a challenge," Simeon emphasises, "at a time when this **educational pact** seems to have been broken. Pope Francis launched an appeal back in 2019 to all adults who have an educational responsibility to pool their resources, their intelligence, for a community that educates, for a village of education in which every boy, every girl, can find the right environment to grow, to become a man and a woman, to participate in building the society of tomorrow. In reality, the **Educational Pact** concerns each one of us so that we can build an educational context in which the



whole community must get involved in accompanying the life journey of each one'.

But what is the **Global Compact on Education**?

"The **Global Compact on Education**," Annamaria Fonti Iembo, director of the diocesan school pastoral, tells us, "responds to an appeal addressed to the school world that His Holiness Francis presented in September 2019, and consists of seven cardinal points: respect for and centrality of the person, the function of the family, respect for women against all forms of violence against them, their equality, and social problems linked to the economy. These are seven fundamental points for the school to adapt to current changes, and also to the epochal crisis we are experiencing. A crisis that touches on a paradox, on the one hand we have the great achievements of science, on the other there is disappointment, a sort of 'sad passion' as Spinoza puts it, i.e. people no longer trust each other while exasperated egocentrism and driven utilitarianism prevail, whereby each thinks of himself and does not see the other. All the way to violence and wars. Talking about education in this context is difficult and arduous, but we will make it with hope, as Pope Francis says, the strength that helps us to fight injustice and provide adequate responses to the needs of all'.

The meeting was organised by the School Pastoral Care Office with the cooperation of Uciim (Italian Catholic Union of Teachers, Managers, Educators and Trainers) and the Diocesan Office for the IRC (Institute for the Teaching of Catholic Education), which granted training credit to the participants, teachers of all levels. For Uciim, regional president Marialuisa Lagani brought greetings, while Don Antonio Bomenuto, pastoral assistant and professor of Theology at the 'Sacred Heart' University of Rome, moderated the meeting.

by Raffaele Nisticò - 26 February 2025  
<https://www.calabriainforma.it/arte-e-cultura/2025/02/26/come-raccolgere-la-sfida-del-patto-educativo-globale-incontro-a-catanzaro/51555/>

On the website of the Brazilian Bishops' Conference an article by the Archbishop of Natal on the GCE

## THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION: TOPICALITY AND URGENCY



Education is one of the fundamental pillars for building a more just and supportive society, especially in the current context of changing times, which calls for an overhaul of human formation paths. Considering this reality, on 12 September 2019 Pope Francis issued a call to rebuild the **Global Compact on Education**, asking educators, religious leaders, government officials and society as a whole to recommit to education as a tool for social transformation.

Since its launch, the world has undergone profound transformations. The digital revolution and artificial intelligence have automated many functions, while misinformation and polarisation, amplified by digital media, have become pressing challenges. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated educational inequalities, highlighting the need for a more inclusive and accessible model.

In this context, the **Global Compact on Education** remains relevant. Pope Francis proposes an education based on solidarity, justice, inclusion and fraternity, principles expressed particularly in *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Laudato Si'*. For him, education must be at the heart of the transformations needed to overcome fragmentation and build a more human and sustainable world.

Structured in seven fundamental commitments, the Covenant proposes to encourage welcoming, renew the economy and politics, empower the family and take care of our common home. It also proposes an education capable of overcoming fragmentation and polarisation, promoting spaces for dialogue and inclusion in schools and universities. Furthermore, it advocates social justice and sustainable development, forming citizens committed to ethics, fairness and care for the environment. Another focus is the fight against illiteracy and inequalities in access to education, through public policies and partnerships between governments, religious and educational institutions.

The Archdiocese of Natal has been active in implementing the principles of the **Global Compact on Education**, signing partnerships with higher education institutions such as the Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN) and UFRN,

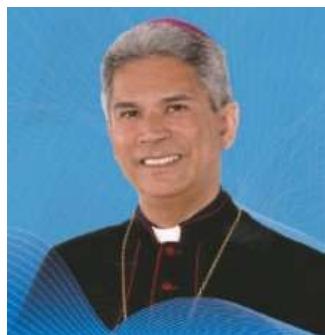
and is seeking new partners to strengthen this commitment. The protocol signed between the Archdiocese and the IFRN at the beginning of February 2025 reinforces the priority of expanding access to education for vulnerable populations, promoting social inclusion and offering educational opportunities in line with social justice, culture and sustainability.

This effort reflects the long tradition of the Archdiocese of Natal in the field of education. From the days when education was a privilege for the few, the Church has been at the forefront of initiatives that have democratised access to knowledge. An enlightening example was the Natal Movement, with its Radio Schools, which enabled thousands of people in the interior of the state to learn to read and write, gaining citizenship and dignity.

Education, however, cannot be an isolated enterprise, but a collective endeavour involving different sectors of society. Pope Francis invites us to build an educational alliance that goes beyond the classroom, including schools, families, communities, governments and religious institutions, promoting an open, accessible and integral education.

For the **Global Compact on Education** to be consolidated, it is essential to promote public policies that incorporate its principles, promoting partnerships between governments, churches and educational institutions. Furthermore, it is necessary to create interdisciplinary educational programmes, incorporating topics such as ethics, sustainability and social inclusion into school curricula. It is also essential to strengthen collaborative networks, bringing together schools, universities, businesses and communities to build a transformative education system. Finally, it is essential to use new technologies in an ethical and inclusive manner, ensuring that digital progress is an ally of education and not a factor of exclusion.

Six years after Pope Francis' appeal, the **Global Compact on Education** remains necessary and urgent. In the face of the educational and social challenges that mark our time, his proposal to rebuild education as an instrument of fraternity, justice and sustainability must be taken up with vigour, promoting a real transformation of society.



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## THE “GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION” AND THE “PERSONAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION”: A PATH OF SELF-EDUCATION

The objectives of the **Global Compact on Education**, namely the second to the seventh, urge us to look outside ourselves: to listen to the new generations, to promote women, to empower the family, to welcome the other, to renew the economy and politics, and to guard the common home. However, in addition to this '*Educational Pact with Others*', we have the first objective - 'to put the person at the centre' - which also implies an '*Educational Pact with Ourselves*', that is, the need for inner care and personal growth that precedes and accompanies our responsibility to care for others.

The Gospel invitation "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mk 12:31) reminds us that there can be no genuine dedication to others without sincere self-love. From a conflictual relationship with oneself comes a conflictual relationship with others. We often risk forgetting that education is not only about the outside world, but also about ourselves. Continuous training, cultivating one's inner well-being and developing a deep awareness of one's own identity are essential aspects of *lifelong learning*.

Self-care is not to be understood as a selfish or self-referential attitude, but as a commitment to personal growth in order to be better instruments for relating and helping others. Philosophers such as Seneca and Pierre Hadot have spoken of soul care as a daily exercise that allows us to face life with more awareness. Psychologists such as Carl Jung and Viktor Frankl have emphasised the role of the search for meaning and self-discovery in the process of human growth. *The Pedagogy of the Deep* also aims to educate on the values that give meaning to existence. Anselm Grün and Richard Rohr, from a spiritual perspective, invite us on an inner journey to recognise the importance of developing the spiritual dimension.

A fundamental author for understanding self-care is Michel Foucault, who in his work *L'uso dei piaceri* (Feltrinelli, 1985) shows that soul care as conceived by the ancients was an ethical and transformative exercise. For those who want to delve into the philosophical dimension, Pierre Hadot in *Esercizi spirituali e filosofia antica* (Einaudi, 2005) shows how philosophy is not just theory, but a lifestyle that leads to inner serenity. As well as the search for truth, philosophy has always aimed at achieving happiness. For a more classical approach, Seneca in his *Letters to Lucilius* (BUR, 2010) reflects on the need to cultivate wisdom and balance in order to face life's challenges.

From a psychological point of view, Viktor Frankl in *Uno psicologo nei lager* (Ares, 2021) shows how the search for meaning can help overcome suffering, while Rollo May, in *L'uomo alla ricerca di*



sé stesso (Astrolabe, 1982), explores the theme of identity and personal responsibility. Carl Gustav Jung, with *Ricordi, sogni, riflessioni* (BUR, 1988), takes us on an inner journey that leads to the discovery of the unconscious and the process of individuation. Abraham Maslow, in *Motivation and Personality* (Armando Editore, 2008), sees the need for self-realisation as an essential component of human life.

For a more spiritual approach, valuable insights can be found in Thomas Moore's *The Soul Cure* (Frassinelli, 1993), which interweaves psychology and spirituality and offers a deeper insight into everyday life. For a critique of the frenzy of modernity, I recommend reading *La società della stanchezza* (Nottetempo, 2012) by the South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han, where he shows how excess productivity is stifling inner reflection. Tiziano Terzani, with *Un altro giro di giostra* (TEA, 2004), instead recounts his journey between spirituality and the search for meaning, exploring different cultures and traditions.

Another effective tool for self-care is personal writing, understood as reflection and inner awareness. James W. Pennebaker, with *Opening Up by Writing It Down* (Guilford Press, 2016), has shown how *journaling* can promote emotional healing and psychological well-being. This method, also known as *writing therapy*, allows one to process difficult experiences, give meaning to life events and strengthen one's identity. Autobiographical writing, which has been widely studied in the pedagogical field and is a fundamental methodological tool in Adult Education, offers a safe space to probe one's inner world, facilitating self-education and personal growth. Likewise, *mindfulness* proves to be a powerful tool for self-care, helping to cultivate awareness of the present moment and reduce

stress. Jon Kabat-Zinn, in *Living Moment to Moment* (Corbaccio, 2018), demonstrated how *mindfulness* meditation can improve mental and physical well-being, promoting greater resilience. The practice of *mindfulness*, as well as *journaling*, can be seen as a form of inner education, which promotes emotional balance and the ability to face the challenges of daily life with lucidity.

For those seeking a practical guide to awareness, Eckhart Tolle's *The Power of Now* (My Life Editions, 2010) is a fundamental text that helps one live in the present, while Anselm Grün, in *The Care of the Soul* (Queriniana, 2005), integrates psychology and Christian spirituality for a more harmonious life. Henry J.M. Nouwen, with *Life of Jesus* and *Life of Man* (Queriniana, 2017), reflects on the deep meaning of Christian spirituality and inner growth. Another interesting contribution is that of Jean-Yves Leloup in *L'arte della meditazione* (Gribaudi, 2013), which combines Eastern philosophy and Christianity in a path of introspection. Richard Rohr, with *The Soul of Man* (Edizioni Terra Santa, 2017), explores the spiritual path as a means to encounter the divine in the everyday. Finally, Simone Weil in *L'Attesa di Dio* (Adelphi, 2014) proposes profound reflections on the human condition and the search for truth, while Paolo Scquizzato, in *Lasciati amare* (Paoline, 2019), invites trust in divine love and the discovery of one's interiority. Needless to say, for Christians there is no better practice of self-education, self-care and *mindfulness* than meditation on the Gospel.

These texts offer an opportunity for in-depth study and reflection on themes that are essential for personal growth, helping us to build a path of self-formation that makes our educational and relational commitment more authentic.

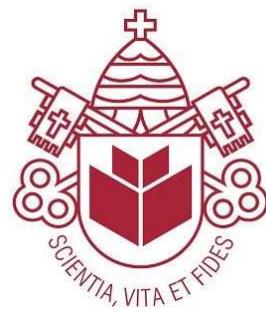


The **Global Compact on Education** calls us to care for others, but this mission, as we have seen, is inevitably accompanied by an Educational Covenant with oneself. One day, as educational professionals, we will retire, but from self-care and self-education we will never retire, because this is a responsibility that never ends.

P. Ezio Lorenzo Bono, CSF  
Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education** ■

The GCE in the PUCPR's Aurora Journal of Philosophy

## GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION AND PERSONALISM



**PUCPR**  
GRUPO MARISTA



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Scientific Electronic Library Online

Paul Ricœur, Personalism and o Pacto  
Educativo Global  
GOMES, RODRIGO BENEVIDES BARBOSA

### Abstract:

Launched in September 2019, the first of the seven commitments of the **Global Compact on Education** is the 'centrality of the person'. In other words, the pact assumes personalism as the philosophical-anthropological foundation to theorise an integral formation of man, in other words a *paideia*. Having said this, the article proposes, firstly, to present personalist philosophy from Paul Ricœur's reading in *Histoire et vérité* (1955) and, finally, to move on to the applicability of personalism in the socio-educational context.

Keywords: Ricœur; Mounier; Personalism; Existentialism; Education.

<https://www.scielo.br/j/rfilos/a/qV9MW8vLqJFm4wD5B87VMC/?lang=pt>



Address of the Holy Father Leo XIV, one week after his election, on the 'ministry' of education

## **EVANGELISING BY EDUCATING AND EDUCATING BY EVANGELISING**



### **ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV TO THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS** *Clementine Hall, Thursday, 15 May 2025*

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, peace be upon you!

Your Eminence,  
dear brothers and sisters, welcome!

I am very pleased to receive you on the third centenary of the promulgation of the Bull *In apostolicae dignitatis solio*, by which Pope Benedict XIII approved your Institute and your Rule (26 January 1725). It also coincides with the 75th anniversary of Pope Pius XII's proclamation of St John Baptist de La Salle as "Heavenly Patron of all educators" (cf. Lett. Ap. *Quod ait*, 15 May 1950: AAS 12, 1950, 631-632).

After three centuries, it is good to see how your presence continues to bring with it the freshness of a rich and vast educational reality, with which you still, in various parts of the world, dedicate yourselves to the formation of young people with enthusiasm, fidelity and a spirit of sacrifice.

Precisely in the light of these anniversaries, I would like to pause and reflect with you on two aspects of your history that I consider important for all of us: ministerial and missionary teaching in the community.

The beginnings of your work speak volumes. St John Baptist de La Salle began by responding to a request for help from a layman, Adrian Nyel, who was struggling to keep up his 'schools for the poor'. Your founder recognised in his request for help a sign from God, accepted the challenge and set to work. Thus, beyond his own intentions and expectations, he gave birth to a new teaching system: that of the Christian Schools, free and open to everyone. Among the innovative elements he introduced in this pedagogical revolution were the teaching of classes and no longer of individual pupils; the adoption of French as the didactic language, instead of Latin, which was accessible to all; Sunday lessons, in which even young people forced to work on weekdays could participate; the involvement of families in the school curriculum, according to the principle of the 'educational triangle', still valid today. Thus the problems, as they arose, instead of discouraging him, stimulated him to seek creative answers and to venture into new and often unexplored paths.

All this cannot but make us think, and it also raises useful questions. What, in the world of youth today, are the most urgent challenges to be faced? What values are to be promoted? What resources to count on?

The young people of our time, like those of every age, are a volcano of life, of energy, of feelings, of ideas. This can be seen by the wonderful things they can do, in so many fields. However, they also need help, so that they can grow in harmony with this wealth and overcome what, although in a different way than in the past, can still impede their healthy development.

If, for example, in the 17th century the use of Latin was an insuperable communication barrier for many, today there are other obstacles to face. Just think of the isolation caused by rampant relational models increasingly marked by superficiality, individualism and emotional instability; the spread of thought patterns weakened by relativism; the prevalence of rhythms and lifestyles in which there is not enough room for listening, reflection and dialogue, at school, in the family, sometimes among peers themselves, with the resulting loneliness.

These are demanding challenges, but we too, like St John Baptist de La Salle, can make them springboards for exploring avenues, developing tools and adopting new languages, with which to continue to touch the hearts of pupils, helping them and spurring them on to face every obstacle with courage in order to give the best of themselves in life, according to God's designs. In this sense, the attention you pay, in your schools, to the training of teachers and to the creation of educating communities in which the teaching effort is enriched by the contribution of all is commendable. I encourage you to continue along these paths.

But I would like to mention another aspect of the Lasallian reality that I consider important: teaching lived as ministry and mission, as consecration in the Church. Saint John Baptist de La Salle did not want there to be priests among the teachers of the Christian Schools, but only "brothers", so that all your efforts would be directed, with God's help, to the education of the pupils. He loved to say: "Your altar is the cathedra", thus promoting in the Church of his time a reality hitherto unknown: that of lay teachers and catechists invested, in the community, with a real "ministry", according to the principle of evangelising by educating and educating by evangelising (cf. Francis, Address to the participants in the General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, 21 May 2022).

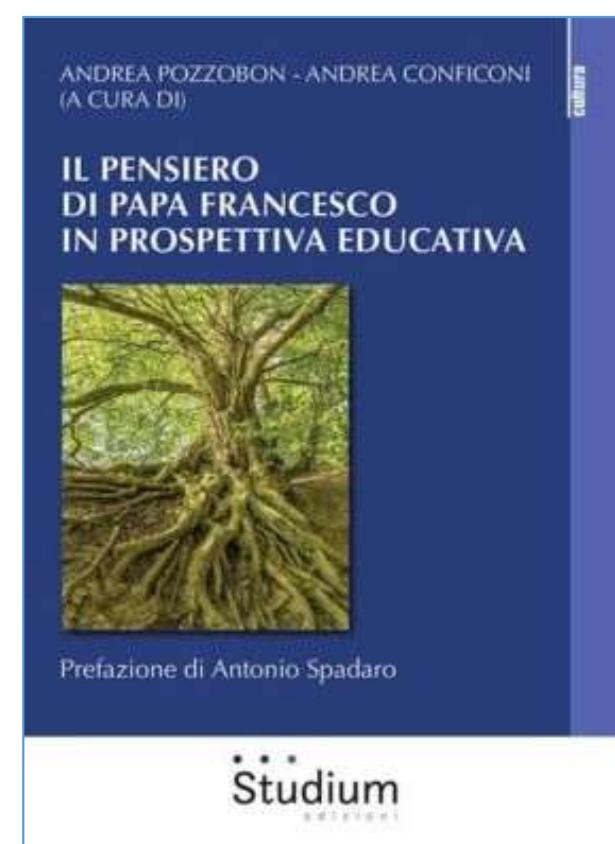
Thus the charism of the school, which you embrace with the fourth vow of teaching, as well as a service to society and a precious work of charity, still appears today as one of the most beautiful and eloquent explications of that priestly, prophetic and kingly munus that we all received in Baptism, as the documents of the Second Vatican Council emphasise. Thus, in your educational realities, religious make prophetically visible, through their consecration, the baptismal ministry that spurs everyone (cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 44), each according to his status and duties, without differences, to "contribute as living members [...] to the growth of the Church and to her permanent sanctification" (ibid., 33).

For this reason, I hope that vocations to Lasallian religious consecration will grow, that they will be encouraged and promoted, in your schools and outside them, and that, in synergy with all the other components of formation, they will contribute to awakening among the young people who attend them joyful and fruitful journeys of holiness.

Thank you for what you do! I pray for you and impart the Apostolic Blessing, which I gladly extend to the whole Lasallian Family.

Pope Leo XIV ■

The GCE at the centre of a new book  
**THE THOUGHTS OF POPE FRANCIS  
IN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**



The book 'The thought of Pope Francis in an educational perspective', edited by Andrea Pozzobon and Andrea Conficoni, professors at the IUSVE, with a preface by Fr. Antonio Spadaro, Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, was published in May 2025. The volume, published by Studium, is the result of a five-year research project and proposes an in-depth and interdisciplinary reading of the educational magisterium of Pope Francis.

Ample space is devoted to the **Global Compact on Education**, the heart of the Pope's proposal to relaunch the educational alliance between school, family, society and religious communities. The book analyses the Pact's seven commitments and highlights their relevance in the light of contemporary educational challenges.

Among the central themes: the school as a community, education as a relational and social act, the culture of encounter, the value of youth restlessness, and the need to inhabit the tensions of reality without seeking shortcuts.

The book is addressed to educators, teachers, pastoral workers and trainers who wish to deepen their understanding of Pope Francis' educational approach as a concrete resource for rethinking education today in a human, spiritual and integral key. ■



GLOBAL COMPACT  
ON EDUCATION

Journal

Nb. The English translation of this Journal of the GCE was done automatically. For any inaccuracies, please refer to the original Italian edition.

The GCE in the speech of Card. J.T. De Mendonça, at the 2nd International Meeting of Schola Occurrentes

## LION XIV AND THE CHURCH'S VIEW OF NEW THINGS



*The Prefect of the DCE gave the closing address of the 2nd International Meeting on Meaning promoted by Scholas Occurrentes. He emphasised the Pontiff's attention, also through the choice of his name, to the "technological revolution" underway, which should be "neither ignored nor feared", but integrated into models of education that, as Pope Francis called for, know how to "make a chorus".*

It is a great pleasure to be with you at the conclusion of this journey of reflection. I would like to greet the bishops present, those responsible for *Scholas Occurrentes*, the authorities, social leaders and representatives of different cultures. Thank you very much for the invitation to offer a few closing words at this important meeting promoted by *Scholas Occurrentes* and CAF.

These days have been a special occasion to celebrate the life and thought of Pope Francis and his visionary project for education. From him we have received a precious legacy, reminding us how central education is to our contemporary world. An inheritance that today is taken up with enthusiasm by the new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, who in his first days of pontificate has already spoken about education and, with the choice of his name, wanted to draw the world's attention to a new and decisive revolution: the digital revolution, driven by artificial intelligence. If for Leo XIII the epochal challenge was the industrial revolution, today Pope Leo recognises in artificial intelligence the historic transition we are experiencing. From the very first acts of his pontificate, he wanted to draw the attention of the Church and the world to a phenomenon whose revolutionary effects are still poorly understood.

In this scenario, education assumes a fundamental role. We do not know what the face of the world will look like in ten years, but one thing is certain: education will remain an essential resource for human beings and society. It is not limited to the careful selection of the tools required by the age of artificial intelligence, but possesses the strength to hold tradition and innovation together: the

continuity of a heritage that is transmitted over time and the ability to discern the signs of the times in order to respond to the challenges of each generation.

Pope Francis has often reminded us that we do not simply live in a time of change, but in a real change of epoch. In this context, education can help us to develop a conscious use of technology, a critical attitude capable of grasping its opportunities and limits. Your meeting was a valuable opportunity to listen, especially to the new generations. This is precisely the second objective of the **Global Compact on Education**.

This year we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the encyclical *Laudato si'*, a prophetic document offering an integral vision of the world and man's mission in creation, and also the fifth anniversary of the **Global Compact on Education**. Five years after its launch, there is a need for a relaunch capable of facing the new challenges of our time, marked by continuous acceleration. Five years today represent an epoch, because reality is evolving rapidly.

The educational field is the immediate mirror of these transformations: the pandemic, for example, has exacerbated mental health issues in schools. Not that they did not already exist, but today they are on the rise. Recent studies, such as that of the Catholic University of Chile, show a 30% increase in cases of psychological distress. It is therefore essential to sharpen our ability to listen and pay attention to the world of youth, where anxieties and depressions start at an increasingly early age.

The **Global Compact on Education** proposed by Pope Francis must continue to incorporate the new needs of human reality. Among its guidelines is the urgency of an inclusive and excellent education for all, an education based on the recognition of education as a fundamental right, as affirmed in the Second Vatican Council. We are still far from realising this ideal. According to UNESCO, some 230 million children in the world do not go to school. Another fundamental pillar is ecological education. Pope Francis has taught us that everything is interconnected: there is no separation between the needs of man and those of the common home. We must not nurture a despotic anthropology, but promote a vision in which man is the custodian of creation. This perspective must enter the school curriculum: global sustainability is built with small gestures, as an educator reminded us by giving me a symbolic stone. It is in education that we discover, together, the meaning of our actions.

The technological revolution and the irruption of artificial intelligence also call for new educational responses. How to remain human in an age where technology tends to replace reality? Education must be a laboratory for reflection on the human, cultivating beauty, peace, spirituality and a sense

of transcendence. We cannot be satisfied with an education centred only on efficiency or the exterior. We must educate interiority, integrate spirituality naturally into education.

Pope Francis reminded us that education is one of the most effective ways to humanise the world. It is the natural antidote to the culture of individualism. He spoke of the need for a new educational season, involving all actors in society, with an integral approach. Only in this way can we tackle the loneliness and insecurities that afflict so many young people, causing depression, addictions, aggression, bullying and verbal hatred.

We must overcome a reductive view of education, which confuses it with mere instruction. Education is something more: it is dialogue with the whole human being. It is a multifaceted culture, capable of overcoming fragmentation and rebuilding the fabric of relationships. The school is not just the classroom, but the neighbourhood, the community, the family, every human space.

The Christian 'paideia' proposed by Pope Francis orients the person not only to individual fulfilment, but to communion with God and with one's brothers and sisters. Christ is the educational model. In this light, we must cherish the dream of Pope Francis. In the Church there are no ruptures, but continuity. The hermeneutics of continuity is fundamental.

We loved Pope Francis, and today we love Leo XIV, who was also a teacher, an educator, a man of the school. With the prophetic choice of the name Leo he wanted to draw the world's attention to the new *Rerum Novarum* of the third millennium: the digital revolution. We must not fear it, but integrate it with a critical spirit and a human gaze, at the service of inclusive and quality education.

As educators we must ask ourselves: do we want to build a time of bewilderment or a time of hope? A school reduced to a skills factory or a workshop of souls? A civilisation based on profit or a community nourished by solidarity?

The answer lies in networking, in making a chorus, as Pope Francis said, drawing on the Church's wealth of experience. The Church knows how to discern, to value, to integrate. Even Pope Leo, speaking to the Napoli footballers, recalled that victory is won as a team. This is what education is: a choral project.

The educator is not a knowledge machine, but a guide, a friend, a fellow traveller. To educate is a ministry. To educate is to evangelise, and to evangelise is to educate. The school is fundamental to the mission of the Church.

The Jubilee of Education that we will celebrate in October will be an opportunity to relaunch the heart of Catholic education: the knowledge of Christ, Master and light of every educational journey.

Thank you for everything you do. Thank you for coming. Thank you for what you are. And thank you for listening to me.

Card. José Tolentino de Mendonça ■

Dossier National Office for Education, Schools and Universities of the Italian Bishops' Conference

## THE JOY OF EDUCATION



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The text contains numerous speeches that take up the essential points of the thought and educational action of Pope Francis, who at the very beginning of his pontificate wanted to meet the world of Italian Catholic schools, to which he dedicated a very important speech that was often repeated later. From those very first words, Pope Bergoglio spoke of the 'village' of education and the three languages to form a personality from an integral point of view: those of the mind, heart and hands. Many other meetings and speeches have followed over the years, up to the proposal of a **Global Compact on Education**, addressed to religions, political and educational institutions, the various actors of civil society, the world of the arts, sport, communication. The first aim of the Dossier,' writes Ernesto Diaco, UNESU director, in the introduction, 'is to remember and express gratitude for a magisterium so rich in educational guidelines and attention to the vast and articulated world of educational institutions, to which is added the desire to discern together what we have received from Pope Francis and to commit ourselves to ensuring that it still bears fruit in the work that we carry out together on a daily basis - in schools and universities, in vocational training centres and in the various aggregations, certain that no one will be able to steal our love for education'.

The book can be accessed at this link:

<https://educazione.chiesacattolica.it/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2025/05/13/Dossier-eredita-educativa-papa-Francesco.pdf> ■

# THANK YOU POPE FRANCIS



Dear Pope Francis, you have been touched by millions of hands, and you, in turn, have touched the heart of the world. You have shaken trembling hands, you have caressed scarred faces, you have embraced the discarded, you have washed feet and kissed them, you have offered peace. We thank you for giving us the visionary project of the **Global Compact on Education**, by which you wished to educate all men and women of the world to universal brotherhood. Now that you are in the hands of God, receive His eternal caress. You, who have always asked us to pray for you, now pray for us.

Tell the Lord that we thank him immensely for having given the Church and the world a Pope like you. And give God a caress from us too.



THANK YOU MR. GIOVANNI FANAI

We would like to thank Industrial Expert Giovanni Fanali, who after years of valuable service in our Department recently retired. We thank him for the monthly printing of the *Global Compact on Education Newsletter* and *Journal*. We wish him all the best for this new time of life, with sincere gratitude for what he shared with us.

# Selected speeches by Pope Francis on education

## **FRANCISCAN PEDAGOGICAL PILLS**



This new volume, an ideal follow-up to the previous volume *"Francis and Young People. A love at first sight"*, collects a selection of speeches delivered by Pope Francis to young people, teachers and

representatives of the educational world. Although they originate from different occasions, these speeches are traversed by a coherent and profound educational vision, which lucidly addresses the challenges of the contemporary world. The pontiff does not limit himself to moral exhortations, but offers an authentic pedagogy 'in pills', with a direct style, rich in images, neologisms and references to concrete reality.

The themes touched upon are those that weigh on young people's present: global inequalities, forced migration, ecological crisis, digital addictions, individualism and existential bewilderment. However, the pope's outlook is far from pessimistic. He invites young people to become aware of reality, but also to believe in the possibility of change, rediscovering their dignity and transformative power.

Precisely to respond to this situation, Francis proposes the **Global Compact on Education**: an alliance between all educational actors - families, schools, universities, religious and civil institutions - to generate a new culture of encounter and solidarity. This project, while in tune with some UNESCO reports, broadens its vision thanks to an anthropological and spiritual perspective: education, for Francis, is not only a tool for technical or social training, but a way of deep humanisation, openness to transcendence, building fraternity and hope.

The book, through the words of the pope, relaunches this global appeal. It is an invitation to think of education as an act of love for humanity and as a seed for a fairer, more united, more human future. A text that speaks to educators, believers, institutions, but above all to young people, the necessary protagonists of a new beginning.

*The book can be accessed at this link:*  
[https://www.cnosfap.it/sites/default/files/pubblicazioni/un\\_patto\\_globale\\_per\\_leducazione\\_integrale\\_stampato.pdf](https://www.cnosfap.it/sites/default/files/pubblicazioni/un_patto_globale_per_leducazione_integrale_stampato.pdf)

Message from Card. J.T. De Mendonça, at the formative meeting on the 50th jubilee of the Diocese of Picos (Brazil)

## BUILDING THE GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL PACT FROM THE LOCAL



6

On 27 March 2025, the Diocese of Picos organised the **Diocesan Global Compact on Education** meeting, held in the Auditorium of the Diocesan Training Centre (CTD), in the Catavento district of Picos. The event was part of the celebrations for the 50th Jubilee of the Diocese and aimed to discuss ways to strengthen education in the region, in line with the **Global Compact on Education** proposal. [...]

The event was attended by Bishop Plínio José Luz da Silva, the clergy of the Picos diocese and representatives of the Instituto Monsenhor Hipólito (IMH), as well as educational leaders such as school headmasters. Mayors and education secretaries from the 42 municipalities that make up the Picos diocese were also present.

During the meeting, Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Holy See's Dicastery for Culture and Education, delivered a message reflecting on the importance of the Covenant for the renewal of global education. The event also featured a speech entitled 'Building the Covenant for Education Starting with Us' by Dr. Humberto Herreras Contreras, who addressed the need to strengthen social and educational ties.

### MESSAGE FROM CARD. DE MENDONÇA, TO MEETING PARTICIPANTS OF FORMATION OF THE DIOCESE OF PICOS (BRAZIL)

Dear school leaders and university rectors, Mayors and Secretaries of Education of the Jurisdiction of Picos (Brazil),

I would like to express my admiration for the initiative to organise this training meeting, with the aim of deepening and implementing the **Global Compact on Education** in your jurisdiction. The mere fact that Catholic educators and lay people are together is already a first realisation of the Educational Pact, one of the main objectives of which is to create networks between the various organisations dedicated to education.

Pope Francis, with his educational project, invites us to build an Education Village, where everyone collaborates in the formation of the new generations. He recalls the pedagogical wisdom of traditional African education, summed up in the proverb: 'It takes a whole village to educate a child'. This communitarian dimension of education is already deeply rooted in Brazilian culture, as

demonstrated by the Basic Ecclesial Communities (CEBs), which were also spaces of education, and Paulo Freire's Cultural Circles, based on participatory and, as he claimed, dialogic education. For this great Brazilian pedagogue, recognised throughout the world, educating was essentially a community act, a principle he crystallised in his famous slogan: 'No one educates anyone: people educate themselves in communion'.



Education in Brazil has always gone hand in hand with culture and local identity. In the Picos region, the tradition of teaching and the transmission of knowledge manifests itself in various ways: in *Cordei* literature, which for generations has educated the population about its history, and in cultural events such as the *Reizado* and the Dance of the Congo, which transmit teachings through popular music and theatre.

The importance of education for social formation is also linked to the legacy of Luiz Gonzaga, the King of *Baião*, whose music gave voice to the people of the Northeast, recounting their struggles, dreams and aspirations. Luiz Gonzaga used his music to raise awareness of the great issues of his time. His '*Xote Ecológico*' denounced environmental degradation and water scarcity years ago, anticipating a problem that has become urgent today:

*"I can't breathe  
I can no longer swim  
The earth is dying  
No more planting  
If you plant you do not grow  
If it is born, it will not grow  
Even good liquor  
It is difficult to find".*

This song has been used in ecological education programmes in Brazil. This message coincides with the seventh commitment of the **Global Compact on Education** on the need to take care of our common home and to form environmentally conscious citizens.

But Luiz Gonzaga also leaves us with an inspiring image of the role of the educator. Like the traveller in his song '*A Vida Do Viajante*', the educator travels the roads, brings knowledge and transforms lives:

*"My life is to travel around this country  
To see if one day I will rest happy  
Preserving memories  
of the lands I crossed,  
Walking through the backlands  
And the friends I left behind".*

The true educator is the one who is not satisfied, who continues to travel, learn, teach and inspire. May your formation meeting be a milestone in the journey of each of you, strengthening the mission to educate for a more just, fraternal and sustainable world.

May you value local traditions and, at the same time, look to the future, building an education that combines roots and innovation. Brazil is proud to have many internationally renowned educators who have inspired and continue to inspire generations of educators in this immense country. Education here has never been just a practice, but a mission, a commitment to human and social development.

Go forward with courage! You are on the right track: he who starts well is already halfway there. Seek dialogue with mutual respect, collaborate as much as possible and recognise that you share the same mission: shaping the citizens of tomorrow. Create networks, harmonise your voices as in a choir, establish alliances, join forces so that working together produces better and better results.

The **Global Compact on Education**, as you know, has as its ultimate goal to educate to universal brotherhood. You are already familiar with this fraternity proposal, as demonstrated by the Fraternity Campaigns, including the one you are experiencing this Lent: a unique initiative that enriches the mission of the Church in Brazil.

To realise this universal brotherhood, the Holy Father proposes seven paths that commit us to

- 1.Putting the person at the centre of every educational process.
- 2.Listening to the new generations to build a future of justice and peace.
- 3.Promoting women, ensuring their full access to education.
- 4.Empowering the family, recognising it as the first and essential educator.
- 5.Being open to welcoming, especially the most vulnerable.
- 6.Renew the economy and politics so that they are at the service of man and the human family.
- 7.Taking care of our common home, protecting its resources and adopting more sustainable lifestyles.

Educating, in short, as Pope Francis reminds us, means knowing oneself, one's neighbour, creation and the Transcendent.

I greet each of you with affection and wish you all fruitful work, so that you may achieve all the goals you have set for this meeting.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education  
Vatican City, 11 March 2025 ■

## The diocesan delegates for education of the Spanish Bishops' Conference involved in the GCE **EDUCATION AT THE HEART OF THE CHURCH**



The diocesan delegates for education of the Spanish Bishops' Conference celebrated their LXIII Day in Rome to live together the Jubilee of Hope, under the motto: 'Education at the heart of the Church'.

Ezio Lorenzo Bono, Secretary of the **Global Compact on Education** (GCE) of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, and Brother Juan Antonio Ojeda, Project Director of the International Office for Catholic Education (OIEC) and Consultant of the aforementioned Dicastery, presented to the Delegates the basic outlines of the GCE, its foundations, importance and growing relevance, the what, why and wherefore, and the process to be followed for its construction at the local and regional levels, with global openness.

Everyone felt very interested and committed to implement it in every context, uniting wills and efforts, reaching out to all the educational, religious, social, cultural, economic and administrative sectors of the cities and provinces, to jointly generate a new education that will lead us to a new humanity that is more fraternal, solidary and sustainable.

João Antonio Ojeda ■

## THE DIOCESE OF CIUDAD VICTORIA AND THE GCE



The Diocese and the local Church of Ciudad Victoria, together with La Salle University Victoria and other educational and social sectors of the city, were very interested and committed to the invitation to the **Global Educational Pact** and to initiating a process of collaboration and efforts open to the Spirit and in creative fidelity, ready to find common paths and projects that would allow them to build together a **Local Compact on Education** with global openness, in line with the prophetic proposal of Pope Francis.

To this end, they invited Brother Juan Antonio Ojeda to explain the foundations and objectives of the Covenant and how to build it from the ground up based on his vast experience. This first meeting was attended by more than one hundred people from the different sectors of Ciudad Victoria and the Diocese. All were very excited and motivated to start this fruitful journey to improve education in order to change people's lives, their relationships and their contexts and achieve greater fraternity, without waste and allowing the growth and well-being of all. A more equitable, caring, just, peaceful and sustainable city.

João Antonio Ojeda ■

## The Prefect of DCE meets the Rector of LUMSA **LUMSA AND THE DICASTERY FOR CULTURE AND EDUCATION: AN ALLIANCE FOR THE GCE**



On 24 March 2025, a meeting was held at the Dicastery for Culture and Education between Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery, and the Rector of the LUMSA University, Prof. Francesco Bonini. Accompanying His Eminence were His Excellency Monsignor Carlo Maria Polvani and the Rev. Father Ezio Lorenzo Bono. The LUMSA delegation included, in addition to the Magnificent Rector, Prof. Maria Cinque, Prof. Carina Rossa and Prof. Stefano Biancu.

The meeting confirmed the close cooperation between the Dicastery and the Roman Athenaeum in the framework of the **Global Compact on Education**, promoted by Pope Francis.

Cardinal Tolentino expressed deep gratitude for LUMSA's contribution to international educational projects, emphasising the need to strongly relaunch the Covenant's cultural commitment in view of the next Jubilee of the Educational World (GME). In turn, Rector Bonini reiterated the University's full willingness to consolidate this synergy.

Prof. Maria Cinque illustrated the results of the dialogue between LUMSA and the **Global Compact on Education** Committee, making concrete proposals for the organisation of the GME. The beating heart of the Jubilee will be the Global Education Village, which will host thematic events, stands of the international networks and a space dedicated to relaunching the identity of the **Global Compact on Education**.

To support this process, the Cardinal announced the establishment of a commission to review the **Global Compact on Education** Vademecum.

The meeting concluded with a shared desire to continue with determination along the path of education and culture as instruments of hope for the future of the world. ■

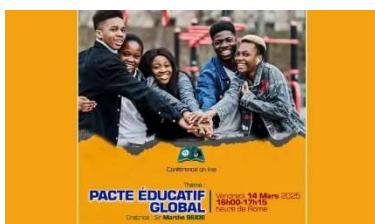
## THANK YOU HIS EXCELLENCY MONS. GIOVANNI CESARE PAGAZZI



On 28 March 2025, the Pope appointed Monsignor Giovanni Cesare Pagazzi, until now Secretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church. He succeeds Monsignor Angelo Vincenzo Zani, who turned 75 last 24 March and held the position for about three years.

The GCE Committee thanks him for his important contribution especially to the **African Compact on Education**.

Francophone ISS-FMA on the road with the GCE  
**GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION:  
A CHANCE FOR A NEW HUMANISM**



On 14 March 2025, an online meeting organised by the ISS-FMA of the French-speaking nodal point took place on the

topic of the **Global Compact on Education**.

Rome (Italy). An online meeting organised by the Salesian Institutions of Higher Studies (ISS-FMA) of the French-speaking nodal point took place on 14 March 2025. The meeting, in line with the formative planning carried out in collaboration with the Pontifical Faculty of Educational Sciences "Auxilium" in Rome, had as its central theme the "**Global Compact on Education**", a fundamental topic for the formation and growth of the new generations and for networking. [...]

Sister Martha Seide, Lecturer at the Faculty "Auxilium" and Council member of the Office International de l'Enseignement Catholique (OIEC), expertly delved into Pope Francis' **Global Compact on Education**, starting with its launch in 2019, highlighting the ongoing commitment of the Roman Curia's Dicastery for Culture and Education and the OIEC, committed to promoting and supporting this Pact at the global and local (glocal) levels.

During the meeting, Sister Martha also presented the PG Series No. 20, edited by the FMA Institute's Youth Pastoral Sector, which explores in depth the Educational Covenant and the work the Institute is doing in this direction.

A significant aspect that emerged from General Chapter XXIV is the importance of adopting the **Global Compact on Education** according to a vision of integral ecology, as the basis for a new humanism that unites people in a global educational network of solidarity:

"We are convinced that taking on the **Global Compact on Education** from the perspective of integral ecology is today a possibility for a new humanism. It is a matter of networking, in a broad educational alliance, to mature a universal solidarity".

One of the lines of action for the Third Priority Choice, consists in fact in Embracing the **Global Compact on Education** in the style of the Preventive System, in a network with the Salesian Family, national and international, intercultural, interreligious, inter-congregational institutions and educational agencies. [...]

The Educational Pact is a dynamism that generates hope: it is the certainty shared during the meeting. [...]

*taken from:*

<https://www.cgfmanet.org/ifma/educazione/iss-fma-francophone-in-cammino-con-il-patto-educativo-globale/>

At the CdO Convention, His Exc. Bishop Cesare Pagazzi  
calls educators 'Ministers of Hope'

**IN EDUCATION DWELLS  
THE SEED OF HOPE**



Pacengo di Lazise (VR)

21-22-23 marzo 2025

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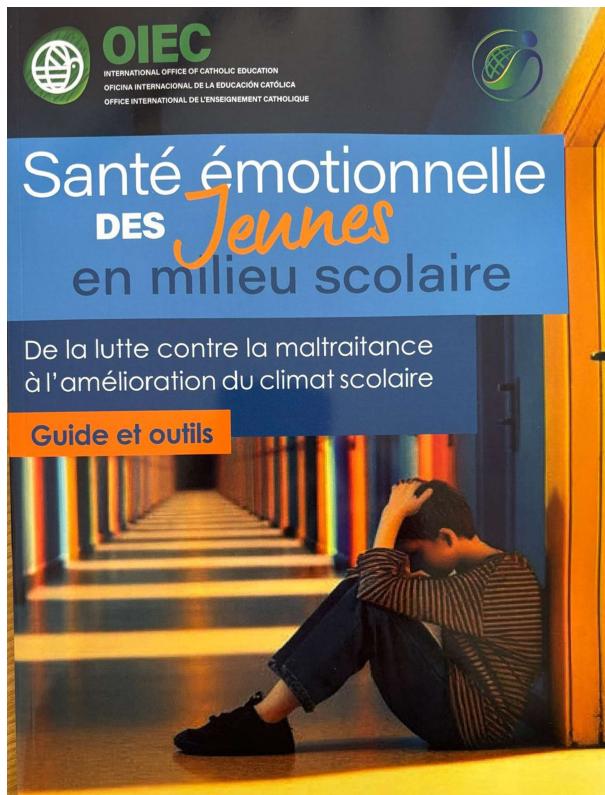
On Sunday 23 March 2025, Pacengo di Lazise (Vr), concluded the XXV National Conference of CdO Opere Educativa, entitled "In education dwells the seed of hope". The title took up the call launched by the Holy Father on the occasion of the **Global Compact on Education** in 2020, Pope Francis' appeal for a personal education of the new generations, according to an integral dimension.

Speakers included the Sisters of Charity of the Assumption, who provide educational and health support in the Corvetto district of Milan, Stefania Famlonga, from the NGO Avsi, involved in situations of great human emergency in Ecuador, Daniele Sacco, HR manager at Mondadori, who, thanks to his consolidated managerial experience, emphasised the shared commitment in running an organisation. [...] Other moments of work went more into the merits of operations, recounting innovative didactic attempts, the use of methods to support the development of critical and creative thinking, the launching of ordinal experiments such as adherence to the 4+2 reform, methodologies of inclusion, experiences of multi-channel communication with the territory, together with technical and legal insights related to the seismic vulnerability of buildings and the responsibility of administrators, with a focus both in legal terms, and in the synthetic meaning offered by Daniele Sacco, as a creative gesture, an original contribution to the management of a school work.

The schools belonging to the CdO Opere Educativa network will return to their educational task, as managers and administrators or as rectors, headmasters and teachers, comforted by the words of Msgr. Cesare Pagazzi, secretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education: 'Education and hope,' reads a note, 'why put these two words together? Because no one would set out to educate if they did not hope in the vital power of the young person, who may not yet be aware of this potential, but the educator sees it in nuce, and from the wish of Bernhard Scholz, president of the *Meeting* foundation: this authentic educational commitment leaves a positive trace, a 'seed' that perhaps will not blossom immediately, like a tree in spring, perhaps it will blossom over time, but the seed remains'.

*taken from:* <https://educazione.chiesacattolica.it/cdo-opere-educative-concluso-il-convegno-nazionale/> ■

# EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCHOOLS



This important new OIEC grant is a valuable tool for educators who, every day, face the challenge of educating the new generations, preparing young people to enter as active and mature subjects in an increasingly complex and changing society.

School is undoubtedly one of the fundamental places for the growth of young people, where the learning of knowledge is intertwined with the construction of identity and emotional development. However, for many students around the world, the school environment, instead of being an ideal place for their growth and development, can turn into a source of stress, exclusion and, in the most extreme cases, even violence. This text helps us become aware that the emotional and mental well-being of young people cannot be separated from education. On the contrary, it is its beating heart.

Education, in fact, is not limited to the transmission of knowledge, but must also accompany the personal growth of young people. Learning to recognise, understand and manage one's emotions is an essential aspect of education, as is the creation of a healthy and inclusive school climate, capable of fostering dialogue and solidarity between students, teachers and families. School must be the place where one learns to live with others. For this, academic training is not enough, which could also take place online, at a distance, with everyone in their own room followed by a virtual tutor. Sharing everyday life with other students is necessary so that interpersonal skills

are developed and confrontation with others becomes an integral part of education.

Today's context, marked by rapid social changes, rapidación, as Pope Francis would say, and technological, digital and cultural innovations, presents young people with unprecedented challenges. Academic pressure, the weight of the social media, which occupy - or rather, usurp - much of our young people's lives, the phenomenon of cyberbullying, which reaps victims not only psychologically but also physically, with sometimes tragic outcomes, and uncertainty about the future profoundly affect their mental health. It is therefore urgent to develop educational strategies that integrate emotional support with schooling.

However, I would like to add that an integral formation cannot ignore the spiritual dimension. As Pope Francis reminds us: 'We cannot keep from the new generations the truths that give meaning to life'. I urge, therefore, especially in our Catholic schools, that spiritual formation has its proper place within the educational pathway: academic, physical, mental and emotional growth takes place within a horizon of meaning that finds in Christ the rock on which to build and educate the new generations. Otherwise, we would risk building on sand.

A particularly appreciable aspect of this text is the repeated reference to the **Global Compact on Education**, launched by Pope Francis as an invitation to rethink education in a communitarian and solidarity-based key. The Pact is not just an abstract idea, but a concrete call to join forces among families, schools, institutions and civil society to form people who are aware, responsible and capable of building a more just and fraternal world. This perspective is an important sign of the urgency of an educational alliance in which no one is discarded or left alone and in which knowledge is always at the service of the integral growth of the person.

We have in our hands a guide for educators, parents and school operators, offering concrete tools to promote emotional well-being in schools. I hope that we do not limit ourselves to analysing reality or collecting data, but build more sensitive educational communities, capable of listening, understanding and acting for the good of young people.

In thanking the OIEC, which once again stimulates us in our educational mission, and all educators for the dedication with which they offer the best of their energies to this great mission, I impart my blessing on all.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ■

# 360° Education



The meeting, attended by educators from all over the world, took place in Budapest from 10 to 14 March 2025. The aim was to continue to consolidate the fruits of the previous Congress, held in 2019 in Chile, and to face new challenges: the **Global Compact on Education**, the Calasanz Movement, Non-Formal Education and Social Action, the Network of Parishes and Calasanz Identity.

The meeting aimed to promote 'full-time schooling', harmonising integral education, evangelisation and social change within the overall framework of the **Global Compact on Education**. Five experts offered the theoretical framework for the Congress, focusing on the challenges of current education systems, artificial intelligence and the mission of schooling through integral education, evangelisation and social change. Two afternoons were also devoted to workshops focusing on the narrative offered by the **Global Compact on Education**. The proposal was to begin work during the congress that will continue into the future and ultimately provide pathways for implementing the different dimensions in the Scholastic schools.

Among the invited experts, Prof. Carina Rossa from the LUMSA University gave a lecture on 'A look at the school mission from the perspective of social change', in which she emphasised Pope Francis' leadership in his love for schools and his concern: 'to change the world, we must change education'. Young people want to undertake projects of profound cultural change that provoke transformations at a global and local level and, in this sense, we approach reality from a complex and systemic perspective, seeking solutions to overcome the uncertainty that characterises the present. It is not so much a question of 'provoking' a revolution as of initiating a process of metamorphosis. Education must embrace the human and social complexity in which we live and must find within itself the strength to change this situation. The regeneration of education, as Morin says, will come from within, which is why it is important to research and read the new

experiences generated by the **Global Compact on Education**.

In his closing speech, Father General Pedro Aguado expressed his gratitude for the work done over the past few days. "We are diverse and try to give our children the best we can. We offer a variety of activities, but Calasanz is always present. Enjoy being a gift from God for the children," he explained in his speech. We have a good project on our hands, he emphasised, and the shared practices identified with the most vulnerable are exciting. The Calasanz charism vibrates in every corner of the Pious Schools, and encounters like these are necessary. The charism is bigger than ourselves, which is why it can transform us and we must continue to discover it. Children still need educators who believe in them, because from there we can support them so that they become people capable of transforming the world. I cannot think of a more exciting and innovative task, Father General concluded with these words.

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Carina Rossa ■

## VISITS TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL PACT



Every month the Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education** receives numerous visits from people from all over the world, who want to learn about the Education Compact, to inform about their activities, to do studies on the Education Compact, or just to say hello.

Among the visits received in recent months were those of Prof. Gerarl Cattaro from Fordham University in New York; Prof. David Macek from the Czech Republic; Prof. Ana Risco Lazzaro, Prof. Facultad de Magisterio y Ciencias de la Educación - Universidad Católica de Valencia (Spain); Dr Gabriela Mantoani, from the group 'Cien poetas por la Paz' from Argentina; a group of students from LUMSA University who received a lecture on the **Global Compact on Education** from their lecturer Prof. Fr. Ezio Lorenzo Bono; Prof. Rodrigo Martinez of CELAM; David Lavin of Ed Tech Advisors; Odino Faccia and the managers of the Palm Group; José María Del Corral President and World Director of the Pontifical Scholas Occurrentes; Prof. Isabel Margarida Duarte of the University of Porto (Portugal). Thank you all for the pleasant visit. ■

## EDUCATION ON THE PATH OF HOPE



Juan Antonio Ojeda y Hervé Lecomte, miembros de la OIEC

OIEC Secretary General Hervé Lecomte and Project Director Juan Antonio Ojeda reflect on the development of the **Global Compact on Education** proposed by Pope Francis: "It is an opportunity for all of us to take up education again and put it on the path of hope."

The International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC) has among its objectives to live the mission of the Church by promoting a Catholic-inspired educational project in the world. In a visit to the Vatican media, its Secretary General, Hervé Lecomte, and Project Director, Juan Antonio Ojeda, shared the current work, challenges and tasks they are developing for the implementation of the **Global Compact on Education** proposed by Pope Francis.

The Secretary General of OIEC, Hervé Lecomte, explained in an interview with the Nota Ecclesial podcast of Vatican Radio and Vatican News that "the International Office of Catholic Schools is present in 110 countries around the world, representing more than 210,000 schools for 68 million students with the aim of working towards the Church's mission for Catholic schools.

The first and most important thing,' Lecomte said, 'is to work on the development of the **Global Compact on Education**, that is, to work with the Vatican so that the Pope's wonderful texts can enter every school in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity that exists. On the main challenges for Catholic education, he notes that the first is 'the concern for the mental health of children who are not in good health and with the world very difficult, with war, with many things we can feel, it is important that we can work for them'.

"The second, with artificial intelligence, we can see an incredible change in the evolution of education. We also have to work to help children work with AI, to help teachers adapt those who do the courses to take a little more time with them," insisting however with the " **Global Compact on Education** to put the person at the centre. It is a huge challenge'.

For his part, Juan Antonio Ojeda, OIEC project director, also believes that in the Jubilee year, the **Global Compact on Education** "is an opportunity for all of us to take up education again and put it on the path of hope. Hope tells us that a new education is possible, but to do it we have to get out of our comfort zone. It is clear that the education we have been providing has become obsolete, often anchored in the past, and must be updated and respond to the challenges and needs of today'.

To this end, the *International Catholic Education Office* in collaboration with the *Dicastery for Culture and Education*, among others, is proposing "a document entitled 'Exodus, Conversion, Hope', which invites

schools, educational communities, educational and social agents of the municipality to set out, to go out to meet others, to learn from each other, to unite wills and efforts, to add common projects, and for this it is basic and fundamental to convert individually and communally".

Ojeda also recalls that 'the Pope insisted that in order to generate a more habitable world and take care of the common home, it is basic and necessary to change our habits of consumption, production, etc., because if we want to generate a new education that reaches everyone, it is necessary to change our being, our way of thinking in a more critical way, etc., our way of relating to one another, more empathetic and compassionate, to collaborate together and not remain in the mere lucubration of beautiful things, but to move on to action'. Regarding the initiatives that OIEC is carrying out to promote peace through education, the Secretary General said that "projects on this theme appeal to young people. At OIEC, for four years we have been organising a project called *Planet Fraternity*, which has been developed in more than 34 countries, with 5,000 students working on a theme that allows them to discover other countries, another culture, and it works very well. At the end of March, we launched a project called *Mediterranean Rally*, around the Mediterranean, to promote projects carried out by children around the Mediterranean on the theme of peace.

The OIEC is recognised as an international Catholic organisation by the Holy See. It works in close collaboration with the Dicastery for Culture and Education. It also has consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC, Geneva and New York), UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

Johan Pacheco - Vatican City

From:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/es/iglesia/news/2025-04/oficina-internacional-de-la-educacion-católica-en-camino-de-esp.html>

## OIEC MEETS THE PREFECT OF DCE



On 7 April 2025, OIEC Secretary General Hervé Lecomte and Project Director Juan Antonio Ojeda met with the Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, to whom they outlined their organisation's most recent activities and renewed their commitment to collaboration with the Dicastery. The Cardinal Prefect praised the great work done by the OIEC for Catholic education and the collaboration with the DCE.

# COMMUNITY CAPABLE OF SOWING THE FUTURE

## SPEECH BY HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL JOSÉ TOLENTINO DE MENDONÇA ON THE OCCASION OF THE PUBLIC OPENING OF THE SUMMA EXHIBITION SCIENTIA UNIVERSITAS MUNDUS MAGISTRI ALUMNI

29 April 2024

Ladies and gentlemen, friends of the university world,

In these sad days of the death of our beloved Holy Father, and in this situation of a vacant See, it is not possible for me to be physically present at this important event, which I very much wanted to attend. Even so, I would like to make myself present with this brief message in praise of this initiative.

I want to thank you for inviting me to speak on this significant day, which celebrates, through the SUMMA exhibition, not only the centenary of the International Federation of Catholic Universities, but also the living and profound legacy of the late Pope Francis in the field of education.

The exhibition that we are inaugurating today is not simply a journey through the history of universities, nor a tribute to the past: it is a living testimony to the 'spirit' that has animated the idea of the university from its very origins. An idea that is deeply rooted in the very heart of the Church, mother and teacher, which in the Middle Ages gave impetus to the birth of the first universities, realising that the search for truth, the dignity of man, the autonomy of thought and the building of a community of knowledge were inseparable elements, and never in contradiction with the knowledge of faith, indeed they were its essential lymph.

At this delicate time of the sede vacante, we feel an even stronger sense of responsibility for the legacy that Pope Francis leaves us. During his magisterium, he has shone a new light on education as a transformative force in society. He has delivered hundreds of speeches on education, culminating in the launch of the **Global Compact on Education**, in which he called for 'putting the human person back at the centre', weaving a new intergenerational solidarity and renewing the courage to hope for a more fraternal world.

In this perspective, the SUMMA exhibition takes on an even deeper meaning: it calls us to cherish the 'genius' of the university, but also to renew it. As John Henry Newman reminds us, the university is not just a place for the technical transmission of skills, but the living laboratory where the spirit is cultivated, critical thinking is refined, and the new is imagined. The university, especially the Catholic university, is called upon to be, today more than ever, a 'universidade de esperança': a community capable of sowing the future.

In the Gospel parable of the sower, Jesus teaches us that to bear fruit, the quality of the seed is not enough: the generosity of the sower and the readiness of the soil are also needed. This is also the case for the university: knowledge is not enough, what is needed is the educational courage of one who sows with passion, and a soil, i.e. a society, ready to welcome the seed of hope.



Another powerful image that the Holy Father has left us with regard to education is that of Aeneas who, fleeing from burning Troy, carries his old father Anchises - symbol of tradition - on his shoulders and takes his little son Ascanius, symbol of the future, by the hand (cf. Speech on the **Global Compact on Education** of 1 June 2022). This is also the idea of the university: knowing how to treasure the richness of the past, always looking towards the future.

In our time, marked by extraordinary technological potential and at the same time by profound anxieties, universities are faced with an unprecedented challenge: that of artificial intelligence. Machines today are capable of processing data and information in

impressive ways. Artificial intelligence must be seen as a formidable ally of the university, research and teaching, as a valuable tool enabling a more personalised and excellent education for all. We must avoid dystopian visions and apocalyptic scenarios that would inhibit us from making full use of this tool, in the knowledge that no artificial intelligence will ever be able to replace the profoundly human capacity to make sense, to seek truth, and to act wisely and responsibly.

At a time when we are in danger of reducing education to mere technique or the production of immediate results, the 'genius' of the university must be defended even more strongly. SUMMA reminds us that the university is and must remain a place where free minds, critical consciences, and hearts open to the beauty and complexity of reality are educated. Where a 'common house' for knowledge is built, not an ivory tower separated from the challenges of the world.

If today's world is experiencing a 'crisis of hope', as the philosopher Byung-Chul Han puts it, then the mission of the Catholic university is even more urgent: to be a laboratory of hope, a place where the art of trust, of dreaming, of resilience is taught, against the temptation of fear and resignation.

The greatest contribution we can offer our time is not only technical expertise, but the ability to form women and men who know how to care for life, the environment, human relations; who know how to transform knowledge into wisdom, knowledge into service.

Sidival Fila's blank canvas, which opens the exhibition, is a powerful metaphor: every generation has the responsibility to rewrite the meaning of the university, interweaving roots and future, memory and innovation. Now it is up to us to rewrite this sense for our troubled times, yes, but also full of promising ferment.

Let this exhibition be, for all of us, an invitation not to betray this spirit. May it be a grateful homage to Pope Francis and his educational dream. And may it be a renewed commitment to build universities that, in an increasingly complex and fragmented world, know how to be 'universities of hope'.

Thank you.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Vatican City, 29 April 2025 ■

# UNIVERSITIES 'HOUSES OF THE HEART'



## XI ASSEMBLY OF THE MARIST INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Rome 28 April - 2 May 2025

Distinguished Marist Brothers, esteemed educators, I should have been with you today on this important occasion of the XI Assembly of the Marist International Network of Higher Education, but with the death of our beloved Pope Francis and the consequent current condition of Sede vacante, it is not possible for me to be present. However, I did not want you to miss this brief reflection of mine, which will be read by His Excellency Archbishop Carlo Maria Polvani, Secretary of the Holy See's Dicastery for Culture and Education.

I would like to begin by expressing my deep gratitude for the invitation you have extended to me to reflect with you on the vital topic of the identity of the Catholic university. Your charism, born of the prophetic vision of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, reminds us that education, even before being a transmission of knowledge, is an act of love. Champagnat taught us that to educate, one must first love, and love concretely.

In the document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, St John Paul II reminds us that the university springs from the very heart of the Church. For this reason, today with you I wish to focus precisely on the heart: heart understood as the centre of the person, but also as the symbolic place where the educational mission takes root. Each one of you, with your presence, your stories, daily difficulties and hopes, is a living sign of this concrete love that builds universities animated by a Christian vision of man and the world.

In *Dilexit nos nos 21* Pope Francis tells us: "Everything is unified in the heart, which can be the seat of love with all its spiritual, psychic and even physical components. Ultimately, if love reigns in it, the person achieves his own identity in a full and luminous way, because every human being was created above all for love, he is made in his deepest fibres to love and to be loved".

The Catholic university, as you well know, is never a neutral or merely functional structure. It is called upon to combine knowledge and service, critical thinking and social responsibility. Therein lies its specificity: it is not just a matter of forming skills, but of forming people in all dimensions, capable of serving, discerning, building bonds. This is also the heart of

the **Global Compact on Education** proposed by Pope Francis: an invitation to build a great alliance between educators, families, institutions and young people, to regenerate the educational commitment starting from fraternity. The ultimate goal of the Educational Pact is to educate everyone to universal brotherhood.

Education is always a collective action. Among the objectives of your Assembly is to establish concrete partnerships between education networks. Educating is always a community act. No one educates alone, as Pope Francis has reminded us several times, certainly inspired by the famous maxim of Paolo Freire: 'No one educates alone. People educate in communion'. The educational community, as your Marist spirituality teaches us, is the fertile soil in which the seed of education can germinate. Today more than ever we need educational alliances to counter the logic of conflict and division that marks our global society. The fratricidal wars that wound nations like Ukraine and Palestine, and the dozens of other countries at war, remind us of the urgency of education for peace, encounter, solidarity.

In his address to the International Federation of Catholic Universities (FIUC) last year, Pope Francis recalled that nearly two thousand Catholic universities around the world constitute a valuable network that can and must collaborate more effectively. In a time of fragmentation, Catholic universities are called to globalise hope and unity, not indifference and fear: "Let us imagine the potential that a more effective and more operational collaboration could develop, strengthening the Catholic university system. In a time of great fragmentation, we must have the audacity to go against the tide, globalising hope, unity and concord, instead of indifference, polarisations and conflicts".

The Pope warns us against an idea of the university as an 'enterprise', subject to the logic of the market and profit. Instead, the Church's universities must embody a different logic: that of openness, generosity, and passion for the truth and the good of humanity. Our institutions cannot become companies of education, but must remain communities of research and life.

Pope Francis also emphasised that the university must promote a culture of peace, addressing its many dimensions in an interdisciplinary way. Peace is not only the absence of conflict, but the daily construction of justice, respect and encounter.

He then strongly urged not to lose the spiritual appetite: not to replace desire with bureaucracy, not to let education become sterile. Catholic universities must be spaces where the desire for meaning, for truth, for vocation is reawakened. The university is called to cherish the intensity of the first love, to make the thirst for beauty, for justice, for God burn: "The philosopher Hannah Arendt, who studied in depth the concept of love in St Augustine, emphasises that that great master described love with the word *appetitus*, understood as inclination, desire, tension-versus. That is why I say to you: do not lose your *appetitus*! Maintain the intensity of your first love! Let Catholic

universities not replace desire with functionalism or bureaucracy'.

Christian educators are the continuators of that paideia that the Church has preserved and renewed throughout the centuries. Today, this task asks us to be both custodians of tradition and prophets of innovation. Without roots we do not grow, but without openness we do not live. The identity of the Catholic university is played out precisely in this fruitful tension between preserving and inventing, between repeating and creating. At an international meeting on the **Global Compact on Education** (1-6-2022) Pope Francis pointed to the figure of Aeneas as a model of an educator, because he knew how to guard the past, represented by his father Anchises, and the future, represented by his son Ascanius.



Marist International Network of  
**HIGHER  
EDUCATION**

Pope Francis leaves us as a legacy an educational model that wants to hold together three fundamental dimensions, which he summarised in the 'triple language' of mind, hands, heart. Content is not enough: what is needed is an integral formation that involves intelligence, practical work and passion. Education is only truly such when these three forces dialogue and harmonise.

A true Catholic university is a community of life and relationships, where social friendship is lived out in the corridors and lecture halls, in study programmes as well as in research. Pope Francis invites us to transform our universities into 'houses of the heart'. This means making space for listening, for caring relationships, for building authentic bonds. The heart is what allows us to hold the fragments together, to build bridges and not walls.

Educating is an act of love and care. It is a patient and silent work, accompanying people without ever imposing itself. Yet, all too often our universities become places of loneliness: many students and lecturers live side by side, but without real relationships. This is why we must ask ourselves: are our universities environments where 'we' are learned? Where one breathes passion for the common good? Are they places of a dialogic education, or are they agencies of a bankable education, as Paulo Freire always reminds us?

Pope Francis, in his speech on 5 November 2024 at the Pontifical Gregorian University, during his meeting with the academic community asked a simple but essential question: 'Why do we do what we do? And for whom?' We cannot allow routine or administrative efficiency to rob us of the meaning of our actions. We need a continuous conversion that keeps us alive, vigilant, capable of interpreting the signs of the times. The greatest risk, especially for those of you who are in charge of the governance of an academic institution, is functionalism, isolation, detachment from reality. We are increasingly locked in our offices, swamped by meetings and bureaucracy, but when was the last time we had lunch in the canteen with the students? That we sat in the back of a classroom to

listen to a lecture? Even these gestures must be part of our educational ministry.

To educate is to help find meaning. Here is another pair of fundamental words: education and meaning. To educate does not only mean to transmit, but above all to accompany towards a vision of life. This is also why it is important to foster networks, common paths, pacts between institutions. The recent synod reminded us of the central role that universities and schools play in the life of the Church today, especially in promoting the role of women, synodality, listening and co-responsibility.

Catholic universities are called to be glocal: capable of opening up to the planetary dimension without losing their local roots. They must be able to speak the language of culture, art, literature, spirituality. Only a culture that engages in dialogue is capable of regenerating meaning. Pope Francis has always invited us to listen to the passing of time, to grasp the signs of the kairos.

The Jubilee of the Holy Year has as its emblematic sign the passing of the holy door, which invites us to reflect on the value of the 'passage', the threshold, the opening. The door is also a strong image for the university: a place of access to the truth, but also of exit towards service. "I am the door", says Jesus: and we can ask ourselves, are our universities doors that lead to the fullness of life? It is said that there are more doors than people in the world: but the problem is not the number of doors, but whether they are open or barred.

As part of the Jubilee year, a big educational week will take place in Rome from 27 October to 2 November. The culminating days will be 30 and 31 October with the setting up of the Education Village, structured in three spatial dimensions, of mind, heart and hands, and 1 November with a concluding Eucharistic celebration in St Peter's Square. We are also counting on a significant presence of your Marist Congregation. It will be an opportunity to meet rectors and academic leaders from all over the world, and to say together that the university is a resource of the future, a laboratory of hope.

The university is a journey. It is a pilgrimage of knowledge. Pope Francis, meeting university students in Lisbon, called them 'social choreographers': women and men called to think up new dances, new languages, new worlds. The university cannot only train to preserve the current system. It must generate justice, inclusion, responsibility.

Knowledge entails responsibility. Without the spiritual dimension, education becomes empty. The Education Pact invites us to embrace the complexity of our time, to care for the common home, to promote an integral ecology, to renew the participation of women and to invest in a more human digital vision.

I conclude with words full of hope from the Holy Father addressed to the students of the Catholic University of Portugal: 'We are not at the end, but at the beginning of a great show. A new dance is about to begin, a new harmony that each of us is called upon to compose with our talents.'

May Saint Marcellin be with you. Thank you for your educational mission, and good work.

## GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION IN TAIWAN



*Fu Jen Catholic University (FJCU), based in New Taipei, Taiwan, is one of the leading Catholic academic institutions in Asia. Originally founded in 1925 in Beijing and reopened in Taiwan in 1961, it is affiliated with the Jesuits and is known for its integration of Chinese culture and the Christian faith. The university offers a wide range of academic programmes and also houses the Fu Jen Catholic University Hospital, which provides advanced medical services and serves as a clinical training centre. From 7-10 April 2025, a delegation from Fu Jen Catholic University and its university hospital visited Palau\* to gain a first-hand understanding of the conditions of higher education and public health in the country. This visit aimed to explore opportunities for collaboration and academic and health exchange between the two institutions.*

*\* Palau is an island nation located in the western Pacific Ocean, consisting of some 340 islands, and is one of the world's youngest and smallest independent republics. A former trust territory administered by the United States, it gained independence in 1994. The capital is Ngerulmud, while the most populous city is Koror. Palau is renowned for its crystal clear waters, coral reefs and marine biodiversity, making it a popular destination for eco-tourism and diving.*

*We reproduce a letter that FJCU Chancellor Francis Yi-Chen Lan wrote to the **Global Compact on Education** Secretariat to convey their activities in the spirit of contributing to the spread of the GCE in Taiwan.*

Dear GCE

A warm greeting from the Fu Jen Catholic University! I am writing to update you on the efforts of Fu Jen Catholic University in contributing to the **Global Compact on Education**. Fu Jen Catholic University and Fu Jen Catholic University Hospital formed a delegation that visited Palau from 7-10 April 2025 to get first-hand experience of the conditions of higher education and public health. With national leaders and educators, we discussed and explored opportunities for educational collaboration between Fu Jen Catholic University (FJCU) and Palau. The Vice President of Palau presented the country's national development strategy, emphasising

the urgent need to cultivate local talent to support sustainable development. One of the critical gaps identified was the lack of qualified professionals in areas such as chemistry and public health, vital areas for strengthening Palau's health system.

Currently, the highest ranked post-secondary institution is Palau Community College (PCC), which only offers associate degree programmes in science. The director of PCC emphasised the importance of expanding academic offerings to include comprehensive degree programmes, particularly in science and public health disciplines. In response to this need, FJCU has committed to supporting higher education in Palau by providing academic training to bridge the gap between degrees through collaborative efforts. This partnership between FJCU and Palau will pave the way for PCC students to pursue a degree at FJCU in Palau, utilising the university's strong academic foundation and expertise.

Although Palau is a small country, it is worth noting that approximately 40 per cent of Palau's population is Catholic. As a Catholic university, FJCU's involvement in this educational mission reflects the values and vision of the **Global Compact on Education**, an initiative encouraged by His Holiness Pope Francis to promote inclusive and holistic education worldwide. This collaboration not only furthers Palau's national development goals, but also exemplifies FJCU's broader commitment to caring for underserved communities and extending educational support to regions with limited resources.

Through this partnership, the FJCU exemplifies its commitment to the advancement of global higher education and to the initiatives promoted by the Department of Culture and Education.

We hope you will find this news pleasing and share it with H.E. Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça. If you have any comments or suggestions on this collaboration, please do not hesitate to let me know. I wish you a blessed Triduum and a Happy Easter!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Francis Yi-Chen Lan  
Rector Fu Jen Catholic University ■

# THE RE-ENCHANTMENT OF EDUCATION



In May, the Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education** of the Dicastery for Culture and Education participated in three training events dedicated to the topic of education.

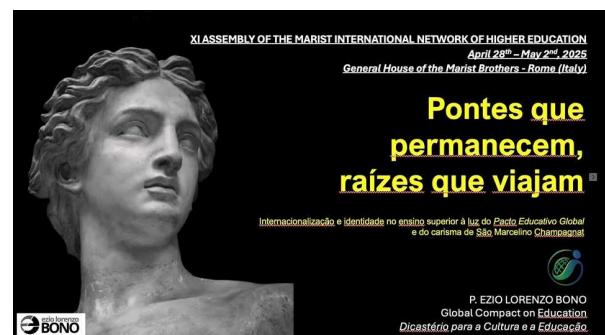
The first took place on 1 May, during the International Assembly of Rectors of Marist Group Universities, hosted at the General Headquarters of the Marist Congregation in EUR, Rome. On that occasion, a communication was presented entitled 'Bridges that remain and roots that travel. Internationalisation and identity in universities in the light of the **Global Compact on Education** and the charism of St Marcellin Champagnat'. The talk looked at a number of educational themes, taking the story and journey of Aeneas from Troy to Latium as its leitmotif.

The second meeting, organised by the National Catechetical Office of the Italian Bishops' Conference, was held on 7 May at the Ergife Palace hotel in Rome. The communication presented, entitled "Educating to the Christian life in the sign of the **Global Compact on Education**", proposed a reinterpretation of the seven objectives of the Educational Pact through the characters of the TV series Mare fuori, used as a narrative thread.

Finally, the third event was organised by Brazil's FTD-Educação and took place in Rio de Janeiro from 13 to 16 May, on the occasion of the 12th INTEGRA Encontro: 'Re-enchantment: hopes and challenges of Catholic educational management'. The communication presented, entitled "Pinocchio and the re-enchantment of education", developed the theme by following the characters from the Adventures of Pinocchio as a symbolic guide in the educational journey. The highlight of the event was the prayer at the Shrine of Christ the Redeemer, with an extraordinary night opening reserved for the participants of the meeting. On that occasion, the statue of Christ was illuminated in blue, to celebrate Catholic education, whose ultimate purpose coincides with that of the Church: evangelisation, that is, accompanying students to the knowledge of Jesus, our true enchantment.

From: <https://www.dce.va/it/interventi/2025/il-reincanto-dell-educazione.html>

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Message from Cardinal J. T. de Mendonça to the young participants of the meeting: ODUCAL - Javeriana

## YOUNG LATINOS BUILDERS OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION



Dear young people, in this time of the Sede Vacante, our hearts turn with gratitude to the recalled Pope Francis, the Pontiff who taught us to dream big and to believe in the transformative power of education. Among the many treasures he bequeathed us, we would like to recall the **Global Compact on Education**: it is not just an academic project, but a seed of the future, a prophecy of hope.

Today this seed is entrusted to you, young people of Latin America, land of bold dreams and tenacious courage. You are the gardeners of this dream, the new sap that can make a humanity capable of encounter, of care, of beauty flourish. As Gabriel García Márquez reminds us in his book *Vivir para contarla*: 'Life is not what one has lived, but what one remembers and how one remembers to tell it'. Your task is to write, with life itself, a story worth telling: a story of bridges and not walls, of embraces and not exclusions, of hope stronger than any fear.

Let yourself be guided by this light. Like the vivid and abundant works of Fernando Botero, which fill the world with forms full of life and wonder, you too fill your existence with colours, generous gestures, courageous choices. Keep your soul as free as the breeze that caresses the marvellous peaks of the Andes, and take with you the freshness of the waters of the Magdalena.

Do not let fear hold you back. Do not let resignation extinguish your light. You are the poets of the new education, the weavers of luminous paths, the sowers of hope that will make the world blossom again, starting with your beautiful Latin American continent.

I accompany you with esteem, affection and prayer. Onward, young people of the **Global Compact on Education** Onward, sowers of light!

Card. José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Vatican City, 29 April 2025 ■

Prologue by Card. De Mendonça to the OIEC dossier on the World Leaders' Summit on Children's Rights

## LOVE AND PROTECT CHILDREN

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AMATE E PROTEGGETE I BAMBINI:  
VERTICE MONDIALE DEI LEADER  
SUI DIRITTI DEI BAMBINI  
Vaticano, 3 febbraio 2025

COSTRUIAMO UN PATTO EDUCATIVO «GLOCALE»  
CHE CONSOLIDI E AMPLIA I DIRITTI DEL BAMBINO

OIEC  
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
DIRECCIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE LA EDUCACIÓN  
DIRECCIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE LA EDUCACIÓN CULTURAL

LUMSA  
UNIVERSITÀ  
EIS  
EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE  
FOR CHILDREN

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The face of a child is the mirror reflecting the humanity of our time. Where a child suffers, it is the dignity of the entire human family that is wounded. Where a child is loved, protected and educated, there the hope of a more just, fraternal and peaceful world blossoms.

The *World Summit of Leaders on the Rights of the Child*, celebrated in the Vatican (3 February 2025), was a moment of light amidst many shadows. It reminded us that children are not numbers or cases to be studied: they are faces, stories, dreams. They are - as the late Pope Francis emphatically stated - 'our children'. This meeting brought together diverse and committed voices who, from every continent, creed and responsibility, expressed the same conviction: there is no peace without justice for children; there is no future without integral care for them.

As the Dicastery for Culture and Education, we welcome with respect and gratitude the testimonies collected here, and assume with renewed commitment the responsibility to promote a **Global Compact on Education** that puts the child at the centre of every cultural and educational project. Pope Francis indicated as the second objective of the **Global Compact on Education** to listen to the voice of children. A pact that does not remain a declaration, but is translated into policies, schools, families and communities capable of welcoming, listening and accompanying the youngest, especially the most fragile and forgotten.

Let this document not just be the memory of an event, but the seed of a transformation. Let every reader feel called to be a voice for the voiceless, a defender of every right, a builder of hope. Because protecting children means guarding the soul of humanity.

Cardinal José Tolentino del Mendonça  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ■

**EDUCATING AND EDUCATING OURSELVES TO WELCOME THE MOST FRAGILE**

A journey between education of prisoners, the homeless, migrants and learning in old age

"Open to welcome" is the fifth objective of the **Global Compact on Education**: "Educate and educate ourselves to welcome, opening ourselves to the most vulnerable and marginalised". But what does it mean, concretely, to be open to the most fragile? In a world marked by inequalities and new forms of exclusion, the education of the most vulnerable becomes a privileged way to build a more humane and supportive society.

In this reflection we focus on four emblematic areas of 'special' education: prisoners, the homeless, migrants and the elderly. In each of these contexts, educating means believing in each person's potential for redemption and their ability to contribute to the common good.

**1. Education in prison**

To be effective, punishment cannot be limited to the deprivation of liberty: it must become an opportunity for inner and social change. Every prisoner, even the most guilty, carries with him a wounded history, but one that is not without value. Education in prison is a delicate and profound process that requires time, skills and trust. It is not enough to correct behaviour: the person must be rebuilt. Study, art, spirituality, listening and reintegration paths become tools for rebirth.

A prison that educates is a prison that reduces reoffending and returns new people to society. It has been proven that those who have been able to study in prison are unlikely to return to crime. The challenge is cultural: to overcome the idea of punishment as revenge and invest it with an educational sense, promoting alternative measures, dignified places, meaningful relationships and paths of awareness.

**2. Education of the homeless**

Educating those living in extreme marginality is first and foremost an act of profound humanity. Those who live on the streets often bring with them trauma, loneliness and failure. In these cases, education is not just the transmission of knowledge, but the rediscovery of one's dignity and the meaning of life.

Itinerant and flexible educational projects show that it is possible to accompany these people according to their rhythms and needs. The educator becomes a fellow traveller, a witness of hope.

Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed, resilience, and Sen and Nussbaum's capability theory offer us tools to support pathways that activate the inner resources even of those on the margins.

**3. Adult Migrant Education**

In a world marked by complex migrations, educating migrants has become a matter of urgency. Educating a migrant means welcoming him, recognising him, valuing him. Language teaching is only the beginning: we need civic,



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intercultural and labour training, based on listening to personal history. Many migrants possess titles and skills that remain invisible. It is necessary to overcome these barriers with the recognition of prior learning and customised pathways.

The shift from integration to inclusion is decisive: it is not just a matter of adapting migrants to society, but of transforming society into a more welcoming space for all.

The most advanced experiences show that the customisation of pathways, the training of practitioners and the involvement of local communities are decisive for genuine inclusion.

**4. Education in old age**

The increase in life expectancy has transformed the meaning of old age: growing old is no longer a retreat, but an opportunity. Learning in old age is possible and beneficial: for the mind, heart and relationships.

The theories of *andragogy*, *brain plasticity* and *socio-emotional selectivity* show that even older people can learn if the teaching is meaningful and related to their experience. Universities of the Third Age, autobiographical projects and intergenerational activities are effective examples of *lifelong learning*.

Learning at 80 is an act of resistance to marginalisation and an affirmation of one's humanity. It means feeling part of the community, still having something to say, to discover, to give. Educating the elderly means educating all of us not to fear the passing of time, to value experience and to cultivate hope even in the last chapters of life.

**In conclusion**

Educating to welcome means humanising education and humanising everyone: educators and those being educated. Opening oneself to the most vulnerable is a pedagogical, spiritual, political - and profoundly human - act. Every person has the right to learn, to tell his or her story, and to rebuild. Education is an act of trust in the capacity of the other to change, and in the possibility of the community to regenerate itself by welcoming.

As Pope Francis reminds us, '*educating is an act of hope*'; and I would add that it is especially so when we educate those in society who are most vulnerable.



DICASTERIUM

DE CULTURA ET EDUCATIONE

Communiqué of the Dicastery for Culture and Education on the celebration of the

## JUBILEE OF THE EDUCATIONAL WORLD

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The Catholic Church is celebrating the 25th Jubilee in history, which the Holy Father Francis has chosen to place under the theme 'Pilgrims of Hope'.

The Holy Year is also organised through a calendar of major events, including **the Jubilee of the Educational World**, which will take place from 27 October to 2 November 2025.

On Saturday 1 November, the Solemnity of All Saints' Day, we will meet in St Peter's Square in Rome to celebrate the Eucharist together. We want to thank the Lord for the commitment of all those who have the future of the young generations at heart (families, educators, institutions...) and send out a powerful appeal for education to be a creator of fraternity, peace, justice.

It will be the culmination of many projects and initiatives that, everywhere in the world, already animate places of education, starting with schools and universities, Catholic and non-Catholic. In these vast communities, millions of people, from different cultures, are engaged in building their own life project: *Education is truly an act of Hope!*

During the week, pilgrims will be invited to **pass through the Holy Door** and to participate in numerous initiatives. On Thursday 30 and Friday 31 October, the programme will be structured around the *three languages of education*, proposed by Pope Francis:

- o the *language of the mind*, declined in **structured moments of speaking and thinking** around the great challenges of education,
- o the *language of hands*, through the **Education Village**, a physical space in which to present experiences and new models with a view to mutual contamination;
- o the *language of the heart*, a **spiritual proposal** and experience of interiority so that education can introduce us into total reality.

The calendar will be enriched by further proposals, to be elaborated in dialogue with the Church's teaching on education: the conciliar Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* (whose 60th anniversary will be celebrated during the Jubilee), the apostolic Constitutions *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (whose 35th anniversary is celebrated) and *Veritatis Gaudium*, the recent **Global Compact on Education and Culture**.

Updates will be made available from time to time on the websites of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ([www.dce.va](http://www.dce.va)) and Jubilee ([www.iubilaeum2025.va](http://www.iubilaeum2025.va)).



Video message from His Eminence J.T. De Mendonça, at the National Education Congress in East Timor

## EDUCATIONAL ACTION: THE MYSTICISM OF BEING TOGETHER



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with great joy that I extend this greeting to all participants in the National Congress on Education, which is taking place in the hall on the occasion of the Centenary of the Foundation and the 150th anniversary of the religious congregations that animate this mission: the Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament and of the Mother of God and the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

This congress is a profound celebration of faith, culture and commitment to the educational mission. The Naroman Esperanza Educational Centre, from childhood to higher education, is a symbol of an evangelising mission that forms well-rounded individuals, rooted in Timorese culture and prepared to face the challenges of the future — the strong and impactful challenges of today's world.

The pedagogy of the family of Nazareth, lived in a family atmosphere of love, exchange, patience, collaboration and help, continues to inspire this formative journey. Mary and Joseph accompanied Jesus with tenderness, listening and a deep wisdom of the heart, teaching him to grow in stature

and grace. May this model of the Holy Family of Nazareth be a beacon for your mission.

The literature and history of East Timor — and I remember that Portuguese man who became Timorese, the anthropologist Ruicinati, who I heard say: 'Timor, love. Timor rhymes with amor' — illuminate your path. But not only Ruicinati: all the literature and history of East Timor illuminate your path.

We remember the poems of Bórsia da Costa who, with simple and intense words, evoked the resilience, courage and dedication of the Timorese nation and its people. Words have the power to preserve memory and keep the light of hope alive. Timorese culture, made up of song, dance, poetry and life, is also a way of igniting and multiplying sparks of freedom, of desire for peace, of education for all, lived and realised.

In the Dalak poem, Bórsia da Costa invokes unity with the voice of the earth and the spirit and writes: 'Converging streams become rivers, United fears, let us raise our land.'

In Timorese literature, education is frequently represented as a key element, a cornerstone — and it could not be otherwise — in the construction of national identity and identity, as well as in



individual and social growth. Other important Timorese authors, such as Luís Cardoso and Fernando Silva, have explored the theme of education in their writings, linking it to the struggle for independence and the need to preserve local culture.

May these words — the words of your poets, of those who dream of Timor, who gather culture and tradition, who listen to the vernacular beat of the heart and translate it into modernity, innovation and the future — may this social and cultural poetry of Timorese culture serve as inspiration. Education liberates, strips away, breaks the chains of oppression and sows the hope necessary for a nation to grow together.

We need the mystique of being together, the mystique of community. And educational action is also this: a laboratory for forming a sense of community. Because we need each other. No one is saved alone.

This congress is fully in line with the spirit of Pope Francis' **Global Compact on Education**: an invitation to put the human person at the centre, to listen to young people, to care for the most vulnerable, to value the family and to protect our common home, with a renewed awareness of the importance of ecology.

The new Pope Leo XIV is also a blessing of hope for the contemporary Church. He, who has such a strong and marked experience as an educator in his biography, draws attention to the role of the educator as a true ministry, reminding us how much the Church's evangelising mission also passes through the valuing and activation of educators.

I pray that this meeting will be a space for listening, dialogue and renewed hope, responding to all the dreams you have placed in this congress — and that it may surprise you. May it go beyond.

May educators, families and young people in Timor, enriched by a history of faith and culture, be dreamers of peace, development and the future. Receive my blessing and the assurance of my spiritual communion with all of you.

Timor, amor. ■

International Conference on Education in East Timor

## WEAVING HOPE

The international conference "Weaving Hope: Together for an Education that Inspires and Transforms," organised by the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and the Handmaids of the Eucharist and of the Mother of God, was held in Lauala, Ermera (East Timor) from 20 to 22 June 2025.

More than 200 participants, including several members of various congregations, experienced a meeting marked by synodality, educational commitment and the desire to weave networks in the service of the common good. In a participatory dynamic, they reflected on how to build together an educational network that responds to the challenges of the country and embodies the values of the **Global Compact on Education**.

In her opening speech, M. Montserrat del Pozo, Superior General of the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, emphasised that "educating is not repeating content, but sowing humanity, weaving communities and opening paths to the future," recalling that the Pact is an alliance to build education as a space for encounter, listening and shared commitment.

For her part, M. Irene Labraga, Superior General of the Handmaids of the Most Holy Eucharist and of the Mother of God, emphasised with emotion that "communion multiplies possibilities" and that this common project stems from the desire to work together to transform reality through education.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, sent an inspiring video message in which he recalled that this congress is a living manifestation of the **Global Compact on Education**, a call to "put the person at the centre, to care for the most vulnerable, to value the family and to protect our common home." With poetic sensitivity, he evoked Timorese culture by comparing it to a flow of hope: 'Timor rhymes with amor'.

One of the inspiring moments was the participation of Professor Ron Berger, academic director of EL Education (USA), who gave lectures and a practical workshop on the importance of rigorous, committed and transformative education. He encouraged teachers to create learning environments in which every student can develop their full potential and take pride in a job well done. The conference culminated with the blessing of the new Naroman Esperansa University Institute (IUNE) and early childhood education centre, presided over by Cardinal Virgílio do Carmo da Silva, SDB.

Weaving Hope was an experience of communion that ignited the desire to build an educational network with a soul, deeply rooted in the Timorese people and open to the future.

# VI UNISERVITATE GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM

Service-Learning in a Fragile World: Universities Nourishing Peace and Hope  
Germany, 6-7 November 2025



In a world grappling with deep tensions and difficulties, it is urgent to continue viewing education as an act of courage and hope that builds peace, and solidarity service-learning (SSL) is a pedagogy that makes that possible.

Uniservitatem is a global programme for SSL promotion in Catholic Higher Education Institutions. As part of its activities, the VI Global Symposium will be held on 6th and 7th November 2025 under the title Service-Learning in a Fragile World: Universities Nourishing Peace and Hope.

The title addresses the challenges universities face in a world of conflict, confrontation, and social polarization. In this context, education in general, and SSL in particular, can actively engage in the construction of the polis. Pope Leo XIV greeted us at his first appearance, following Jesus: 'Peace be with you' (Vatican, May 2025). Based on encounter, reflection, and engaged research, this academic and fraternal event is intended to be an experience of building peace and hope.

Focusing on the three objectives of Uniservitatem global network (research, networking and institutionalization), the VI Symposium will promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue through solidarity service-learning. There will be three types of activities: panel discussions; concurrent sessions on research; and concurrent sessions on practical experiences inspired by the **Global Compact on Education**, aiming to contribute to joining hands, head and heart, as Pope Francis has taught us.

Through encounter, reflection and committed research, this academic and fraternal event aims to be an experience of building peace and hope. Its objectives are:

- Continue a cycle of Symposia of the Uniservitatem global network launched in 2020 as a multicultural, "polyhedral" and plural space based on the contributions of the pedagogical approach of solidarity service-learning to holistic education in Higher Education.
- Explore SSL institutionalization models and processes in Catholic Higher Education to strengthen its identity and mission and build peace and hope in a fragile world.
- Analyze the spirituality of service and examine the connections between the spiritual dimension and the SSL institutionalization processes in Higher Education as a whole.
- Reinforce the dialogue among the SSL approach, the **Global Compact on Education** and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on the good practices in Catholic Higher Education Institutions.
- Facilitate the exchange of views on university community engagement and solidarity service-learning among specialists, university authorities, researchers, faculty members and students of Higher Education Institutions with their community partners from diverse cultural contexts worldwide
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As part of the Symposium, and keeping in mind the objectives of the global network, there will also be a meeting of students (October); a meeting of regional hubs (5th November, optional); and a meeting of rectors (6th November).

The event is jointly organized by Uniservitatem (Porticus + CLAYSS) and the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. It will be held in a hybrid modality at a global level: onsite for members of the regional hub of Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East (CEE&ME) and Asia and Oceania (A&O), and online for those who wish to participate from other regions of the world.

The 6th Symposium is aimed at: Institutions that are members of the Uniservitatem global network; Catholic institutions of higher education in general; Public and private universities and other institutions of higher education in general; Networks related to AYSS and/or higher education and civil society organisations or public bodies.

For more information, see:  
Español: <https://www.uniservitatem.org/es/simposio-global-uniservitatem/vi-simposio-global-uniservitatem/>  
English: <https://www.uniservitatem.org/symposium-uniservitatem/vi-global-symposium-uniservitatem/> ■

The GCE themes in the DCE Photo Competition

## SPORT IN MOTION



The winners of the "Sport in Motion" photography competition, promoted by the Dicastery for Culture and Education and aimed at young people under the age of 25, which took place between November 2024 and April 2025, have been announced. The overall aim of the competition was to bring together three words that are not always closely related: youth, art and sport. For the same reason, the competition aims to reinterpret the challenges of sport today through the eyes of young people, who have a clearer 'view of hope'.

The competition received 49 valid entries, representing the five continents, for a total of 81 photos in the competition. The photos had to focus on five themes (taken from the **Global Compact on Education** and the theme of the Jubilee): sport and disability, sport and family, sport and ecology, sport and politics, sport and hope.

For each category, the organisation's jury selected three winning photos. And from the 15 winning photos (3 for each category), the first winning photo of the competition was chosen.

The first winner is Isaac Burjiwa, who competed in the 'sport and politics' category with a photo entitled 'BLOOM – Where the War Fails'. His photo (shown in this article) was taken in the neighbourhood of Goma (North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo) and shows children playing football with a makeshift ball made of plastic bags. As the author himself describes in the caption of the photo, 'the joy of these children turns into hope. Through their simple gestures, these children remind us that, amid the chaos, something is still growing: an invisible but very real light. Where war fails, childhood flourishes in peace, unity and humanity.'

You can see all 15 winning photos at the following link:

<https://www.dce.va/it/news/2025/vincitori-e-vincitrici-del-concorso-di-fotografia.html>

The OIEC at the forefront with the GCE  
**THE OIEC'S COMMITMENT TO  
EVANGELISING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**



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On 30 June 2025, Hervé Lecomte and Fr. Juan Antonio Ojeda of the OIEC met with His Eminence Cardinal J.T. De Mendonça at the Dicastery for Culture and Education to coordinate and further the work promoted by the OIEC. Among other topics discussed were: International Catholic Education Day; Artificial Intelligence and its implementation in Catholic schools through the "Catholic Schools 5.0" project; health and emotional education in Catholic schools. 0"; the health and emotional education of children, adolescents and young people; children's rights and their promotion and improvement in the face of their serious deterioration; actions around peace, building bridges and extending the culture of encounter (Peace in the Mediterranean, "Planet Fraternity" Project, etc.); the inner conversion of people and their relationship with the Church; the role of the Church in the development of a culture of peace and peace. ); the inner conversion of people and institutions to build with courage, consistency and success the objectives of the **"Glocal" Compact on Education**; the celebration of the 60th anniversary of *Gravissimum educationis*



in terms of the Pact; the organisation of the Jubilee of Education; etc. These are many themes that demonstrate the OIEC's strong commitment to building the Pact and improving education and evangelisation in Catholic schools, with a view to transforming lives and contexts. ■

# EDUCATING IS REVEALING THE HIDDEN BEAUTY IN HUMAN BEINGS

A theme that is echoed in the **Global Compact on Education** promoted by Pope Francis is education through art and beauty. The recently deceased Pope emphasised on several occasions that educating means leading people to beauty. Starting from this integral vision of education, I propose reading art – and in particular archaeology and sculpture – as keys to a deeper understanding of the educational task as the unveiling of the beauty hidden in human beings. Understanding education as the unveiling of beauty evokes the very root of the term truth (in Greek *a-letheia*), that is, to unveil, to remove the veil, to bring out what was hidden. Educating, in this perspective, is a gesture of openness and revelation. It is unveiling – not creating from nothing – the beauty that is already present, albeit buried, forgotten, hidden. Art offers a privileged language to describe this educational process: from the patience of the sculptor who frees the form from the marble, to the archaeologist who uncovers and interprets the traces of the past, the educator presents himself as the one who brings out the invisible, the one who believes that every person hides within themselves a beauty worthy of coming to light. There are similarities between the act of education and the artistic gesture. In a recent book (*Metafore di archeologia*, Ed. Aracne, Rome, 2025), Enrico Proietti observes that the archaeologist does not construct or invent: he searches, questions, excavates with respect and, above all, does not impose preconceived forms, but rather allows them to emerge. Today, however, we move within a more complex vision of reality, which nevertheless does not renounce a tension towards unity and meaning. In this complexity, art emerges not only as a didactic tool, but as a true form of sensitive, embodied, holistic knowledge. Art unites perception and intuition, physicality and spirit, emotion and thought, and brings us directly to the question of truth. It allows itself to be guided by the signs of the past, by the hidden stratification of time, which it patiently brings to light. Its gaze is turned towards the past but projected towards the future: it knows that history is not an immobile reality, but something in constant motion. In the same way, when educators truly listen to others,



they do not mould them according to an abstract ideal model, but work to unearth what is already there, even if it is not visible, hidden under rubble and conditioning. Educating, after all, is an archaeological gesture: it is an *educere*, that is, a 'bringing out' – not an 'imposing from outside'. The same is true of sculpture: Michelangelo said that the statue is already in the block of marble and that the artist does nothing more than free it from the superfluous. The educator, too, through his inner eyes, can see before others what a person can become. This is why Pope Francis often repeated that educating is an act of hope. In the past, truth (*verum*) or goodness (*bonum*) were considered the main paths to access reality. Today, perhaps, it is beauty (*pulchrum*) that appears to be the most viable door, the one that seduces, invites and opens without imposing itself. But these three dimensions – *verum*, *bonum*, *pulchrum* – cannot be separated. What is profoundly true cannot be inhuman or ugly; what is good always possesses a form of intrinsic beauty. Educating through art, then, is not a mere embellishment of the educational process, but an integral act of accessing the truth of the human being. Archaeology is not only the science of finds, but the art of interpretation: a humble, never definitive art that moves between what has been lost and what can still be told. Here, then, is the profound link between archaeology, philosophy and anthropology. From this perspective, educating means continually interpreting the mystery of humanity. Art, like archaeology, teaches us not to be satisfied with evidence, but to inhabit complexity, to pause before the enigma, to walk in the footsteps left by others. And this is, perhaps, the highest educational task of our time. In conclusion, educating through art does not simply mean using art as a tool, but adopting an artistic attitude: a sensitive gaze, a contemplative posture, a creative gesture. The educator is not a training technician or a transmitter of content, but a seeker of meaning, an interpreter of traces, a liberator of hidden forms. Like the archaeologist, they dig delicately, preserve what they find, and connect fragments. Like the sculptor, they do not add, but remove, to reveal what is already there.

Educational archaeology is not limited to digging into memory or individual potential. It also draws on another field of reflection that I find fundamental: that of Deep Pedagogy. From this perspective, educating means going to the heart of the human being, questioning fundamental values, the big questions of meaning, the desire for fulfilment and significance. The pre-Socratic philosophers sought the arché, the first principle that explains the world, which they identified with a simple unity, an intelligible foundation (such as fire, water, presenting itself as the most accessible door, the one that seduces, invites and opens without imposing itself. But these three dimensions – verum, bonum, pulchrum – cannot be separated. What is profoundly true cannot be inhuman or ugly; what is good always possesses a form of intrinsic beauty. Educating through art, then, is not a way of embellishing the educational process, but an integral act of accessing the truth of the human being. The archaeologist does not have before him a truth that is already given, clear and orderly, but a field strewn with fragile signs, fragments to be preserved and interpreted. Culture, history and art: all disciplines that do not merely record reality, but seek, dig, question, preserve and interpret traces. Educators are also called to this same task: to read the signs left by others, to intuit what is not said, to grasp the meaning behind gestures, silence and desire. As the Book of Genesis tells us, when the Creator formed man, he was enchanted because he saw that he was very beautiful. We too, as educators, are not called to create man, but to reveal – with wonder and respect – the beauty that has always belonged to him.

Fr. Ezio Lorenzo Bono, CSF  
Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education** ■

## VISITS TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE GLOBAL EDUCATION PACT

In June 2025, the Secretariat of the **Global Compact on Education** welcomed visitors who wanted to learn about the Compact, share information about their educational activities, conduct research on the **Global Compact on Education**, or simply say hello. Among the visitors we welcomed in June 2025 were:

Fra' Stefano Turani, Director of the S. Famiglia School in Marracuene (Mozambique); Prof. Simone Cristine, professor of law at the University of Juiz de Fora (Brazil); Fr. Fausto Ghirardelli and Fr. Aurelio Fratus of the CSF; Hervé Lacomte and H. Juan Antonio Ojeda of the OIEC; Antonio Roura, delegate for Education of the Spanish Episcopal Conference; Egido Maggioni and Anna Grazia Greco of ispromay. Thank you all. ■

## Meeting with the 'Institut Pacte Educatif Africain' THE AFRICAN EDUCATION PACT TO RENEW EDUCATION IN AFRICA



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His Eminence Antoine Cardinal Kambanda, President of the Commission, Monsignor Jacques Assanvo Ahiwa, Vice-President, and Professor Jean-Paul Niyigena, members of the Commission for Relations with Episcopal Conferences and Religious Congregations for the **African Education Pact**, met on 26 June 2025 with His Excellency Monsignor Carlo Maria Polvani, Secretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, accompanied by Father Ezio Lorenzo Bono of the Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education** and Dr Nicola Tomasoni of the *Gravissimum Educationis* Foundation.

At this meeting, the African delegation shared information on the work in progress and on the upcoming African congress on Catholic education. They illustrated the activities of the "Institut Pacte Educatif Africain," an organisation of the International Foundation Religions and Society. Its mission is to promote and implement the **African Education Pact**, which is an offshoot of Pope Francis' **Global Compact on Education**. Its goal is to support the network of Catholic schools in Africa, as well as other sectors of education, such as youth movements, in order to put the guidelines of the Pact into practice.

The Institute was officially launched in Kigali, Rwanda, in December 2024 and is chaired by Cardinal Antoine Kambanda. One of the Institute's first activities was a workshop to identify needs, which brought together the national coordinators of the **African Education Pact** and experts from partner universities.

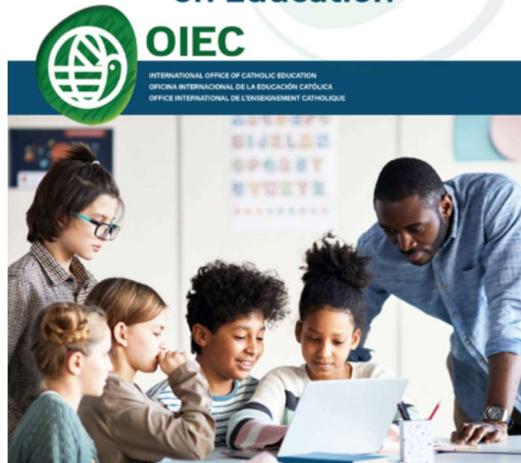
The **African Education Pact** aims to renew education in Africa by emphasising respect for the individual and nature and promoting a more united future. This Institute is a key player in the implementation of a renewed education pact for Africa, in close collaboration with the continent's educational and religious institutions. ■

# Catholic Education 5.0

Putting people at the centre of technological innovation with the **Global Education Pact**

## Catholic Education 5.0

Putting people at the heart of technological innovation with the **Global Compact on Education**



We are living in a time of change. Never before have technological advances transformed our societies, our lifestyles, our ways of learning and relating to one another so rapidly. The emergence of artificial intelligence in all areas of human existence is forcing us to rethink the mission of education. In this constantly evolving context, Catholic schools are called to stand at a crossroads: not to undergo change, but to illuminate it, humanise it and give it meaning.

Catholic Education 5.0 aims to be a response to this call of history. It is an ambitious project: to integrate technological advances without renouncing our primary vocation of accompanying every young person on their journey of human, spiritual and intellectual growth. Far from giving in to naive enthusiasm or paralysing fear, we are invited to make a calm discernment: to welcome the tool without becoming slaves to it, to use innovation to better serve humanity and to always put the intelligence of the heart at the centre.

Artificial intelligence is neither good nor bad in itself. It all depends on how we use it and the intention that guides us. When used wisely, it can become a valuable ally for teachers, offering them resources, facilitating the adaptation of teaching programmes to the specific needs of each student and freeing up time for educational relationships.

But it also carries risks: standardisation of knowledge, invisible biases in algorithms, loss of critical thinking, massive collection of personal data, and new forms of inequality.

Faced with these challenges, the educational mission of Catholic schools remains unchanged: it is always to awaken in young people an awareness of their dignity as children of God, of their vocation to become

peacemakers, seekers of truth and builders of fraternity.

It is in this spirit that this book is structured. We propose first of all to reflect on how AI can become an ally of educational work: to teach better, to include more, to personalise pathways without sacrificing relationships.

We will then explore how to train students to become free, critical and responsible users of these technologies, aware of possible abuses but capable of transforming them into positive tools.

The issue of assessment will be addressed from a new perspective: how can we discern authentic skills in a world of powerful tools?

We will also open up new avenues for reflection on ethical issues, personal data protection and career guidance in this new context.

At every stage, the **Global Compact on Education** proposed by Pope Francis will serve as our compass: to constantly focus our action on the person, to build educational communities open to solidarity, justice and peace.

The Catholic School 5.0 is not defined solely by its use of new technologies. It is recognised by the quality of its presence, the depth of its discernment and the strength of its hope. In a world that is often fragmented, frenetic and unpredictable, it chooses to lay solid foundations: a comprehensive education, rooted in the Gospel, open to the universal and capable of accompanying young people to become protagonists of their own lives and of the future of the world.

This book is an invitation:

- To undertake an educational, personal and collective conversion.
- To work with courage and creativity to invent the school of tomorrow.
- To educate for inner freedom and service to the common good.
- To see innovation not as a threat, but as a renewed invitation to love, teach and hope.

Together, enlightened by the light of the **Global Compact on Education**, let us dare to dream and build a fully human Catholic school in the digital age. A school where every young person learns to grow in truth, freedom and fraternity. A school where artificial intelligence never erases the intelligence of the heart.

"The real problem is not technology, but the man who possesses it." Romano Guardini - "The End of the Modern Age" (Das Ende der Neuzeit), 1950.

You can download the book at this link:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_MH1iQ7D52\\_DUZwOPI0cLYNhDyA9Xg5e/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_MH1iQ7D52_DUZwOPI0cLYNhDyA9Xg5e/view)



GLOBAL COMPACT  
ON EDUCATION

Journal

Nb. The English translation of this Journal of the GCE was done automatically. For any inaccuracies, please refer to the original Italian edition.



# INVITATION

## Jubilee of the World of Education

### EDUCATIONAL CONSTELLATIONS

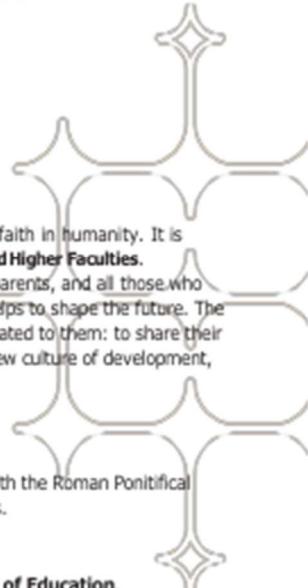
To the global educational community

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am pleased to share with you the general programme of the **Jubilee of the World of Education** which is scheduled to take place from the **27th of October till the 1st of November, 2025**.

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The educational presence of the Catholic Church is an expression of a generative and passionate faith in humanity. It is active worldwide through a variety of institutions: **219.000 schools and 1.760 Catholic Universities and Higher Faculties**. **Hundreds of millions of people** are involved in these educational communities: students, teachers, parents, and all those who accompany young people on the journey of life. Everywhere in the world, this luminous presence helps to shape the future. The protagonists of these Educational Constellations are invited to Rome to experience the Jubilee dedicated to them: to share their experiences, relaunch their mission, and to disseminate a call for education to be the creator of a new culture of development, fraternity and peace.



The **Holy Father Leo XIV** will preside over four events during the Jubilee of the World of Education:

- **MONDAY, 27 OCTOBER**, in St. Peter's Basilica, celebration of the beginning of the **academic year** with the Roman Pontifical Universities and Institutions. The event is specifically addressed to the Roman Pontifical Institutions.
- **THURSDAY, 30 OCTOBER**, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican, audience with **students**.
- **FRIDAY, 31 OCTOBER**, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican, audience with **educators**.
- **SATURDAY, 1 NOVEMBER**, in St. Peter's Square, celebration of the **Eucharist for the entire World of Education**. In these encounters, Pope Leo will have the opportunity to set out his educational vision, a precious constellation to orient our path forward in the years to come.



During the days of Jubilee, a **Village of Education** will be set up in the vicinity of Saint Peter's – this will be a diffused space where, using different modes of expression, some of the best practices and achievements in education will be exhibited and put into dialogue with each other:

- ◆ **THURSDAY, 30 OCTOBER**, at the Conciliazione Auditorium, a World Congress "**Educational Constellations – A Pact with the future**" will take place: participants are invited to reflect together on the challenges of education, from the universal right to a quality education to the new cultural and technological frontiers.
- ◆ **THURSDAY, 30 AND FRIDAY, 31 OCTOBER**, the nearby Church of San Lorenzo in Piscibus, will host **The School of the Heart** with moments of prayer and paths of meditative exploration, featuring a variety of spiritual, cultural and artistic experiences.
- ◆ **FRIDAY, 31 OCTOBER** the Corsie Sistine of Santo Spirito in Sassia and the nearby Saint Pius X Hall will host two creative initiatives: an **immersive artistic and cultural experience** probing the meaning of education and an **exhibition of educational experiences from all over the world**.
- ◆ **FRIDAY, 31 OCTOBER**, at the end of the Audience with educators, we will experience together the most characteristic ritual of the Jubilee: the **passage through the Holy Door**.

I look forward to meeting you at this great celebration. In the meantime, I invite you to register now for the individual events.

Card. José Tolentino de Mendoça  
Prefect  
Dicastery for Culture and Education of the Holy See



Updates will be made available from time to time on the Jubilee website ([www.iubilaeum25.va](http://www.iubilaeum25.va)) and on the website of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ([www.dce.va](http://www.dce.va))



### FOR REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT:

<https://www.dce.va/it/eventi/2025/giubileo-dello-mondo-educativo.html>



Address by Cardinal De Mendonça at the opening of the Education Roundtable of the 3rd World Meeting on Human Fraternity  
**EDUCATING: REDESIGNING CONSTELLATIONS OF MEANING**



Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

It is with sincere gratitude that I take the floor to thank you for your kind invitation to participate in the work of this *Education Roundtable* as part of the *World Meeting on Human Fraternity*.

The meeting we are inaugurating today represents a moment of great significance: not only an opportunity for dialogue between experts and professionals in the field, but also a concrete sign of our shared commitment to building a more fraternal world together.

I speak to you as Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, an organisation that brings together and supports an immense network of 220,000 schools and over 1,700 Catholic universities, making it one of the world's leading providers of education. This network is spread across the continents, present in large urban centres as well as in the most remote corners of the planet.

The Church's focus on education is ancient, almost ancestral: from the schools that sprang up in medieval monasteries and mission lands to the founding of the first universities that shaped European and world culture, educational commitment has always been a pillar of its mission. Today, this long tradition is being renewed in new and creative ways.

In recent years, the Church's most significant contribution to education has certainly been the *Global Compact on Education* proposed by Pope Francis. This project has stimulated

initiatives, reflections and educational processes in every part of the world.

Last year, the *World Meeting on Human Fraternity* hosted the presentation of the Pact at its Education Table; today, I would simply like to recall its beating heart, which is its ultimate goal: to educate everyone in universal fraternity.

We are living in an era of rapid and dizzying change. Education, too, must be able to grasp the signs of the times, refining languages and tools capable of educating the new generations. The upcoming *Jubilee of Education*, which we will celebrate in Rome at the end of October, also fits into this horizon. It will be an important occasion to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the conciliar declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* and the 5th anniversary of the *Global Compact on Education*. But above all, it will be an opportunity to inaugurate a new season of education, open to what we like to call *global educational constellations*.

As you know, the word 'desire' comes from the Latin *de-sidera*, 'lack of stars': it is the gaze towards the sky that no longer finds points of orientation, and therefore seeks, waits, invokes. Conversely, the term *disaster* evokes the fall of the stars, loss, the absence of light. In this sense, talking about 'educational constellations' expresses the desire to educate and to receive an education as the need to put stars where they are missing, to rekindle lights in the inner sky of children and young people. Where education is lacking or fails, educational disaster arises: a sky without stars, a generation without guidance. Educating, then, means

restoring the stars, redrawing constellations of meaning, tracing luminous paths that guide life. The new Doctor of the Church, John Henry Newman, saw education as a great work that forms not only the mind but the very being of man. I would say it is like a choreography of stars that broadens the horizons of the mind to truth, of the heart to goodness, and of the spirit to beauty.

And here I would like to recall Dante Alighieri, who placed the word stars at the end of each of the three canticles of the Divine Comedy: to emerge from darkness 'to see the stars again', to purify oneself 'to ascend to the stars', and finally to contemplate 'the love that moves the sun and the other stars'. So too with education: it brings us out of the darkness of ignorance, purifies us from selfishness, and finally leads us to the light of love, which is the ultimate meaning of every educational journey.

Well, among these stars that illuminate the constellation, we can undoubtedly include this Education Roundtable. Here, experts, institutions and operators from different areas of society come together, all united by the conviction that education is the first name of peace and fraternity. The fruits of your work will contribute to making the global educational constellation even brighter. I know that



the suggestions, outputs and reflections that will emerge from your work will lead to the drafting of the 'Tables of Humanity': an important document that will remind us how, in our time marked by the advent of Artificial Intelligence, it is essential to remain human. It will be humans – and not algorithms – who will have to chart the paths to follow in order to build a real, not artificial, world. It is our task to know how to seize the best of the great revolution that Artificial Intelligence is bringing, without abandoning ourselves to dystopian predictions. Let us remember that education today faces an extraordinary opportunity to reinvent itself: it is called upon to rethink and rewrite its objectives, methodologies and educational pathways in a new and creative way. Let us not waste this unique educational opportunity, but let us all prepare ourselves to embark on this adventure with a spirit full of enthusiasm and hope.

In this spirit, I am pleased to open the proceedings of the Education Panel of the Third *World Meeting on Human Fraternity* and wish everyone a fruitful and productive journey of fraternity.

Thank you. ■

## INTERNATIONAL COURSE ON THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION

The Catholic University of Honduras (UNICAH), through the Sophia Alc University Institute (Latin America and the Caribbean), is launching an important academic initiative for teaching staff: the online seminar **"Global Educational Pact. Inspiration, content, prophecy"**. This training course takes place in eight online sessions, starting on 6 September and ending on 20 December 2025, and is specifically aimed at university professors, with the aim of translating the principles of the **Global Educational Pact** into concrete practices for higher education. A commitment to a more humane education. The initiative reflects the urgent need to train future professionals not only with technical skills, but also with a solid ethical and value base. The aim of the seminar is to inspire teachers to become "agents of change", promoting an education that is intrinsically more humane, supportive, sustainable and fraternal. The seminar, with a total workload of 48 hours (including 24 hours of synchronous virtual lessons, 16 hours of personal study and 8 hours of research work), also aims to strengthen collaboration networks between universities and give visibility to existing local projects related to the Pact. The teaching staff and central themes: The seminar's teaching staff includes representatives of the **Global Compact on Education** from various Catholic universities in Italy, Brazil, Chile and Colombia.

The programme is divided into eight thematic modules, which address the pillars of the **Global Compact on Education**.

### Research and Publications at UNICAH

The seminar methodology places a strong emphasis on collaborative research and dialogue, with sessions that integrate the presentation of the theme with reflection and collective construction exercises in small groups.

The most relevant aspect for the academic world is the opportunity offered to participants to actively contribute to scientific literature. The lecturers, organised into groups, are asked to develop a 'good practice' from their own university related to the **Global Compact on Education**, to be presented in the final session. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to co-publish an article highlighting the link between their pedagogical work and the Compact in UNICAH's postgraduate scientific journal, *Regina Pacis - Sapientia Postgraduate*. This element underlines how the seminar is not only training, but a real catalyst for applied research and educational innovation within the University.

This seminar is a clear sign of UNICAH's commitment to aligning its educational mission with major global challenges, placing education at the service of a more just and fraternal world.



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Carina Rossa ■

# CATHOLIC EDUCATION THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES: EDUCATING, CARING AND GIVING HOPE!



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, participants in the 7th ANEC Congress - Brazil,

It is with deep and sincere esteem that I address all of you participating in the VII National Congress of Catholic Education, promoted by the National Association of Catholic Education of Brazil (ANEC), held in Fortaleza, with this inspiring theme: "Catholic education that transforms lives: educating, caring and giving hope!".

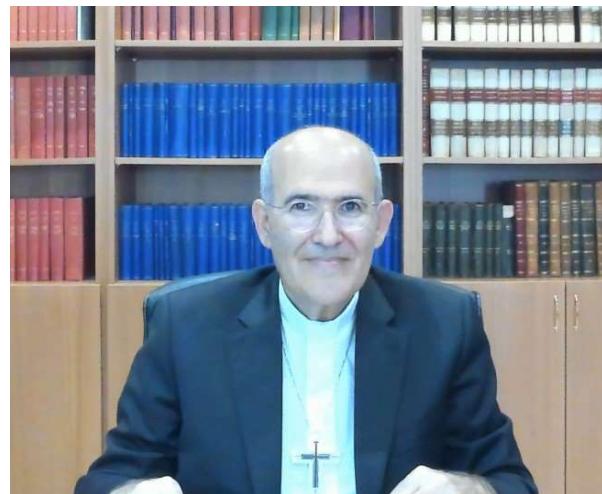
I must say that the transition from the noun hope to the verb to hope was very sensitive, joyfully sensitive. It is as if we had filled the noun with energy, movement, an art of transformation, which is also the symbol of this congress: education that transforms life also transforms language, it also transforms the noun into a verb of action, of commitment. And this is very beautiful.

Even from a distance, I join spiritually in this important moment, sharing with you the hope, reflection and commitment that this congress represents.

These days we are experiencing a moment of extraordinary joy and hope with the election of the Holy Father Pope Leo XIV. The heart of the Church is filled with plans for the Shepherd whom the Holy Spirit has shown us: a great shepherd, a man of faith, of communion and, above all, an educator, a teacher of hope, very sensitive to the issues of the world of education. He will undoubtedly be a beacon for all those who make education their mission.

Pope Francis, of blessed memory, leaves us a precious legacy, especially in our field of education. His visionary project of the **Global Compact on Education** has been, over the last five years, a source of inspiration, renewal and courage for all of us who believe in a holistic, participatory, inclusive and people-oriented education, at the service of the poorest and most vulnerable, in the name of the common good and in the name of fraternity.

The **Global Compact on Education**, launched in 2019, as we all remember, represents a concrete expression of the Church's pedagogical thinking. It is an open appeal that continues, and must continue, to the pact, to the dynamic relationship between generations, between communities, between school and family, between faith and reason, between humanity and creation, between the seriousness of the search for knowledge and the joy of building it together, of living it together. It is a pact that stems



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from the conviction that education is always an act of hope.

We know for certain that this project did not come out of nowhere. It is fully in line with the teaching of the Church, with what the Vatican says about *Gravissimum Educationis*, the fundamental right that education represents. But also with the teaching of the last Popes: St John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Pope Francis, who took up this legacy and updated it with prophetic courage, also in dialogue, in tune with the challenges of today, of this moment. The Church must read the signs of the times in this field of education too, seeing, for example, the environmental crisis, this prevailing culture of waste, the loneliness of young people that we see in their malaise, in the mental health issues that the field of education increasingly has to address, in this internalised feeling of fragmentation.

It is true, as the poet John Donne says, that no man is an island, but today we see the difficulty of building archipelagos, because there is great fragmentation, great polarisation.

To resolve this, to move from the problem to the solution, Pope Francis has conceived the **Global Compact on Education**. Certainly, the teaching, the attention, the intelligence, and the radiant humanity of Pope Leo XIV will enrich the **Educational Pact**. It is up to us, as a Catholic educational community, as a network of communities, to continue to walk with – and I emphasise these two words – with fidelity and creativity, because tradition and innovation are very important to us, welcoming the new signs of the Spirit and the indications that the Church will discern in the coming years.

I would like to conclude this message by expressing my heartfelt thanks to Brazil, its schools, its educators, its communities and its local Churches, which have enthusiastically welcomed the Holy Father's appeal. In Brazil, the **Educational Pact** has become a living adventure, a concrete dynamism. This is a sign of a springtime for education. I think that Brazil, with all the difficulties we can see – because this is life – with all that, I think that the great effort that

is being made is, in fact, to recognise with gratitude that we are also experiencing a springtime for Catholic education.

Brazil shows the world that it is possible to educate with the heart, with the mind and with the hands, placing the human person at the centre and opening horizons of fraternity and peace.

We know how immense the challenges of the future are: the great digital transformation, artificial intelligence, cultural change, the anthropological crisis, so many questions in this world marked by uncertainty, because we do not know exactly what lies ahead. We know that it will be new, unprecedented, different: this requires discernment on our part. This is also a time to be together, because none of us can face the immensity of these epochal challenges alone. Together, we discern what is important at this moment.

I highly recommend reading the document that our Dicastery for Culture and Education, together with the Dicastery for Culture and Faith, have written together on artificial intelligence. The document is entitled *Antiqua et Nova* (new things). In my opinion, it is a very timely reflection, particularly the paragraphs that directly concern the world of education.

It is important to take these paragraphs and make them the subject of reflection, discussion, in-depth study, scientific and academic projects, but also networking.

It was very important for ANEC to take up the task of discernment and reflection on this great epochal change that is taking place.

In this spirit of communion, let us walk together in this Jubilee of Hope with the deep desire, at the end of next October, to renew our commitment to a humanised and humanising education, transformed and transforming.

I remember this Jubilee of Education, and in particular the days of 30 and 31 October and 1 November with a Eucharistic celebration in St Peter's Square, with all educators and the entire school community. We organised these days, 30 and 31 October and 1 November, starting from the mind, the heart and the hands, organising a major conference on the right to education.

The relevance of the Second Vatican Council and the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*: together with Pope Leo, we want to listen to his voice and generate a dynamic spirit of planning and hope that does not end in the Jubilee year, but is projected in a concrete way in our schools, with vitality, in a creativity that is the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

May this conference be a fruitful time of grace, listening, reflection, encounter – even joyful encounter – sharing and common discernment, so that together we may advance in the proposed objectives.

With fraternal affection, I love Brazil very much, I greatly admire your work and your mission, and I assure you of our communion in prayer.

I invoke upon this congress, upon each participant and upon what it represents, the light of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of Our Lady of Aparecida, Mother of Education.

A hug. ■

## The Secretariat for the GCE at Auxilium University **PISTEMIC JUSTICE IN EDUCATION**



On 13 September 2025, the Pontifical University 'Maria Ausiliatrice' in Rome hosted a meeting dedicated to the theme of *Educational Responsibility*, in the context of the upcoming Jubilee of the World of Education. For the occasion, the Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education** contributed with a reflection on the key themes of the educational alliance. The image of educational constellations was evoked, emphasising the need to 'put stars back in the sky' for the younger generations, who often lack points of reference. It is an invitation to build a broad and global alliance, based on the seven goals of **the Global Educational Pact** and aimed at overcoming cultural, family and intergenerational divides.

The importance of listening to the new generations was emphasised: a surprising kind of listening, because more and more young people are asking for an education that touches their inner life, their sense of meaning and depth. This need is met by the perspective of *life-deep learning*, alongside *life-long* and *life-wide learning*.

Finally, the theme of epistemic justice, central to the epistemologies of the Global South, was recalled: recognising each person as a subject of knowledge, capable of contributing to educational dialogue with equal dignity.

The meeting at Auxilium was thus part of the journey towards the Jubilee of Education at the end of October 2025, as a moment of discussion and shared construction. It was a further step towards a new educational season in which to network energies, visions and hopes. ■

## Meeting between the Prefect and the UISG-USG **EDUCATIONAL CHARISMS IN DIALOGUE**



On 24 September 2025, during a meeting at the Dicastery for Culture and Education, the Prefect welcomed the new head of the Education Commission of the Union of Superiors General, Sister Priscilla Latela. The meeting was an opportunity to reaffirm the decisive role that consecrated women play in the world of education. The Prefect called for greater synergy between the various religious families involved in education, emphasising how "charisms can dialogue with each other" in order to face today's challenges with a shared vision. Both parties highlighted the urgent need to strengthen collaboration between religious men and women and the Dicastery, especially in view of the Jubilee of the World of Education and the relaunch of the **Global Compact on Education**. ■

The *Global Compact on Education* Committee at Tor Vergata

## JUBILEE OF YOUTH 2025 AND THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION



It has been described as one of the most powerful moments of the Holy Year: the Jubilee of Youth, which brought together around one million young people in Rome, transforming the capital into a great laboratory of encounter, faith and future. The images of the night in Tor Vergata, dotted with the lights of mobile phones and the enthusiasm of the participants, have been seen around the world. The Pope spoke of 'a youth that is not afraid of goodness'.

During the events at Tor Vergata, a survey was also conducted by the Committee for the **Global Compact on Education** of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, which asked young people a simple but crucial question: 'What do you think are the biggest challenges for the future of education? A surprising finding that emerged with particular force concerns young people's desire for an education that can help them cultivate their inner lives. Silence, depth, authenticity, the ability to listen to oneself: these were recurring words. It was the same silence that enveloped the large esplanade during the Saturday evening vigil with Pope Leo.

In an age saturated with digital stimuli, it is surprising that young people are not only asking for skills and opportunities, but also for spaces for introspection and spiritual paths that will help them become more human.

This is not the first time that the **Global Compact on Education** has listened to the younger generation. Already at World Youth Day in Lisbon in 2023, thousands of young people visited the **Global Compact on Education** stand set up in the City of Joy to answer the question: "How do you imagine the education of the future?" Even then, the same request emerged: an education capable of nourishing the inner self.

From World Youth Day in Lisbon to this year's Youth Jubilee, the younger generations show surprising consistency: they are looking for roots, meaning and direction. They do not want just 'training', but integral formation. This is probably where education will start again in the coming years.

And, in view of the Jubilee of the World of Education, it is easy to imagine that the Holy Father will take this clear and unexpected voice of young people into serious consideration. ■

## OIEC leaders at a meeting in Stockholm INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The Inner Development Goals (ODI) initiative was formalised in April 2019 in Ekskäret (Sweden). It was the result of a joint effort by all kinds of social, business, political and institutional organisations. Five dimensions and 23 skills were identified. The five dimensions are: being, thinking, relating, collaborating and acting.

These goals are directly linked to the SDGs and can also be related to the seven goals of the **Global Compact on Education**. Without a doubt, if we want to change people's lives and their contexts, we will first have to change ourselves and our educational and social institutions, etc. so that they are authentic, consistent, compassionate, collaborative and available.

At the OIEC, and in line with the pact, we wanted to learn more about what these SDGs are and how they can be applied in Catholic and non-Catholic educational institutions, in order to prepare ourselves to weave together a **Global and Local Compact on Education**. To this end, in July we met in Stockholm: Hervé Lecomte and Juan Antonio Ojeda from the OIEC and Åsa Jarskog on behalf of the ODIs. We are designing a prototype to implement an application project in various institutions in the world of education and see its contribution to the pact and to the achievement of greater fraternity and the common good.

Juan Antonio Ojeda ■

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## Cardinal De Mendonça meets online the GCE representatives GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION: WORK IN PROGRESS



Vatican City  
— 18  
September  
2025.  
Cardinal José  
Tolentino de  
Mendonça led  
a video-  
conference

today with representatives of the **Global Compact on Education**, opening the study phase of the new educational perspectives that will be presented at the Jubilee of the World of Education.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the eleven universities in the research group and other Catholic and secular institutions. The Prefect reiterated the urgent need for a global educational alliance capable of responding to contemporary cultural and social challenges.

The results of the work begun today will be presented to the Dicastery during the Jubilee week. ■

ODUCAL celebrates 35 years of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*: three days of reflection in Chile

## CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

### EDUCATIONAL PACT FOR A MORE FRATERNAL SOCIETY



As part of the 35th anniversary of the promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, representatives of the Organisation of Catholic Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (ODUCAL) met from 1 to 3 October at the Catholic University of the Holy Conception in Chile. The meeting was attended by rectors, academic leaders and Grand Chancellors, including Cardinal Fernando Chomali, Archbishop of Santiago de Chile. Also present was the president of ODUCL, Fr Anderson Pedroso, S.J., rector of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro.

The event highlighted the importance of returning to the sources that inspire the mission of the Catholic university, reinterpreting them in light of the new cultural and social challenges facing higher education in Latin America. In this sense, three fundamental references were recalled: *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, which defines the identity and mission of the Catholic university; the **Global Compact on Education**, which calls for a renewal of education based on human dignity, social responsibility and solidarity; and the networking of ODUCL, which promotes regional integration and the strengthening of Catholic identity through its seven thematic networks.

*Ex Corde Ecclesiae* was noted for its ability to promote dialogue between faith and reason, guiding the search for truth and academic reflection in the light of faith. The **Global Compact on Education** proposes an education that forms responsible citizens who are sensitive to social justice, sustainability and care for our common home. ODUCL works to put these inspirations into practice in the Latin American context, valuing local cultural wealth and promoting an education capable of transforming society.

During the meeting, the need emerged to strengthen service to communities, the defence of human dignity, solidarity and dialogue between faith,

culture and society. These themes represent common ground that unites *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the **Global Compact on Education** and the mission of ODUCL.

The president of the organisation, Fr. Anderson Pedroso, S.J., described the work of Catholic universities as a system of "orchestrated

autonomies," in which each institution operates with its own responsibility but in communion with the others and with the Church. He emphasised that ODUCL's seven thematic networks strengthen integration, a sense of community and ethical commitment, helping to put the principles of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and the **Global Compact on Education** into practice. The goal, he said, is to form leaders of integrity, servants of truth and builders of a more just and fraternal society.

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excerpt from *Vatican News* ■

#### New CIEC guide to educating on the principles of the GCE A COMPLETE COURSE FOR EDUCATORS



The CIEC (Confederación Interamericana de Educación Católica) has published a new booklet dedicated to the educational development of the principles of the **Global Compact on Education** offering schools a simple,

concrete and immediately usable tool.

For each of the seven principles – from the centrality of the person to listening to young people, from the promotion of women to care for our common home – the document proposes a comprehensive path consisting of pedagogical objectives, ecclesial and methodological foundations, suggested content, activities for primary and secondary schools, as well as evaluation criteria and related rubrics.

It is a guide designed for teachers, educators and school administrators who wish to embody the spirit of the **Global Compact on Education** in the daily life of the school, integrating Christian values, social commitment and a humanistic vision of education. The proposed activities are adaptable to different contexts and promote meaningful learning, capable of combining experience, reflection and action.

The booklet *Guías Didácticas para Desarrollar los Principios del Pacto Educativo Global* is now available and can be downloaded free of charge from the official CIEC website. ■

Address by Cardinal De Medonça at the Second International Congress on GCE and Human Rights – PUCPR (Brazil)  
**THE NEW ETHOS OF EDUCATION: AN ETHICAL CHALLENGE TO LIFE**



PUCPR - Curitiba – Brazil (22–23 October 2025)

Dear friends, I greet you all with great joy on the occasion of this second International Congress on the **Global Compact on Education** and Human Rights. First of all, I would like to greet and thank the organisers, researchers, educators and students participating in this Assembly, inspired by the desire to reflect together on the new ethos of education and its many developments: cultural, spiritual and ethical developments that have a great impact on everyone's lives. We are living in an era of rapid and dizzying change that profoundly challenges our vision of the human being, society and the future. Education has a central role to play. Education is called to respond with courage and creativity to these challenges, cultivating not only skills but also consciences; aiming not only at knowledge but also at wisdom; not only at technical skills but also at ethical, cultural and spiritual sensitivity.

When Pope Francis launched his appeal in 2019 to rebuild a **Global Compact on Education**, he truly wanted to reawaken humanity so that it might develop a sense of shared responsibility for our common home and for intergenerational dialogue. Education, he recalled, is always an act of hope that invites personal and social transformation. It is in this spirit, I think, that your congress takes place, exploring the dimension of dignity and human rights, the authentic heart of the **Global Educational Pact**. Defending human dignity means recognising in every person an inalienable value, a living image of God. Promoting human rights means safeguarding freedom, social justice and fraternity as pillars of the common good, that is, of a more peaceful and fraternal society.

The work of all of you is a significant contribution to the reflection on education in view of the upcoming jubilee of the world of education that we will celebrate here in Rome in October this year, commemorating a fundamental anniversary: the 60th anniversary of the Conciliar Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, which played such a crucial role in raising awareness of the universal right to guaranteed access to education. And we will also celebrate, of course, the five years of the **Global Compact on Education**. It will be a time of grace, of encounter, of celebration, but also of

renewal, in which we will launch the new *Global Educational Decalogue*. And the inspiring words of our Pope Leo XIV will open a new educational

season, open to what we like to call global educational constellations.

I think with great gratitude of beloved Brazil, whose flag bears the constellations of the southern sky, as if to remind us that education is also a sky to be contemplated and rebuilt together. Every constellation is born of a deep desire. It is no coincidence that the word 'desire' comes from the Latin term *de-sidera*, which means 'lack of stars'. *De-sidera* is the gaze that seeks a point of orientation in the sky. To educate, therefore, means to put the stars back in their place. It means redrawing constellations of hope and meaning, lighting up the inner sky of the new generations. Where education is lacking or fails, an educational disaster arises. It means: dis-astro, a sky without stars, a generation without direction.

St John Henry Newman, whom the Holy Father Leo XIV will proclaim Doctor of the Church in the next jubilee, saw education as a great work that forms not only rationality, but the whole person, the integral human being: a choreography of constellations that expands the mind to truth, the heart to goodness and the spirit to beauty.

I love to recall a classic of Christian literature, Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy. You know that it is divided into three parts, three canticles: hell, purgatory and paradise. Each of these parts ends in the same way.

Hell says: come out of darkness to see the stars again.

Purgatory concludes by saying: purify yourself to ascend to the stars.

And Paradise, the third canto, ends by saying: contemplate the love that moves the sun and the other stars.

So it is with education. It frees us from darkness, from ignorance; it purifies us from fragmentation, from selfishness; and it leads us to the light of love that moves everything. It moves the sun and all the stars of the educational universe.

With this fraternal wish, I encourage you to continue your work with enthusiasm, certain that every step towards a more just and humane education is a step towards a brighter world, more in line with the values of the Gospel.

My fraternal gratitude to all. ■



# LISTEN TO ASCANIO

Pope Francis, with the **Global Compact on Education**, has launched an appeal that has the flavour of great historical turning points: to build an alliance between all those who work in education and culture — from science to art, from entertainment to sport, from the media to various educational organisations — to generate a new humanism and an education capable of universal fraternity. This is not an abstract document, but a living process. Over the past five years, the *Dicastery for Culture and Education* has given substance to this appeal, monitoring and promoting events that have become forums for dialogue, creativity and encounter between different worlds.

Let us recall some symbolic moments:

The Meeting of Representatives of World Religions (2021): for the first time, the major faiths met not to defend their identities, but to imagine together how to educate for peace.

The Meeting of Artists in the Sistine Chapel (2023): there, Pope Francis called them 'allies of God's dream', guardians of the beauty that converts hearts and opens inner passages.

The Jubilee of Culture (2025): writers, actors, musicians and intellectuals showed that culture is not ornamentation, but nourishment for the soul.

The Jubilee of Sport (2025): because sport, in its grammar of loyalty, sacrifice and play, is an extraordinary school of fraternity.

The Jubilee of the World of Education (2025): this will be the great "synod of education," the beginning of a new season.

Precisely for this new phase, Cardinal Prefect José Tolentino de Mendonça has proposed an image that enchants and provokes: that of *Educational Constellations*.

To educate, he says, means 'putting the stars back in their place': finding orientation, recomposing meanings, drawing luminous maps that help us not to lose our way in the night of the world. It is a poetic and demanding pedagogy, because it requires courage, discernment and depth.

But today, at the heart of these constellations, a decisive point emerges: listening to Ascanius. Pope Francis, with one of his most beautiful metaphors, describes the educator as Aeneas, walking with his father Anchises — tradition — on his shoulders and holding Ascanius — the future — by the hand. For decades, we have worked above all to protect Anchises, to defend memory, to transmit values. Today, the times demand something new of us: to listen more radically to the voice of Ascanius, that is, of young people. And what Ascanius is saying is surprising.



During World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon and the Youth Jubilee in Tor Vergata, the **Global Compact on Education** Committee interviewed thousands of young people from very different cultures, languages and walks of life. When asked, 'What do you dream of for the education of the future?', we expected young people to ask for more technology, more digital, more STEM, more artificial intelligence. But what did they ask us for? Education for the inner life.

They spoke to us about meaning, spiritual searching, authenticity, silence and true relationships. They asked us for a school that speaks to the heart, that raises questions, that does not merely inform but transforms. Is this not a sign of the times?

In a society that seems distracted and secularised, young people are showing a new ferment of spirituality, a desire for God that cannot be stifled. Not a superficial 'return to the sacred', but a deep thirst, a longing for light.

Pope Francis had prophetically intuited this: "We cannot hide from the new generations the truths that give meaning to life."

That is why today more than ever we must educate with *lifedeep learning*, a *pedagogy of depth* that accompanies human beings in descending into their hearts, listening to their inner selves, discerning what enlightens and what deceives.

For us, Catholic educators, educating in a Christian way — in universities, schools, parishes, movements — means precisely this: helping to interpret the signs of the times, especially those signs that young people themselves offer us. Their thirst for meaning, their desire for spirituality, their need to be listened to is not a passing fad, but a call that challenges the Church.

This is why it is essential to create youth councils, real spaces for listening and dialogue, workshops in which young people are not recipients but protagonists. Listening to them does not mean giving up, but regenerating ourselves. It does not mean losing our identity, but rediscovering its freshness.

Listening to Ascanio is an act of faith in the future that God is already preparing. Let us therefore listen: without fear of being surprised, without fear of being provoked, without sterile defences.

Because only an education that listens becomes truly capable of generating the future — and of doing so with a Christian heart, open and deeply human.

Fr. Ezio Lorenzo Bono  
Secretariat for the **Global Compact on Education**



Pope Leo XIV launches the new Apostolic Letter on education "Drawing maps of hope"

## THE LODESTAR OF THE COMPACT ON EDUCATION



### APOSTOLIC LETTER "DRAWING NEW MAPS OF HOPE"

BY POPE LEO XIV ON THE OCCASION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONCILIAR DECLARATION *GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS*

(*Excerpt*)

#### 10. The lodestar of the Compact on Education

**10.1.** Among the stars that guide our path is the Global Compact on Education. I gratefully accept this prophetic legacy entrusted to us by Pope Francis. It is an invitation to form an alliance and networks to educate in universal fraternity. Its seven pathways remain our foundation: putting the person at the centre; listening to children and young people; promoting the dignity and full participation of women; recognizing the family as the first educator; opening ourselves to welcome and inclusion; renewing the economy and politics in the service of humanity; and caring for our common home. These "stars" have inspired schools, universities and educational communities around the world, giving rise to concrete processes of humanization.

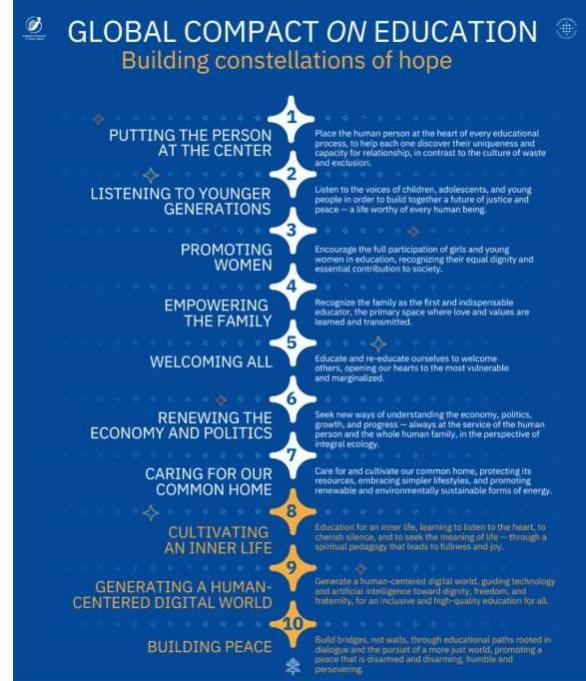
**10.2.** Sixty years after *Gravissimum educationis* and five years after the Compact, history calls to us with fresh urgency. Rapid and deep changes expose children,

teenagers and young people to unprecedented fragility. It is not enough to conserve it: it must be relaunched. I ask all the educational bodies to inaugurate a season that speaks to the heart of the new generations, reconstituting knowledge and meaning, competence and responsibility, faith and life. The Compact is part of a broader Global Educational Constellation: charisms and institutions, though diverse, form a unified and luminous design that guides our steps in the darkness of the present time.

**10.3.** To the seven paths, I would add three priorities. The first regards the inner life. Young people ask for depth; they need spaces for silence, discernment, and dialogue with their conscience and with God. The second regards the digital human: let us educate in a judicious use of technology and of AI, placing the person before the algorithm and harmonizing technical, emotional, social, spiritual and ecological intelligence.

The third regards unarmed and disarming peace: let us educate in non-violent languages, reconciliation, bridges and not walls. “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Mt 5:9) becomes the method and content of learning.

10.4. We are aware that the Catholic educational network has a unique reach. It is a constellation that spans every continent, with a particular presence in low-income areas: a concrete promise of educational mobility and social justice [23]. This constellation demands quality and courage: quality in pedagogical planning, teacher training and governance; courage in ensuring access for the poorest, in supporting fragile families, in promoting scholarships and inclusive policies. Evangelical gratuitousness is not rhetoric: it is a style of relationship, a method and an objective. Where access to education remains a privilege, the Church must push to open doors and invent new paths, because “losing the poor” is equivalent to losing the school itself. This also applies to universities: an inclusive outlook and attention to the heart save us from standardization; a spirit of service revives the imagination and rekindles love. [...]



Pope Leo XIV meets students during the Jubilee of Education and launches three new PEG objectives

## THREE NEW PRIORITIES OF THE EDUCATION PACT



### MEETING WITH STUDENTS ON THE OCCASION OF THE JUBILEE OF THE WORLD OF EDUCATION ADDRESS BY HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV Paul VI Hall - Thursday, 30 October 2025

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Peace be with you!

*Dear young men and women, good morning!*

What a joy to meet you! Thank you! I have awaited this moment with great emotion: your company, in fact, reminds me of the years when I taught mathematics to lively young people like yourselves. I thank you for responding in this way, for being here today, for sharing your reflections and hopes, which, through you, I convey to our friends throughout the world.

I would like to begin by remembering Pier Giorgio Frassati, an Italian student who, as you know, was canonised during this Jubilee Year. With his passionate love for God and neighbour, this young saint coined two phrases that he often repeated, almost like a motto. He said: “To live without faith is not to live, but to merely exist” and also: “Upwards”. These are very true and

encouraging statements. So I say to you too: have the courage to live life to the full. Do not be satisfied with appearances or fads: a life flattened by what passes us by never satisfies us. Instead, let each one say in his or her heart: “I dream of more, Lord, I want more: inspire me!”. This desire is your strength and expresses well the commitment of young people who plan a better society, of which they do not accept to remain spectators. I therefore encourage you, to constantly strive “upwards”, lighting the beacon of hope in the dark hours of history. How wonderful it would be if one day your generation were recognised as the “plus generation”, remembered for the extra gear you will give to the Church and the world.

This, dear young people, cannot remain the dream of one person alone: let us unite to make it happen, witnessing together the joy of believing in Jesus Christ. How can

we achieve this? The answer is essential: through education, one of the most beautiful and powerful tools for changing the world.

Five years ago, our beloved Pope Francis launched the great project of the Global Compact on Education, an alliance of all those who, in various ways, work in the field of education and culture, to involve the younger

generations in a universal fraternity. You, in fact, are not only recipients of education, but its protagonists.

Therefore, today I ask you to join forces to open a *new educational season*, in which all of us — young people and adults —

become credible witnesses of truth and peace. For this reason, I say to you: you are called to be *truth-speakers* and *peace-makers*, people of your word and builders of peace. Involve your peers in the search for truth and the cultivation of peace, expressing these two passions with your lives, with your words and with your daily actions. In this regard, I would like to add to the example of Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati a reflection from Saint John Henry Newman, a learned saint who will soon be proclaimed a Doctor of the Church. He said that knowledge multiplies when it is shared and that it is in the conversation of minds that the flame of truth is kindled. Thus, true peace is born when many lives, like stars, come together and form a pattern. Together we can form *educational constellations* that guide the way forward.

As a former professor of mathematics and physics, allow me to do some calculations with you. Perhaps you have a mathematics exam coming up soon? Let's see... Do you know how many stars there are in the observable universe? It is an impressive and marvellous number: a sextillion stars – a 1 followed by 21 zeros! If we divided them among the 8 billion inhabitants of Earth, each person would have hundreds of billions of stars. With the naked eye, on clear nights, we can see about five thousand. Even though there are billions upon billions of stars, we only see the closest constellations: however, these show us a direction, like when sailing at sea.

Travellers have always found their way by the stars. Sailors followed the North Star; Polynesians crossed the ocean by memorising star maps. According to the farmers of the Andes, whom I met as a missionary in Peru, the sky is an open book that marks the seasons of sowing, shearing and the cycles of life. Even the Magi followed a star to Bethlehem to worship the Baby Jesus. Like them, you too have guiding stars: parents, teachers, priests, good friends, compasses to keep you from getting lost in the happy and sad events of life. Like them, you are called to become shining witnesses for

those around you. But, as I said, a star alone remains an isolated point. When it joins with others, however, it forms a constellation, like the Southern Cross. So it is with you: each one of you is a star, and together you are called to guide the future. Education unites people in living communities and organises ideas into constellations of meaning. As the prophet Daniel writes, "those who have taught many to do right will shine like the stars for ever" (*Dan 12:3*): how wonderful: we are stars, yes, because we are sparks of God. To educate means to cultivate this gift.

Education, in fact, teaches us to look up, ever higher. When Galileo Galilei pointed his telescope at the sky, he discovered new worlds: the moons of Jupiter, the mountains of the Moon. So is education: a telescope that allows you to look beyond, to discover what you would not see on your own. So do not stop looking at your smartphones and their fast-moving fragments of images: look up at the sky, look upwards.

Dear young people, you yourselves suggested the *first of*

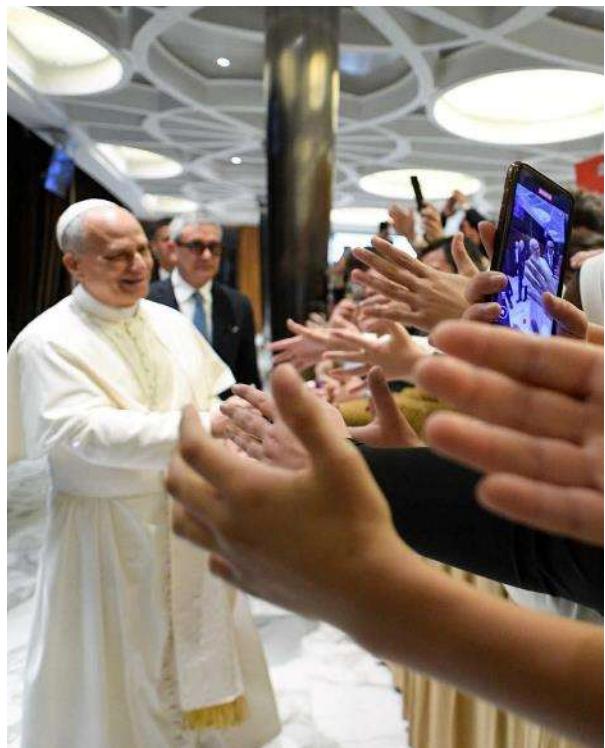
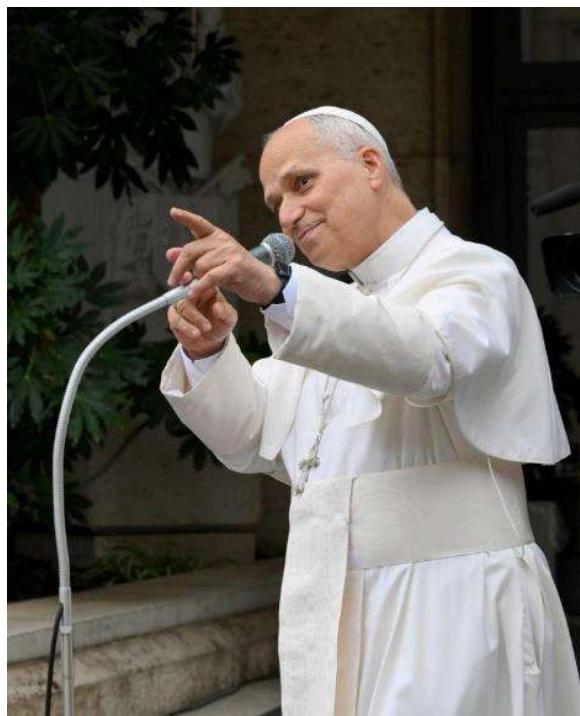


*the new challenges* that engage us in our Global Compact on Education, expressing a strong and clear desire; you said: "Help us in our *education for the inner life*." I was truly struck by this request. It is not enough to have great knowledge if we do not know who we are and what the meaning of life is. Without silence, without listening, without prayer, even the stars go out. We can know a great deal about the world and yet be ignorant of our own hearts: you too may have experienced that feeling of emptiness, of restlessness that does not leave us in peace. In the most serious cases, we see episodes of distress, violence, bullying, oppression, even young people who isolate themselves and no longer want to relate to others. I think that behind this suffering there is also a void created by a society incapable of educating the spiritual dimension of the

human person, not just the technical, social and moral dimensions.

As a young man, St Augustine was brilliant but deeply dissatisfied, as we read in his autobiography, *The Confessions*. He searched everywhere, between career and pleasures, and got up to all sorts of things, but found neither truth nor peace. Until he discovered God in his own heart, writing a very profound sentence that applies to all of us: 'My heart is restless until it rests in You'. This is what it means to educate for the interior life: to listen to our restlessness, not to flee from it or to stuff it with things that do not satisfy. Our desire for the infinite is the compass that tells us: 'Do not be satisfied, you are made for something greater', 'do not just get by, but live'. The *second of the new educational challenges* is a commitment that affects us every day and in which you are masters: *digital education*. You live in it, and that is not a bad thing: there are enormous opportunities for study and communication. But do not let the algorithm write your story! Be the authors yourselves: use technology wisely, but do not let technology use you. Artificial intelligence is also a great novelty – one of the *rerum novarum*, or new things – of our time: however, it is not enough to be 'intelligent' in virtual reality, but we must be human with others, cultivating emotional, spiritual, social and ecological intelligence. Therefore, I say to you: educate yourselves to *humanise the digital world*, building it as a space of fraternity and creativity, not a cage in which to lock yourselves up, not an addiction or an escape. Instead of being tourists of the internet, be prophets in the digital world!

In this regard, we have before us a very timely example of holiness: Saint Carlo Acutis. He was a young man who did not become a slave to the internet, but rather used it skilfully for good. Saint Charles combined his beautiful faith with his passion for computer science, creating a website on Eucharistic miracles and thus making the internet a tool for evangelisation. His



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initiative teaches us that the digital world is educational when it does not shut us in on ourselves, but opens us to others: when it does not put you at the centre, but focuses you on God and others.

Dear friends, we finally come to the *third great challenge* that I entrust to you today and which is at the heart of *the new Global Compact on Education: education for peace*. You can see how much our future is threatened by war and hatred that divide peoples. Can this future be changed? Certainly! How? With an education for peace that is disarmed and disarming. It is not enough, in fact, to silence weapons: we must disarm hearts, renouncing all violence and vulgarity. In this way, *a disarming and unarmed education* creates equality and growth for all, recognising the equal dignity of every boy and girl, without ever dividing young people between the privileged few who have access to expensive schools and the many who do not have access to education. With great confidence in you, I invite you to be peacemakers first and foremost where you live, in your families, at school, in sports and among your friends, reaching out to those who come from other cultures.

In conclusion, dear friends, do not look to shooting stars, on which fragile wishes are entrusted. Look even higher, to Jesus Christ, 'the sun of righteousness' (cf. *Lk 1:78*), who will always guide you on the paths of life. ■

#### PLEASE NOTE:

The original edition of the *Global Compact on Education Journal* is in Italian. Editions in other languages are produced automatically using online translators. To view the official translations of the Holy Father's speeches, please consult the "*Magisterium*" section of the website: [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

Pope Leo XIV meets educators during the Jubilee of the World of Education and outlines four key points

## "I HAVE DECIDED TO RESUME AND UPDATE THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION PROJECT"



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### ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV TO EDUCATORS ON THE OCCASION OF THE JUBILEE OF THE WORLD OF EDUCATION St. Peter's Square - Friday, 31 October 2025

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

I am very happy to meet you: educators from all over the world and engaged at every level, from primary school to university.

As we know, the Church is Mother and Teacher (cf. St John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra*, 15 May 1961, 1), and you help to embody her face for so many pupils and students to whose education you dedicate yourselves. Thanks to the luminous constellation of charisms, methodologies,

pedagogies and experiences that you represent, and thanks to your "polyphonic" commitment in the Church, in dioceses, congregations, religious institutes, associations and movements, you guarantee millions of young people an adequate education, always keeping the good of the person at the centre of the transmission of humanistic and scientific knowledge.

I too have been a teacher in the educational institutions of the Order of St Augustine and I would therefore like to share my experience with you, taking up four aspects of the doctrine of the Doctor Gratiae that I consider fundamental to Christian education: interiority, unity, love and joy. These are principles that I would like to become the

cornerstones of a journey to be undertaken together, making this meeting at the beginning of a common path of growth and mutual enrichment. Regarding interiority, St Augustine says that 'the sound of our words strikes the ears, but the true teacher is within' (In Epistolam Iohannis ad Parthos Tractatus 3,13), and adds: 'Those whom the Spirit does not instruct internally leave without having learned anything' (ibid.). He thus reminds us that it is a mistake to think that beautiful words or good classrooms, laboratories and libraries are enough to teach. These are only means and physical spaces, certainly useful, but the Teacher is within. Truth does not circulate through sounds, walls and corridors, but in the profound encounter between people, without which any educational proposal is doomed to failure.

We live in a world dominated by screens and often superficial technological filters, in which students need help to get in touch with their inner selves. And not only them. Even for educators, who are often tired and overburdened with bureaucratic tasks, there is a real risk of forgetting what St John Henry Newman summarised with the expression: *cor ad cor loquitur* ('the heart speaks to the heart') and what St Augustine recommended, saying: 'Do not look outside. Return to yourself. The truth lies within you' (De vera religione, 39, 72). These are expressions that invite us to look at education as a path on which teachers and disciples walk together (cf. St. John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, 15 August 1990, 1), aware that we should not seek in vain but, at the same time, that we must continue to seek even after we have found. Only this humble and shared effort – which in school contexts takes the form of an educational project – can bring pupils and teachers closer to the truth.

And so we come to the second word: unity. As you may know, my "motto" is: *In illo uno unum*. This is also an Augustinian expression (cf. *Ennaratio in Psalmum 127*, 3), which reminds us that only in Christ do we truly find unity, as members united to the Head and as companions on the journey of continuous learning in life.

This dimension of 'with', constantly present in the writings of St Augustine, is fundamental in educational contexts, as a challenge to 'decentre' ourselves and as a stimulus to grow. For this reason, I have decided to take up and update the **Global Compact on Education** project, which was one of the prophetic insights of my venerable predecessor, Pope Francis. After all, as the Master of Hippo teaches, our being does not belong to us: 'Your soul,' he says, 'is no longer yours, but belongs to all your brothers and sisters' (Ep. 243, 4, 6). And if this is true in a general sense, it is even more so in the reciprocity typical of educational processes, in which the sharing of knowledge can only be seen as a great act of love.

In fact, this very word – love – is the third word. An Augustinian couplet gives us much food for thought in this regard: 'The love of God is the first

commandment, the love of neighbour is the first practice' (In Evangelium Iohannis Tractatus 17, 8). In the field of education, then, each of us might ask ourselves what commitment we are making to address the most urgent needs, what effort we are making to build bridges of dialogue and peace, even within teaching communities, what capacity we have to overcome preconceptions or limited visions, what openness we have in co-learning processes, what effort we are making to meet and respond to the needs of the most fragile, poor and excluded. Sharing knowledge is not enough to teach: love is needed. Only in this way will it be fruitful for those who receive it, in itself and also and above all for the charity it conveys. Teaching can never be separated from love, and one of the current difficulties in our societies is that we no longer know how to sufficiently value the great contribution that teachers and educators make to the community in this regard. But let us be careful: damaging the social and cultural role of educators is to mortgage our own future, and a crisis in the transmission of knowledge brings with it a crisis of hope.

And the last key word is joy. True teachers educate with a smile, and their challenge is to awaken smiles in the depths of their disciples' souls. Today, in our educational contexts, it is worrying to see the symptoms of widespread inner fragility growing at all ages. We cannot close our eyes to these silent cries for help; on the contrary, we must strive to identify their underlying causes. Artificial intelligence, in particular, with its cold, standardised technical knowledge, can further isolate already isolated students, giving them the illusion that they do not need others or, worse still, the feeling that they are not worthy of them. The role of educators, on the other hand, is a human commitment, and the very joy of the educational process is entirely human, a 'flame that melts souls together and makes many into one' (St Augustine, *Confessions*, IV, 8,13).

Therefore, dear friends, I invite you to make these values – interiority, unity, love and joy – the "cornerstones" of your mission towards your students, remembering the words of Jesus: "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40). Brothers and sisters, I thank you for the valuable work you do!

I bless you from my heart and pray for you. ■



## RELAUNCHING THE PACT WITH HOPE: THE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL COMMITMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES



On 30 October 2025, the International Congress "Educational Constellations: a pact with the future" was held at the Auditorium Conciliazione in Rome.

The fourth session of the Congress was dedicated to the **Global Compact on Education** and was chaired and moderated by Prof. Isabel Capeloa Gil, President of the Strategic Alliance of Catholic Research Universities.

Below are the speakers' presentations.

### AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL PACT: MOBILISING THE WORLD OF EDUCATION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

Cardinal Antoine Kambanda, Archbishop of Kigali, Rwanda; Grand Chancellor of the "Institut Pacte Éducatif Africain"



Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
I would like to thank His Eminence Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery



for Culture and Education, and his collaborators for giving the floor to the actors of the African Educational Pact during this important ecclesial and educational event.

My presentation will be divided into three parts:

1. The spirit of the African Educational Pact,
2. The Universal Magisterium and the African Educational Pact,
3. The Institute for the African Educational Pact.

#### 1. The spirit of the African Educational Pact

The African Educational Pact is the result of a collective and ecclesial effort carried out by pastors (cardinals, bishops and major superiors), the scientific community, and men and women in the field, both in the North and South of the world. The meetings that initiated, developed and nurtured this process took place in Rwanda, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Côte d'Ivoire. The next continental meeting will be held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Three key dates mark the life of the African Educational Pact:

it was presented to the People of God in Kinshasa on 6 November 2022; it was received by Pope Francis on 1 June 2023; and the Institute for the African Educational Pact



was launched in Kigali on 9 December 2024.

Three main points characterise the African Educational Pact:

First point: "Educating for the challenges of today and tomorrow"

The promoters of the African Education Compact first recognised the restorative, reconciliatory and innovative role of education in societies facing multiple challenges.

In an Africa marked by ethnic and interreligious conflicts, poverty, social inequalities, exclusion, corruption, domination and exploitation by multinational powers, and the migration of young Africans on the one hand, and on the other by numerous promising achievements, talents and accomplishments in various fields, education remains the only area capable of bringing hope to populations wounded by so many ills.

While the continent still struggles to provide education for all its children – and those who do attend school often study in difficult conditions – the African Education Compact highlights another pressing issue: the profound weaknesses of African education systems, which have a significant impact on the quality of life of African peoples. These weaknesses include:

- girls' education,
- the link between school and social training with issues of positioning and maturity,
- education in spirituality and transcendence,
- the inclusion of vulnerable children,
- ecological education and digitalisation education
- imported curricula, disconnected from African values and cultures, and more.

There is, therefore, a gap between African schools and African life.

Aware of the important role that the Church plays in education in Africa, the promoters of the African Educational Pact seek to make Catholic education a driving force for social transformation and a model for other educational actors: states, other religions, other Christian denominations and even private educational institutions.

Second point: 'It takes a whole village to educate a child'

This African proverb, echoed by Pope Francis, reflects the constellation of people involved in the African Education Pact. Pastors, academic researchers and grassroots workers such as teachers and catechists work together around this common vision. The African Education Compact builds bridges between the North and South of the

world, since education – as we understand it – is structured through dialogue between the past, present and future and through openness to different cultures.

In this way, the African Education Compact introduces a new educational dynamic based on a renewed paradigm of cooperation: South-South collaboration on the one hand, South-North collaboration on the other, and a renewed and enriched dialogue within the global North itself.

While deeply rooted in African cultures, the African Education Compact promotes education that transcends national, linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Third point: 'A new alliance of educational actors for transformative education'

The Church, families, governments, Catholic universities and Catholic schools are called to a paradigm shift, forming a solid alliance capable of implementing the principles of the African Educational Pact.

Transformative education can only be achieved through structures and institutions that establish or strengthen such an alliance. Its goal is to respond to the anxieties and challenges facing Africans today, in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council (*Gaudium et Spes*).

Therefore, the Church is called to promote a synodal spirit, greater involvement in real-life situations, and the inclusion of women in both formation and pastoral practice.

The Church must strengthen its educational structures and make them more professional. Governments and the Church should ensure that families are prepared to fully assume their educational responsibilities. States must invest more in the education of young people and collaborate with all educational actors, including the Church, to promote transformative education.

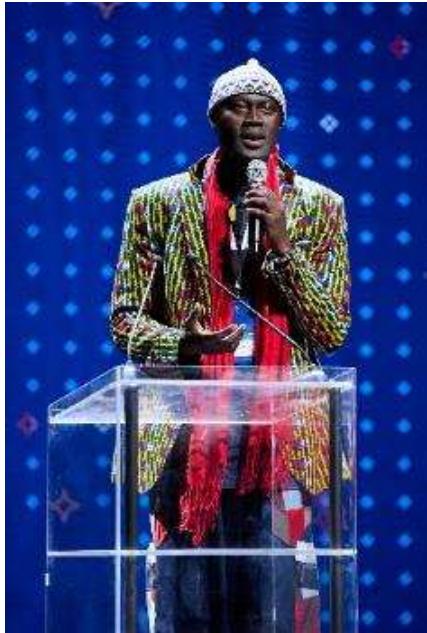
## 2. Pope Francis and the African Educational Pact

On 1 June 2023, Pope Francis joyfully received the African Educational Pact. On that occasion, he observed:

"The African Educational Pact should contribute not only to recovering and strengthening this communal and horizontal dimension of relationships, but also to highlighting the other dimension, the vertical one: the relationship with God."

The African Educational Pact is, therefore, a tool that strengthens the community and solidarity dimension typical of African peoples, often tested by ethnic and religious divisions. It also aims to promote a historical path distinct from that of the West in terms of relationship with God.

In a continent that Pope Benedict XVI described as the "spiritual lung of humanity," Catholic schools educate students in their relationship with God. The African Educational Pact promotes a Catholic education that harmoniously integrates the spiritual and community dimensions. But it also addresses the phenomena of secularism and fundamentalism



in Africa. Pope Francis expressed his joy that the African Educational Pact recalls and embodies "the values of traditional African education, particularly those of hospitality, welcome and solidarity". According to Pope Francis,

the education promoted by the African Educational Pact is a living sign of the inculturation that Africa needs. He stated that, in terms of values and vision, "This Pact is a novelty that develops from two great roots: traditional culture and the Christian faith." An education rooted in these two sources can bring hope, as it responds to what Pope Francis has called "the educational needs of the territory."

In his message to participants at the First African Congress on Catholic Education, held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in 2023, Pope Francis said: "Quality education is a sign of hope and a solid foundation for the peaceful coexistence that Africa needs today."

He warned Catholic educators against elitism, which leads to the creation of selective education systems, and invited them to draw inspiration from the African Educational Pact to renew Catholic education, making it more inclusive.

In the spirit of the African Educational Pact, several African bishops' conferences have implemented protocols to make Catholic schools more inclusive. Once again, the commitment of African bishops to support poor parents was fundamental to the project. They implemented a system in which the children of wealthy parents support the children of poor parents in terms of university fees.

Pope Francis also warned against the spirit of competition in education, as it promotes individualism. He urged educators to train students in the spirit of community and solidarity.

According to him, the Catholic education envisaged by the African Educational Pact should prepare the younger generation to be responsible people, capable of making constructive choices, wise decisions and committing themselves to building fraternal societies at the service of all and for the common good.

### 3. The Institute for the African Educational Pact: an instrument of implementation

To ensure that the African Educational Pact does not remain a mere document, the Institute for the African Educational Pact was established. Its mission is to assist African episcopal conferences in implementing the main guidelines of the African Educational Pact, thereby improving the quality of Catholic education.

By strengthening Catholic education, the Church seeks to contribute to the coming of the Kingdom of God in Africa today.

The Institute carries out four main types of activities:

#### 1. Research

The Institute brings together researchers from partner universities in the Global South and North to explore and deepen the themes promoted by the African Educational Pact. In this way, it contributes to the renewal and strengthening of knowledge in the academic, educational and cultural fields. It is a place of dialogue and collaboration, both among researchers from the Global South and between scholars from the Global South and North.

The knowledge produced by African researchers, rooted in African cultures and contexts, enters into dialogue with knowledge from other parts of the world. Research thus contributes to the Africanisation of curricula, as well as the pedagogical and methodological tools essential for Catholic education today.

#### 2. Training of local leaders and trainers

Training sessions – characterised by reflection, questioning and the sharing of good practices – bring together various grassroots actors to collaborate on joint projects aimed at improving Catholic education in their countries.

These training initiatives are authentic spaces for cooperation that strengthen the capacities of individuals and institutions involved in Catholic education.

#### 3. Local multiplication and appropriation of skills

Once trained, local leaders and trainers return to their countries to train their collaborators and other local actors in Catholic education.

This process of local multiplication and appropriation of skills within episcopal conferences and dioceses serves to strengthen the capacities of those involved in Catholic education in the field.

#### 4. Field support and technical assistance

Experts from the Institute for the African Educational Pact respond to requests for technical assistance from local teams at the level of episcopal conferences and dioceses to improve the quality of Catholic education in local contexts.

This ensures that the Institute's work remains grounded in the real challenges and concrete needs of the sector.

#### Conclusion

The Institute for the African Educational Pact supports the implementation of the main guidelines of the African Educational Pact within the African Episcopal Conferences, with the aim of making Catholic education a driving force for

transformation in the face of Africa's challenges – poverty, ethnic and religious conflicts, corruption, social inequalities and environmental exploitation, youth migration – and to promote the talents and achievements of adolescents and children.

Through its activities, the Institute strengthens the culture of communion and cooperation between local Churches, universities and national education systems. It contributes to improving the quality of education on the world's youngest continent.

This work is carried out through various initiatives, including the African Congresses on Catholic Education – the next one will be held in Nairobi from 4 to 7 December 2025 – and training workshops organised in collaboration with universities, institutions and Catholic men and women of good will from both the South and North of the world.

The Institute for the African Educational Pact promotes the creation of knowledge rooted in African cultures and realities. It thus strengthens Africa's place and role in the global dialogue of knowledge, while embodying the dialogue between faith and reason, Church and society.

However, in fulfilling its mission, the Institute faces two main challenges:

1. lack of funding and

2. the lack of interest on the part of the scientific community and international institutions in African education, cultures and knowledge.

The Institute, whose main objective is to promote peaceful coexistence in Africa, must also address global issues related to digital culture and its consequences for Africa, particularly in the field of education.

In conclusion, on behalf of the actors and beneficiaries of the Institute for the African Educational Pact, I would like to express my gratitude to the pastors, researchers and partner institutions in the North who, in a spirit of intellectual and missionary generosity, participate in and support its work.

I appeal to all Catholic institutions involved in education to make education a privileged space for solidarity and cooperation between the North and South of the world.

At a time when politics builds walls between peoples, cultures and religions; when technological exclusion threatens human dignity; and when political, ethnic and religious nationalism separates "us" from "others," let us make education a place of communion, solidarity and unity for all humanity, saved by and in Christ.

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Thank you for your kind attention.

## THE ARGENTINE EDUCATIONAL PACT

*Cardinal Mario Poli, Archbishop Emeritus of Buenos Aires, Argentina;  
Argentine Educational Pact*



10

In Pope Francis' ongoing and innovative social teaching, global education has been the subject of a constant and sensitive pastoral approach, in the face of the consequences of growing marginalisation affecting millions of new generations of children, adolescents and young people, deprived of the learning process in vast areas of the world<sup>1</sup>. The launch of the **Global Education Pact** in September 2019 is the mature fruit of his vision of a more just and supportive world, with equal opportunities, which gives priority to the right to education for all.

The Pope did not limit himself to an incisive diagnosis of the emergency in global education; with the launch came a stimulating appeal: 'Today more than ever, it is necessary to join forces for a broad educational alliance to form mature people, capable of overcoming fragmentation and opposition and rebuilding the fabric of relationships for a more fraternal humanity'<sup>2</sup>. Public education in Argentina, which has seen memorable times, is no exception in the Latin American landscape today. In addition to the heartbreaking indicators of material poverty (food, housing, health, unemployment), there is now "learning poverty," a decades-long decline in the education system, accentuated during the pandemic, which has exacerbated the emergency in the most vulnerable sectors.

The Pope's appeal has been well received by the members of the Argentine Episcopal Conference, who on several occasions have denounced the deterioration of schools and their mission in society, leading to a renewed commitment to the younger generations. This pastoral motion was carried out through the Commission for Education - created from the outset to promote Catholic teaching - and now, broadening its gaze to the horizon of public education, regulated by the National Education Law (December 2006), which allows for three

<sup>1</sup> Four years ago, the Pope had already highlighted "the already alarming educational gap, with over 250 million school-age children excluded from any educational activity". Video message from the Holy Father on the occasion of the meeting promoted and organised by the

Congregation for Catholic Education, Pontifical Lateran University, 15 October 2020 (=Video message, 15 October 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Message for the launch of the **Global Educational Pact**, 12 September 2019.



models of educational management: state, private and social.

Within the Commission for Education, an idea was born that we agreed to call the Argentine Educational Pact (= PEA), inspired by a renewed spirit of evangelisation, as requested by Pope Francis: "Faithful to the model of the Master, it is vital that the Church today go out to proclaim the Gospel to everyone, in all places, on all occasions, without delay, without disgust and without fear. The joy of the Gospel is for all people, it cannot exclude anyone"<sup>3</sup>.

This has involved building bridges with the education system in civil society, where we have met people of good will with whom we share a common desire to restore schools as the best institutional space for more open and inclusive education, which is urgently needed for the present and future of a huge student population. For this noble cause, we wanted to share what the Council left us: 'Among all the means of education, the most important is the school which, by virtue of its mission, while cultivating intellectual faculties with assiduous care, develops the capacity for sound judgement, introduces the heritage of culture acquired by past generations, promotes a sense of values, prepares for professional life, fosters friendly relations between students of different natures and conditions, contributing to mutual understanding; moreover, it constitutes a centre whose work and benefits must be shared simultaneously by families, teachers, various associations that promote cultural, civic and religious life, civil society and the entire human community'<sup>4</sup>.

In order to raise awareness of the PEA, the CEA Education Commission<sup>5</sup>, in collaboration with CONSUDEC<sup>6</sup> and FAERA<sup>7</sup>, has provided a space for pluralistic and federal dialogue, with the aim of reaching as many rural areas of Argentina as possible. To this end, we have visited various parts of the country<sup>8</sup> and convened the main

representatives of the current state public education system, without excluding representatives of private schools: parents, students, primary and secondary school teachers, rectors, legal representatives, directors and headteachers, local and national union leaders, experts in pedagogy and teaching, philosophers and thinkers on this subject, specialists in education funding, provincial ministers of education, professionals from psycho-pedagogical cabinets, deputies and governors, men and women in politics and, in some cases, specialised journalism.

At each meeting, we devote the first few minutes to presenting the main ideas of Pope Francis' PEG, for whom 'education is always an act of hope that invites us to share and transform the sterile and paralysing logic of indifference into another logic, capable of welcoming our common belonging. If today's educational spaces are adapted to the logic of substitution and repetition, and are incapable of generating and showing new horizons, in which hospitality, intergenerational solidarity and the value of transcendence build a new culture, are we not missing the opportunity of this historic moment'<sup>9</sup>. In this introduction, we outlined the commitment that the Pope proposed to



educators: "Placing the person at the centre of every formal and informal educational process"; "Listening to the voice of students... to build together a future of justice and peace"; full inclusion of women in education; including the family as the primary educator and reconciling it with the school; "Opening ourselves to welcoming the most vulnerable and marginalised"; to renew study in order to organise knowledge and science "at the service of the human family in the perspective of an integral ecology"; to educate people to listen to the voice of the earth, "protecting it from the exploitation of its resources, adopting more sober lifestyles", opting for "renewable energies that

<sup>3</sup> Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Conciliar Declaration *Gravissimum educationis*, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Composed of six bishops and one priest, executive secretary.

<sup>6</sup> National Council of Catholic Education (with 100 years of service).

<sup>7</sup> Federation of Religious Educational Associations of Argentina.

<sup>8</sup> The 12 meetings were held in five of the six main regions of Argentina: Rioplatense; Northeast; Northwest; Cuyo and Patagonia.

<sup>9</sup> Video message, 15 October 2020.

respect the human and natural environment, following the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity and the circular economy<sup>10</sup>.

In our country, the presence of the Church predates the State, where everyone knows that for over three centuries it has carried out commendable educational work, from primary schools to universities, where most of our national heroes were educated. This partly explains why our initiative was welcomed by all the sectors that responded to the invitation; this allowed for a rich exchange of ideas and opinions, in a cordial and serious atmosphere, where listening and constructive dialogue were the most evident aspects. In this context, topics common to the education sector were addressed: teacher training and qualification, school organisation, inclusion of people with disabilities, education funding, the relationship between education and work and between school and family, the integration of new technologies into curricula, and the contribution and challenge of artificial intelligence. There was no shortage of issues common to all jurisdictions, such as early school leaving, repetition and school dropout, and psycho-pedagogical assistance for adolescents and young people.

In all cases, there was a remarkable convergence of opinions, starting from the reality that affects and afflicts the national education system, which particularly affects primary and secondary levels, and at the same time, a clear commitment emerged to join forces to transform reality. In this sense, we sensed a new wind of hope among young teachers, whom we had the opportunity to listen to at conferences with 500 and 350 participants in two provinces in the south and north of the country. They are aware of the crisis, but they have stated that in order to overcome it, schools must recover the essentials of teaching: pedagogy and didactics, even if the context of poverty in their environment also forces them to take responsibility for feeding and protecting their students<sup>11</sup>.

Today, assessment tests are not encouraging in Argentina. Once again, they point to a worsening educational emergency. Of the 100 pupils who started primary school in Argentina in 2013, only 63 reached the final year of secondary school on schedule, i.e. in 2024. But if we look at how many of these young people have achieved an adequate level of knowledge in the two core subjects – language and mathematics – the data becomes even more critical: only 10 out of 100 students finish secondary school 'on time and adequately'<sup>12</sup>

. The Episcopal Commission for Education will continue to accompany this educational challenge. If we ask ourselves: is it worth committing to promoting an educational alliance with civil institutions, when it is up to the State to legislate, support and nurture it over time? We note that there are reasons to say that we cannot be indifferent to a challenge that affects all of us who live together in this country. In this regard, St Paul's words come to our aid: 'Christ died for all' (2 Cor 5:14-15 and Rom 5:8), and even if many people do not know this, it is up to Christians to make it known.<sup>13</sup> Our Master warned us: 'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven' (Matthew 5:14-16).

12

## THE EDUCATIONAL PACT IN INDIA

*Mons. Elias Gonsalves, Archbishop of Nagpur, India; Director of the Office of Culture and Education, Indian Bishops' Conference*



Relaunching the Covenant with Hope: the educational and cultural commitment of Catholic schools and universities

Dear educators, Eminences and Excellencies, Greetings of peace and hope! It is a joy and a privilege to reflect with you today on the fundamental theme: "Reviving the Covenant of Hope: the educational and cultural commitment of Catholic schools and universities". This theme invites us to rediscover the heart of our mission: to

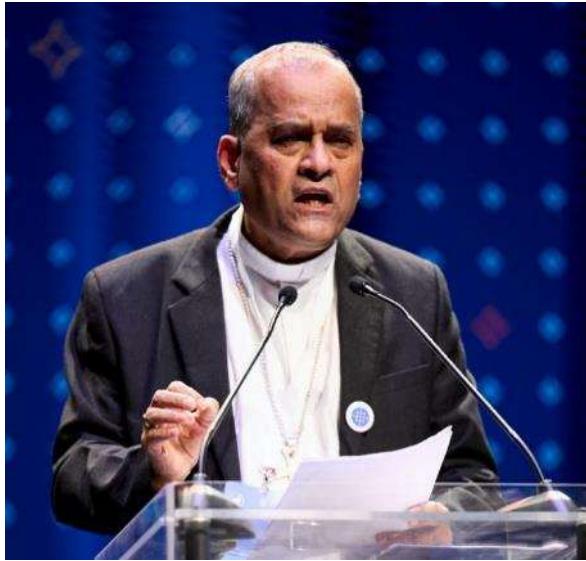


<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> In line with what was heard at all the meetings, the Education Commission prepared a document entitled: "Itinerary of the Argentine Education Pact and proposals for a state policy". It was presented to the Plenary Assembly of the CEA and approved unanimously. It will be available on the Dicastery's website.

<sup>12</sup> These data come from the School Results Index (IRE) compiled by Argentinos por la Educación, which combines information on student trajectories (those who have not repeated or dropped out) with learning outcomes measured by the Aprender 2024 secondary school tests.

<sup>13</sup> See Cardinal Fra Raniero Cantalamessa, *Meditation to the members of the Conclave*, May 2025.



educate with hope, to form them in faith and to transform our world through love and wisdom.

#### 1. Education as an act of hope

"Education is an act of hope that looks to the future." Pope Francis' words in the **Global Compact on Education** (2020) capture the essence of Catholic education in India. In a world marked by inequality, ecological crisis and moral confusion, Catholic education rekindles humanity's trust that every child can flourish in truth, love and justice. With over 16,000 schools, 650 colleges and six universities, the Church in India educates more than 8.7 million students from all walks of life every year. Catholic education is a pact between faith and reason, tradition and innovation, which shapes individuals endowed with conscience, compassion and creativity. It remains a vital force in shaping India's moral and intellectual landscape. Our present world often suffers from disillusionment: war, violence, environmental degradation and moral confusion. In such a context, hope becomes both a virtue and a duty. Catholic education must be a beacon of hope where faith illuminates reason and where truth, beauty and goodness inspire every learning experience.

2. Catholic education: a heritage and a mission  
From the Loreto schools that empower girls in Calcutta to the Jesuit and Don Bosco institutions that serve tribal and rural youth, Catholic education integrates Gospel values with nation building. Rooted in *Gravissimum Educationis* (1965), education is seen as the integral formation of the person, cultivating intellect, virtue and service. In a pluralistic society such as India, Catholic schools are bridges of fraternity, promoting dialogue, justice and peace through a synodal approach that values participation, collaboration and shared discernment. As *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (1990) reminds us, Catholic institutions harmonise faith and reason to build communities of faith, dialogue and peace.

3. Education 5.0: hope for the digital generation  
Education 5.0 calls on Catholic institutions to train the next generation (Next Gen) as ethical digital

citizens. In India's diverse educational landscape, innovation must go hand in hand with compassion. Catholic schools nurture students who are resilient to artificial intelligence and who use technology creatively and responsibly. To bridge the digital divide, institutions such as the Don Bosco Media Network in Shillong and Holy Cross Schools in Agartala organise digital literacy workshops that address misinformation, cyberbullying and social media addiction. The CBCI's 'Digital Literacy for Life' initiative promotes discernment and responsible engagement with technology. Teacher training is critical to this renewal. The CBCI's 'Conscious Educator, Compassionate Leader' programme promotes emotional intelligence and structured support for mental health. Loyola College in Chennai and Sacred Heart College in Tamil Nadu have established counselling centres and wellness centres that care for the inner well-being of educators.



#### 4. Building the Educational Village in Asia

Pope Francis' call to "build an educational village" resonates strongly in the diverse context of Asia. Beyond institutions, Catholic education cultivates learning ecosystems that unite families, civil society and faith communities, promoting collaboration and dialogue through a synodal spirit of communion and shared mission. We continue to promote "Schools of Dialogue" throughout India. Formal collaborations include Christ University's partnership with UNESCO-MGIEP on peace and sustainability and Don Bosco Tech India's engagement with the Ministry of Skills Development. Informal collaborations, such as Parish Neighbourhood Learning Circles, involve teachers, parents and alumni in literacy and environmental projects. Together, they embody *Veritatis Gaudium*'s vision of universities as "laboratories of dialogue and hope".

#### 5. Eight Pathways for Renewal

Path 1: Place the human person at the centre. Education begins with the human person, not as an economic resource, but as a child of God and a gifted human being with dignity. Catholic institutions such as St. Xavier's College in Mumbai and Christ University in Bengaluru integrate service learning and rural immersion into their curricula. Revitalising values education, linking Gospel values to constitutional ideals, strengthens this foundation. Through reflective pedagogy, students learn empathy and civic virtue.



May our schools and universities become communities that express the synodal Church: Communion – where teachers and students walk together in respect and listening.

Participation – where every voice contributes to the common good.

Mission – where learning leads to service and the transformation of society.

As educators, we are not mere transmitters of knowledge; we are witnesses to values and builders of a culture rooted in the Gospel, which places the human person at the centre.

Pathway 2: Listening to young people. Truly listening to young people means giving them the tools to ask questions and participate. Institutions such as Don Bosco College in Matunga and Loyola College in Chennai establish youth parliaments, innovation labs and peer mentoring cells. The integration of structured courses on critical thinking and social analysis enables students to interpret complex issues, such as inequality, ecology and pluralism, with moral clarity.

Pathway 3: Empowering women and girls. Education remains the most effective means of uplifting and transforming. Catholic institutions such as Loreto Convent in Kolkata, Sophia College in Mumbai and Stella Maris in Chennai have consistently encouraged generations of women to lead in science, education and governance. Inspired by Fratelli Tutti (2020) and the All-India Catholic Education Policy (2023), Catholic schools and universities ensure equal access and leadership opportunities for girls through scholarships, mentoring programmes and women's study centres. As Pope Francis reminds us, "A society that excludes women from decision-making processes is impoverished."

Pathway 4: Strengthening Families. Families are the first educators. Many Catholic schools across India organise Family Academies, counselling sessions and digital parenting workshops. Strengthening collaboration between family and school promotes emotional resilience and spiritual balance, creating a pastoral community of care. The Office of Education and Culture

of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI OEC) encourages the creation of Family Academies, where parents are trained in communication, values formation and emotional well-being. In a time of increasing isolation, the school-family partnership can transform into a

pastoral community of care, ensuring that education is truly a shared journey of growth.

Pathway 5: Welcoming the marginalised. The Gospel calls us to educate from the peripheries. Jesuit schools in Jharkhand and Odisha reach over 30,000 Adivasi children; St. Joseph's College in Trichy and St. Xavier's College in Ranchi support Dalit and first-generation students through bridge courses and scholarships. The CBCI's Mission for Inclusive Education renews this commitment by ensuring that education remains a sanctuary of dignity and inclusion. As Laudato Si' emphasises, "Every person is equally sacred, endowed with inalienable dignity." Catholic education thus becomes an act of justice and fraternity.

Pathway 6: Reinventing Economics and Politics. Education forms ethical citizens who engage in society with conscience. Strengthening the foundations of social sciences across disciplines promotes civic literacy and reflective citizenship. Xavier University in Bhubaneswar and St. Joseph's University in Bengaluru lead civic education through social entrepreneurship and governance modules rooted in Fratelli Tutti.



**Path 7: Safeguarding our common home.** Inspired by Laudato Si' and Laudate Deum, Catholic institutions in India are training custodians of creation. Schools and universities promote eco-spirituality through biodiversity gardens, waste reduction campaigns and renewable energy projects. Sacred Heart College in Tirupattur and St. Xavier's in Kolkata integrate environmental ethics into daily learning. Across India, numerous Catholic schools have joined the *Planet Fraternity* movement, a global initiative that aligns education with the call to ecologic conversion and human fraternity. As Pope Francis states, "Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting that directly and significantly affect the world around us."

Pathway 8: Educate for critical consciousness. Catholic education must promote a reflective engagement with reality. Integrating social analysis and community engagement into learning cultivates discernment and civic responsibility. Immersion in rural and urban areas, fieldwork, and community action projects enable students to connect faith to life, transforming awareness into compassionate action.

## 6. Research, innovation, and impact on alumni

Loyola College's Research Seed Grant programme, Christ University's Centre for Policy Research, and Don Bosco Tech's *Innovation Labs* exemplify how faith and reason converge for social transformation. Catholic higher education promotes research in service to humanity. Alumni, eminent scientists, distinguished educators, healthcare professionals, and social leaders embody the transformative legacy of Catholic education. Their lives reflect excellence anchored



in service.

#### 7. Conclusion

These paths form a unified vision: education as hope in action. The CBCI Office for Education and Culture continues to animate this mission through national consultations, leadership programmes, and collaborative networks. By forming people of character, conscience, compassion, and commitment, Catholic education in India remains a shining witness: a living covenant of faith, reason, and hope for future generations.

Dear friends of education, the future of humanity passes through our classrooms. To revive the Global Covenant with hope is to believe once again that education can change hearts and societies. May our Catholic schools and universities become gardens of hope, where faith gives meaning to learning, where culture is transformed by love, and where the Gospel of Christ inspires every search for truth. May Mary, our mother, accompany us as she did her son on this planet. Let us walk together – teachers, students, parents and the Church, especially the Church in Asia and in the South of the world – as pilgrims of hope, building a new civilisation of love through education.

## THE EDUCATIONAL PACT IN THE WORLD. BUILDING CONSTELLATIONS OF HOPE



Fr. Ezio Lorenzo Bono, C.S.F., Coordinator of the **Global Compact on Education** for the Dicastery for Culture and Education.

*Carina Rossa, Researcher at LUMSA (Italy)  
Member of the Scientific Committee of the  
Global Compact on Education.*



The **Global Compact on Education** is the major educational project launched by Pope Francis in 2020, inviting us to change the world by changing education.

The invitation is addressed to all those working in the world of education and culture — educators, parents, teachers, researchers, sportspeople, artists, leaders, men and women of the entertainment world — who are called to form an alliance, a pact, to educate the younger generations in universal brotherhood.

We cannot change the world alone, but together. Because education is never a solitary act, it is always an act of love, a gesture of trust in the future.

#### *The spread of the GCE around the world*

In five years, the **Global Compact on Education** has been widely welcomed, spreading throughout the world, generating numerous initiatives in schools and universities, in research and training, and promoting the renewal of educational pathways and curricula.

The youngest regions of the planet — Latin America, Africa, Asia — and therefore the most open to novelty and innovative proposals, have responded particularly enthusiastically.

In Latin America, national and regional Education Pacts have been established. It is the region where the Pact is most widely disseminated and implemented, thanks to extensive experience in networking and the values of fraternity, inclusion and integral ecology, which resonate deeply in the culture and educational-pastoral context of the continent.

In Africa, several nations have come together to inculcate the GCE in their own contexts, creating an African Education Pact. It should be remembered that Pope Francis launched the **Global Compact on Education**, starting from a proverb from the millennial African educational tradition: "It takes a whole village to educate a child." In Asia, in harmony with the great Eastern wisdom and religious traditions, countries such as India, Japan, China, the Philippines and Taiwan have launched new initiatives, and significant contributions have also come from Australia.

The North Atlantic region (Europe and North America), which is more attached to its educational

traditions and more secularised, has embarked on a slower but nonetheless profound and promising path.

In any case, the **Global Compact on Education** has brought a breath of fresh air, restoring enthusiasm and hope to the world of education over the last five years.

#### *The seven goals of the GCE.*

In the Apostolic Letter that Pope Leo published on Tuesday, he defines the Global Compact on Education as the guiding star of our journey as educators.

'It is an invitation to form an alliance and network to educate for universal fraternity. Its seven pathways remain our foundation: putting the person at the centre; listening to children and young people; promoting the dignity and full participation of women; recognising the family as the first educator; opening ourselves to welcome and inclusion; renewing the economy and politics in the service of humanity; caring for our common home. These 'stars' have inspired schools, universities and educational communities around the world, generating concrete processes of humanisation (10.1)."

Seven stars, seven paths of humanity. Not the lines



of a programme, but traces of a common dream.

The three new objectives of the GCE

Pope Leo, in this Jubilee of the World of Education, opens a new educational season. He takes up and relaunches the **Global Compact on Education** with these words:

Sixty years after *Gravissimum educationis* and five years after the Compact, history challenges us with new urgency. Rapid and profound changes expose children, adolescents and young people to unprecedented fragility. It is not enough to preserve: we must relaunch. I ask all educational institutions to inaugurate a season that speaks to the hearts of the new generations, recomposing knowledge and meaning, competence and responsibility, faith and life (10.2).

Pope Leo relaunches the GCE — which we could call Global Compact on Education 2.0 — adding three new priorities to the seven goals:

1. The first concerns the inner life: young people seek depth; they need spaces for silence,



discernment, dialogue with their conscience and with God.

2. The second concerns human digital technology: we train people in the wise use of technology and AI, putting people before algorithms and harmonising technical, emotional, social, spiritual and ecological intelligence.

3. The third concerns unarmed and disarming peace: we educate in non-violent language, reconciliation, bridges and not walls; 'Blessed are the peacemakers' (Mt 5:9) becomes the method and content of learning. (10.3)

Three new stars in the sky of the Pact: interiority, digital humanity and peace. Three words that sound like a prophecy for the future of education.

The love that moves the sun and the other stars

In conclusion, Pope Leo, inaugurating this new educational season, invites us to open doors and invent new paths.

And just as in the sky, even if the stars are the same, the sky changes its appearance depending on where you are: those who live in the southern hemisphere see different constellations from those who live in the north — yet the sky is the same. So it is with the **Global Compact on Education**: it is one, but it is read and experienced by each people and culture in a unique

way. Each continent has its own doors to open, its own paths to invent, its own stars to light up.

Many constellations, but all moved by the one "Love that moves the sun and the other stars." Today, in this room, we are not simply witnesses to the **Global Compact on Education**: we are part of its constellation.

Let us not forget: stars do not shine because they do not know the night, but because they have passed through it. And so too, after every crisis, we can shine with a purer light.

Let us leave this World Congress and this Jubilee of the World of Education with renewed passion and with this certainty: education is not only a mission, it is an act of cosmic love.

It is a way of collaborating in God's dream, so that — as Dante said — the love that moves the sun and the other stars may continue to move us too, educators of a new dawn, under one sky, full of hope.

## YOU STUDENTS ARE THE REASON FOR THE WORLD OF



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Dear students,  
What a joy it is to be here with you!  
Truly, it is a great thrill. I feel a little at home — perhaps because for many years I lived alongside young people, first as a professor and then as vice-rector at the Catholic University of Portugal. There is a proverb that says, "Next to young people, one does not grow old." Living with young people is like keeping the engine running: it helps one to remain curious, open to learning, and to look at the world with open and fresh eyes.



Today we are inaugurating the *Jubilee Week of the World of Education*.

The Jubilee, as you know, is a special year of grace that the Church celebrates every 25 years. When the next one is celebrated, you will already be adults, men and women full of life and experience! This year, many other sectoral Jubilees have already been celebrated — for sport, artists, young people, etc. — involving millions of people from all over the world, and today we begin the one dedicated to education.

And you know what? It is wonderful to begin it with you, because you students are the reason why the whole world of school, university and every educational project exists.

I would like to leave you with a little message: learn to always look up. Learn to raise your gaze. Look at the stars. Look at the real stars, which require you to have a long gaze. Keep the power of your gaze intact and free. Do not let yourselves be hijacked by the grey tyranny of screens.

Every generation has its dreamers: Dante looked at the stars, Galileo looked at the planets, Pier Giorgio Frassati looked at the mountains, and the young San Carlo Acutis (who died at the age of fifteen) looked at his computer screen, using it as a tool to proclaim Beauty and not as an end in itself... and all of them, we can say, were looking for the same thing: the light of meaning. What is the light that can give meaning to everything and to myself? I know that you too have many 'stars'. You call them *celebrities*: singers, actors, influencers, sportspeople, but also teachers, people who inspire you and whom you follow with passion. It is wonderful to admire them, but remember that you too are stars. Your life must shine, and your light must never go out.

Many famous *stars* shine for a moment and then fade away, like shooting stars. But your light will remain on forever if you keep it connected to the source of the three great pillars of a happy life: truth, goodness and beauty.

And you know what? The stars in the sky are beautiful because they shine together. If a star shines alone, it is just a dot in the darkness of space. But when many stars come together, they form constellations, and those constellations serve as a guide to a better world.

So I say to you: do not shine alone. Together with your companions, with those who are close to you every day, draw a constellation of hope. Look for those who are isolated, those who feel invisible or dull. Notice those who live in the shadows and give them light and hope with your friendship. Our schools cannot become archipelagos of loneliness. Hope is contagious: the more you give it, the more it grows.

Today, your film heroes travel between galaxies and planets (like Buzz Lightyear who says, "*To infinity and beyond!*"), but the real space mission is within you. It is to discover your light and unite it with that of others to form a constellation of hope. And it is precisely this image of *constellations* that will guide the entire week of the Jubilee of the

World of Education: a sky full of stars shining together to illuminate the future.

Tomorrow, Pope Leo XIV will launch his first Apostolic Letter on Education. In it, he will remind us of two great anniversaries: the 60th anniversary of the document *Gravissimum Educationis*, which proclaimed the universal right to study and integral formation, and the 5th anniversary of the ***Global Compact on Education*** desired by Pope Francis, a project that has united schools, universities and communities around the world to educate for universal fraternity.

Now Pope Leo will relaunch this project — we could call it "***Global Compact on Education 2.0***" (*two point zero*) — adding three new major goals for the future of education:

1. *Cultivating the inner life.* Cultivating silence, spirituality, the search for meaning in life. This is precisely what so many young people like you have asked the Pope in surveys over the years.
2. *Generating a human digital world.* Learning to use technology and artificial intelligence wisely, to grow as people, not to become slaves to screens and algorithms.
3. *Building a disarmed and disarming peace.* Learning to disarm words, to disarm prejudices, and also to disarm education, so that it does not create divisions between those who have more and those who have less. Peace, truly, begins in the schoolroom: in respect, in friendship, in everyday gestures.

But I will stop here, as I do not want to anticipate too much of what Pope Leo will say to you on Thursday, 30 October, when he meets you. I know he is looking forward to it with great enthusiasm. I conclude by renewing my invitation: let your light shine. Shine as brightly as you can. But above all, remain united to the source of true light, as Dante, whom you study at school, said: let yourselves always be moved by "*the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.*"

Happy Jubilee of Education!

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça  
Vatican City, 27-10-2025 ■



Minister of Education Giuseppe Valditara at the inauguration of the Jubilee of the World of Education

## SCHOOL IS LIFE



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In his speech, Minister Giuseppe Valditara invited everyone to rediscover the hope of the Jubilee as a pilgrimage towards goodness, which, in an Augustinian vision, goes hand in hand with courage and fraternity, understood as unity in charity. Valditara emphasised that the purpose of this Jubilee is to relaunch the seven commitments of the ***Global Compact on Education*** promoted by Pope Francis. The minister wanted to recall in particular the centrality of the person, a principle present in the Italian Constitution thanks to the Catholic Giorgio La Pira, listening to the new generations and the empowerment of women, in order to break down all discrimination.

Minister Valditara: "We dream of a school that puts the person at the centre: respect, hope and fraternity."

Family, hospitality and global solidarity

Investing in the family, renewing the educational pact that binds families and schools, and involving vulnerable families in their children's education were some of the key points of the minister's speech. Another important theme was education for hospitality. On this subject, Valditara, who recently participated in the G20 education summit in South Africa, launched a proposal to collect donations in Europe to guarantee the right to education in Africa, where, he said, "there is a shortage of 17 million teachers."

*Introductory speech by astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti*  
'Don't let anyone steal your attention and happiness'  
Engineer Samantha Cristoforetti, the first Italian woman to fly in space and the first European to command the International Space Station, opened the eyes of the young people in the audience to an educational risk: 'You are growing up in a society of mass distraction, mobile phones and apps that steal your attention and happiness'. 'Go outside, take long walks, look at the reality around you,' she urged, inviting young people to take risks and rediscover the value of hard work. Quoting Jonathan Swift, she added: 'Thinking for yourself is difficult if there aren't enough things in your head to think about.'

*Testimonies of art, sport and faith*

During the morning, Brother Sidival Fila shared his journey as an artist and religious figure, inviting young people to transform beauty into service, while Sister Zeph and Nhial Deng, winners of the international Global Teacher and Global Student Prizes, testified to the power of education as a means of personal and community redemption. The meeting with athlete Andy Diaz and the performance by singer Annalisa Minetti combined music and sport in a common message of confidence in the future.

Vatican News ■

# Constellations of Educational Networks



On 30 and 31 October 2025, among the numerous events organised by the Dicastery for Culture and Education to accompany the celebration of the Jubilee of the World of Education, the Sala San Pio X hosted the event 'Constellations of Educational Networks', an exhibition space that highlighted the Church's widespread contribution to education at an international level.

The intention behind this event was to create a real "village": an open, polycentric space where the exhibition stands were not simply stops on a guided tour, but nodes in a wider network that mapped out a space to be inhabited.

Participants were not passive spectators, but active explorers.

They moved freely among the stands of the various educational institutions, stopping in small groups around the exhibitors' tables for a close and personal encounter.

In this landscape, different charismatic and institutional identities coexisted within the same visual horizon, offering an overview of the Church's educational activity. Thirty organisations from around the world populated this horizon, in a dialogue that brought together: historic religious families such as the Salesian Society of St John Bosco and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Society of Jesus, the Lasallians, the Marist Brothers, the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), the Canossian Daughters of Charity and the Ursulines of the Roman Union, alongside

representatives of the Union of Superiors General (UISG/USG); major international academic and educational networks such as FIUC, ODUCAL, ASEACCU, SACRU, CRUIPRO, UMEC and OIEC, together with organisations such as FIDAE, ANEC Brazil, the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) and the structures of Notre Dame Australia, as well as the Institute for African Compact on Education (IPEA/AEPI). The institutional dimension was represented by the Episcopal Conferences of Italy (CEI), Spain (CEE) and Brazil (CNBB) and by the Vatican Observatory, while the picture was enriched by organisations such as CLAYSS-Uniservitatem, the social enterprise Con i Bambini, CAFOD, AVSI and FTD Educação.

This diversity was embraced by the **Global Compact on Education** space: not just another stand among many, but the common backdrop, the ideal boundaries of the village.

Within the same space, an area dedicated to presentations marked the rhythm of this experience. At regular intervals of thirty minutes, all 30 organisations present, together with CELAM and Catholic Education Technology, took the floor to introduce themselves and present innovative experiences and projects in the field of education. Each of these voices thus opened a window onto contemporary education, offering concrete perspectives on crucial issues: from the ethical challenges of Artificial Intelligence to the urgency of integral ecology, from the fight against educational poverty to the promotion of peace and human dignity, to the dialogue between science and faith, reaffirming the value of global networks and weaving a polyphonic narrative of innovation and hope.



## CARD. DE MENDONÇA: EDUCATION IS HOPE AND PEACE



On 28 October, the 60th anniversary of the conciliar declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* will be celebrated and a document by Pope Leo XIV will be published. On 1 November, St John Henry Newman will be proclaimed a Doctor of the Church. Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça: these will be days of prayer and reflection.

A time of grace, a time of renewal. An invitation to rediscover the beauty and responsibility of education, which is always an act of hope. The celebrations presided over by Pope Leo XIV will open and close the Jubilee of the World of Education, which will culminate in the proclamation of St John Henry Newman as Doctor of the Church.

### *A compass for the Jubilee days*

Not just imparting knowledge, but performing an act of accompaniment and love, because those who educate sow seeds in hearts. This is what educators and students will be able to experience in the spaces of the Education Village. Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, highlighted three key points when presenting the Jubilee. The first is that the declaration of the Second Vatican Council, *Gravissimum educationis*, whose 60th anniversary falls on 28 October, will be the backdrop to these days of prayer and reflection. And precisely for this anniversary, said the cardinal, a document from Pope Leo XIV is expected that will reflect on the relevance of the conciliar declaration promulgated by Pope Paul VI on 28 October 1965.

### *The Global Compact on Education*

This Jubilee, as emphasised by the prefect, will also be an opportunity to relaunch and enrich the **Global Compact on Education**, an initiative promoted by Pope Francis. During the conference, the representative of the Compact, Father Ezio Lorenzo Bono, spoke on this topic, emphasising that three objectives will be added to the seven already planned, concerning artificial intelligence, disarmed and disarming peace, and education for the interior life.

### *St John Newman Doctor of the Church*

"The Holy Father," said Cardinal de Mendonça, "has decided to associate the Jubilee of Education with the figure of an extraordinary educator and great inspirer of the philosophy of education: St John Henry Newman. He will be declared a Doctor of the Church in the celebration on 1 November." The saint will also be named co-patron of the Church's educational mission, together with St Thomas Aquinas. Starting from these jubilee days, the aim is to "inaugurate a new season that involves educational constellations with a new spirit and new plans, asking them to become true maps of hope in today's world," explained the prefect. He concluded: "Education is the new name for peace and puts hope on the map of the present and the future."

### *The programme*

Among the many events planned - and detailed by Archbishop Carlo Maria Polvani, secretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education - there will also be space for some activities presented by Cardinal Peter Turkson, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, who spoke about the Jubilee of Knowledge. This event will be held within the educational world and will emphasise the theme of ecology. The Jubilee of the educational world will open with Holy Mass presided over by Pope Leo XIV on 27 October. The following day will mark the anniversary of *Gravissimum educationis*. On the 29th, the exhibition *Vivere, credere, guardare questo cielo* (Live, believe, look at this sky) by Tommaso Spazzini Villa will be inaugurated. On Thursday 30 October, the Pope will meet students in the Paul VI Hall, while the Auditorium della Conciliazione will host an international conference entitled: Educational Constellations – A Pact with the Future. Also, on the 30th and 31st, *La scuola del cuore* (The School of the Heart) will be held in the Church of San Lorenzo in Piscibus, and *Costellazioni delle Reti Educative* (Constellations of Educational Networks) will be held in the Sala San Pio X. On the 31st, the Pontiff will meet with educators.

### Catholic education in the world

A detailed report on the state of Catholic education in the world was presented during the conference by Elena Beccalli, rector of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart and president of the Federation of European Catholic Universities (Fuce). There are many noteworthy aspects, including one that stands out: Catholicism has the most extensive educational network in the world. According to data from the Central Statistical Office of the Catholic Church at the Holy See, this network comprises over 231,000 schools and universities in 171 countries. The professor pointed out that as many as 72 million students attend Catholic schools and universities. Among the continents, Africa is the beating heart of the educational proposal, with the highest number of enrolments. "In an era marked by profound polarisation and growing inequalities," Beccalli observed, "education can and must be one of the most effective and transformative levers for promoting integral human development globally."



However, there are also alarming figures on the general front: 61 million children worldwide have never entered a classroom and 160 million young people do not reach the end of secondary school. The rector pointed out that the apostolic exhortation *Dilexi te* reserves space for the role of education, echoing the words of Pope Francis, who insisted on considering it one of the highest expressions of Christian charity. "Pope Leo XIV," she said, "recalled, through a historical reinterpretation, the central role played by the Church in education." She quoted the words of the Pontiff: "The education of the poor, according to the Christian faith, is not a favour, but a duty." Finally, the professor pointed out another striking fact: according to UNESCO, in order to achieve national goals in low- and middle-income countries, there is an annual funding shortfall of approximately \$97 billion until 2030. In 2024, global military spending reached \$2.718 trillion. These figures give pause for thought.

Eugenio Murali - Vatican City

<https://www.vaticannews.va/it/vaticano/news/2025-10/giubileo-mondo-educativo-speranza-papa-leo-xiv.html>

23rd edition of the San Bernardino 2025 Award  
dedicated to the **Global Compact on Education**

### YOUNG CREATIVES TALK ABOUT THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION



On Thursday 4 December 2025, a new edition of the San Bernardino Award, a prize dedicated to socially responsible advertising, took place. The event was held in the Aula Giubileo of LUMSA University in Rome, which promoted and organised the event together with Ispromay.

Now in its 23rd edition, the San Bernardino Award aims to promote and reward profit and non-profit campaigns that, during the year, have distinguished themselves for their ability to convey ethical messages, promoting authentic cultural and social change. The initiative was sponsored by the Lazio Region, the Holy See's Dicastery for Culture and Education, and the San Bernardino Social Responsibility Centre.

In addition to the award aspect, the San Bernardino Prize also represents a significant educational opportunity, both ethically and professionally, particularly for high school students involved in the Young Advertising Professional Award. In the 2025 edition, the Dicastery for Culture and Education participated as a client, proposing a communication brief dedicated to the **Global Compact on Education**, the project promoted by Pope Francis to



promote education oriented towards universal fraternity. Students were also asked to reflect on the positive and responsible use of artificial intelligence, in line with the most recent guidelines of the Magisterium and the indications offered by Pope Leo

XIV on the relationship between technology, ethics and humanity.

Students from the following schools took part in the competition: IIS Confalonieri - De Chirico in Rome, Istituto Angelo Frammartino in Monterotondo and Liceo Artistico Ripetta in Rome.

The Dicastery for Culture and Education awarded the Young Advertiser Prize to the project work of Michele Lulli, a student in class 5<sup>a</sup> BLA at the IIS Confalonieri - De Chirico in Rome, for the quality of the message and the communicative effectiveness of the promotional reel dedicated to the **Global Compact on Education**.

The ceremony was attended by Father Ezio Lorenzo Bono, Coordinator of the Global Compact on Education, and Prof. Carina Rossa, member of the Committee for the **Global Compact on Education**, who presented the new Global Compact on Education 2.0 to the students.

## "YOU ARE THE CONTROL ROOMS OF THE GCE'S



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**The Global Compact on Education** is renewed: the work of the Committee during the Jubilee

On 28 October 2025, during the week of the Jubilee of the World of Education, the Committee for the Renewal of the **Global Compact on Education** (PEG) met in Rome for a day of listening, discussion and shared planning, marking a significant step in the journey begun by Pope Francis and taken up by Pope Leo XIV to put education back at the centre as an act of hope and shared responsibility.

The morning took place at the Dicastery for Culture and Education and was opened by Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery, who strongly emphasised the profound meaning of the **Global Compact on Education** and the innovations brought about by the new Pontiff.

Alongside the Cardinal, Fr Ezio Lorenzo Bono, Don Giuseppe Castelli, Prof. Maria Cinque and Prof. Carina Rossa participated in the proceedings, together with representatives of educational networks and international organisations, including Hervé Lecomte and F. Juan Antonio Ojeda from OIEC, Sister Beatriz Pereiro for UISG, F. Francisco Javier Fernandez for USG; Maria Nieves Tapia, director of CLAYSS; Maria Rosa Tapia for the Uniservitate Programme, John Ghilmour of Education for Hope South Africa; Nelson Otaya for CONACED of Colombia; Rodrigo Martínez for CELAM; Makoto Yamada for Seibo Japan. The leading universities of the PEG were present through their representatives: Prof. Arlene Montevercchio of the University of Notre Dame in the USA, Rector P. Galvarino Jofrè Araya together with Nathalia Soledad Da Costa for the Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez in Chile; Prof. Domenico Simeone for the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Italy; Rector P. Luis Fernando Múnera, S.J. together with Prof. Jairo Cifuentes for the Pontifical Javeriana University in Colombia; Rector Declan O'Byrne for the Sophia University Institute in Italy; Prof. Giulio Alfano for the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome; F. Casey BEAUMIER, SJ for Boston College USA; Prof. Allan Basas for Santo Tomas University in the Philippines.

**Synodal work: listening, discernment, proposals.** In the afternoon, at the Focolare Meeting Point, participants worked in language groups (Spanish and English), sharing critical analyses and operational proposals

along four fundamental axes for the future of the **Global Compact on Education**.

The need to make the Pact more dynamic, inclusive and representative emerged clearly. In particular, the need to rebalance representation, which is currently heavily centred on universities, by involving schools, families, NGOs, congregations and non-formal education contexts more closely, as well as strengthening the presence of Asia and Africa, was emphasised. Among the proposals was the establishment of a promotional group and a *Mesa de la Alianza*, called upon to coordinate and accompany the GEP's journey with regular meetings.

Young people were recognised as indispensable subjects of the Pact, not only as recipients but also as co-constructors. The proposal to create a *GEP Youth Board* and to develop digital membership tools to strengthen the sense of belonging was agreed upon. Particular attention was paid to the most excluded young people and those living on the margins of education systems.

In order for the **Global Compact on Education** to have a real impact in local contexts, the Committee reiterated the need for operational tools. The issue of communication was also central, with the relaunch of the Pact's website and newsletter, designed as a space for storytelling, connection and participation, particularly for the younger generations.

The relaunch of the Compact requires time, a gradual approach and shared responsibility. A medium- to long-term plan (five-year horizon) was proposed, with regular meetings, a clear distribution of tasks and the development of indicators capable of capturing qualitative dimensions such as hope, belonging and generativity.

The Committee meeting on 28 October 2025 confirmed that the **Global Education Pact** is a living process, which grows through mutual listening and the ability to forge alliances between institutions, territories and generations. It is a journey that requires everyone's contribution and looks to the future with realism and confidence, in the knowledge that education is always an act of hope.

Carina Rossa ■

# THE CONSTELLATIONS OF THE BRAZILIAN FLAG



Your Excellency, President of the Federal Senate,  
Esteemed Senators,  
civil and religious authorities,  
Dear educators, students and friends of Brazil,

On behalf of the Dicastery for Culture and Education and the Holy See, I would like to express my deep gratitude for this Solemn Session dedicated to the **Global Compact on Education**. The fact that this initiative has been included in the official calendar of the Federal Senate is an eloquent sign of Brazil's sense of responsibility towards the younger generations, democracy and the common good.

The **Global Compact on Education**, launched by Pope Francis in 2020, has become a shared journey for hundreds of schools, universities and educational communities in this great nation. Today, this Solemn Session is a sign of communion and hope: an invitation to renew the educational alliance between public and private institutions, between the State and civil society, between the academic and ecclesial worlds.

In the context of the Jubilee of the World of Education, which we recently celebrated in Rome,

Pope Leo XIV inaugurated a new educational season called "Constellations of Hope".

In his recent Apostolic Letter "Drawing New Maps of Hope," the Holy Father reminds us that all authentic education must help to build maps capable of orienting life, igniting desire and generating future.

Brazil already carries a deeply evocative image in its heart: the constellation that shines on its national flag. The stars remind us that a country is great when it knows how to orient itself together; when it looks at a common sky; when it recognises that every young person is a light to be cherished and made to shine.

Today, I invite you to add to this national constellation new educational constellations, created by the coming together of your extraordinary energies: those of public institutions, various Catholic movements, universities, local communities, popular schools, businesses and families. Only together can we chart a map of hope and draw constellations that guide the way.

Alongside the seven original objectives of the **Global Compact on Education** – putting the person at the centre, listening to the voice of young people, promoting women, strengthening the

family, opening ourselves to welcome others, renewing politics and the economy, and caring for our



common home – Pope Leo has indicated three new, essential objectives for our time: • Cultivating the interior life, • Generating a human digital world, • Building peace.

### 1. (Cultivating inner life)

Our young people, immersed in constant noise and growing social pressures, have a vital need for silence, meaning and depth.

Education must help cultivate inner life, forming young people capable of listening, discernment and responsibility; offering educational spaces that develop not only skills but also awareness; giving rise in every young person to an 'inner place' where freedom can blossom.

A nation that protects the inner life of its young people is already protecting its future.

### 2. (Generating a human digital world)

Technology needs a soul. Generating a human digital means: making digital technology a tool for equity and not exclusion; promoting critical education, capable of discerning what builds and what hurts; defending young people from manipulation, hate speech, addiction and misinformation; supporting innovative projects that make technology a force for social justice and care for the environment.



### 3. (Building peace)

Building peace means: educating for dialogue and reconciliation; offering young people tools to manage conflicts in a non-violent way; promoting courageous educational policies in the most vulnerable territories; supporting projects that unite culture, sport, art and social inclusion.

Ladies and gentlemen, the **Global Compact on Education** is not a document: it is a journey. It is a promise. It is a culture of hope.

Today, the Federal Senate of Brazil turns its attention to this global mission.

I encourage you to continue along this path with determination, building together – the State, universities, schools, families, communities and civil society – a great national educational alliance that will enlighten the country and the world.

May Brazil always shine new constellations of hope on the faces of its young people.

I greet you all with esteem and gratitude.

*Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça ■*

Video message from the GCE coordinator  
at the Solemn Session of the Federal Senate of Brazil

## NOT UNIFORMITY BUT SHARING



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Your Excellency, President of the Federal Senate, Esteemed Senators, civil and religious authorities, dear educators and friends of Brazil, The Dicastery for Culture and Education is today one of the major players in education worldwide. The Catholic Church supports more than 230,000 schools, 1,300 universities and 400 ecclesiastical faculties on every continent, many of which are attended largely by non-Catholic students. This is a global educational heritage whose origins date back to the first European monasteries, which preserved and spread culture, literacy and research. From these centres, the first universities were born in the Middle Ages, whose legacy continues to inspire academic institutions today.

Pope Francis's 2020 project, the **Global Educational Pact**, is part of this long tradition. It is an initiative open to all, believers and non-believers alike, which proposes to build a broad network of collaboration oriented towards universal fraternity. It is not about standardisation, but about sharing. The new Pontiff, Pope Leo XIV, has renewed this vision by opening a new educational season during the Jubilee of the Educational World, recently celebrated in Rome. In his Apostolic Letter, he invited us to 'draw new maps of hope' and to recognise education as a great common good. This proposal has found particular resonance in Brazil, one of the countries that has most welcomed and developed the **Global Compact on Education**.

This is not surprising. Having lived in this country for several years, I saw a nation that is vibrant, creative and deeply committed to education. Brazil has given the world great thinkers, including two who have held important institutional positions. Darcy Ribeiro, anthropologist, intellectual and Minister of Education and Culture, contributed decisively to the modernisation of the Brazilian education system, promoting schools as a tool for development and social cohesion.

Paulo Freire, head of education for the municipality of São Paulo, introduced a pedagogy based on dialogue and participation and influenced generations with the awareness that education is a practice of freedom and responsibility.

This tradition makes Brazil a bridge between memory and the future.

To the seven original commitments of the **Global Compact on Education** - the person, the family, young people, women, the poor, politics and the economy, and care for our common home - Pope Leo XIV has added three new commitments: educating for the interior life, promoting a human digital world, and training for peace.

Together they form an educational Decalogue, a constellation of non-confessional but human and universal guidelines, intended for all those who care about the future of humanity.

Video message from Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça to the Italian Association of University Teachers (AIDU)

## AT THE SCHOOL OF HOPE



Good morning, distinguished Italian university professors. First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Italian Association of University Professors for promoting this meeting with such an evocative title: 'At the School of Hope', a title that fits perfectly with the Jubilee of Hope and the Jubilee of the Educational World that we are celebrating under the name 'Constellations of Hope'. Your title challenges us all, because schools and universities, even before being institutions, are communities of life, research and meaning, where we learn not only to know but also to hope.

We live in a time of acceleration, of profound and multiple transformations, and this era of change tests us and questions our educational and cultural models. But precisely for this reason, our educational mission remains one of the most decisive areas in which the future of humanity is at stake. As the Apostle reminds us, 'hope does not disappoint': it is the soul of every authentic educational process, the silent force that sustains the daily effort of our dreams. In these days when the Church is celebrating the Jubilee of Hope, the Dicastery for Culture and Education is celebrating the Jubilee of the Educational World, which will conclude on 1st November with the proclamation of Saint John Henry Newman as Doctor of the Church and co-patron of its educational mission.

Within this common horizon, Brazil has the potential to play a role of great importance. Its human qualities, its pedagogical tradition and its social creativity make this country one of the brightest stars in this global educational constellation, a star capable of illuminating bold, inclusive and fully human paths for other peoples too, not only in Latin America, but throughout the world.

I sincerely thank this Senate for its attention to the **Global Compact on Education** and for its collaboration in strengthening the mission of educating the younger generations. With esteem and gratitude, I cordially greet you all.

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ELB ■



It will be a time of grace and encounter, in which the Holy Father Leo XIV will open a new educational season by inviting everyone to renew the **Global Educational Pact**, opening up to the new challenges of recent years as a great alliance of hope between generations, cultures and peoples. Being 'at the school of hope' therefore means returning to education with confidence and courage, betting on the ability of young people to dream and build a more just, fraternal and peaceful world. The educator is a craftsman of hope, because he or she is the one who can glimpse in young people, still in the process of formation, the hidden potential that they themselves may not see, but which the educator already recognises, like the sculptor who glimpses the figure hidden in the block of marble and who, through the chisel of education, frees it and makes it shine.

To educate, from the Latin *educere*, means precisely 'to bring out', to make emerge. This is why school, as you well know, is a place of hope: because there it is firmly believed that, even in the shadow of our times, education remains a constellation of hope, a light that guides humanity's journey towards the future. With this wish, I would like to thank all of you, university lecturers, for your service to culture and education. Your daily commitment is a shining sign of the hope that the Jubilee invites us to rediscover and share. I say this with all my esteem and gratitude.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça ■

## CARTOGRAPHERS OF HOPE, ARCHITECTS OF THE FUTURE



Faced with today's challenges in education and culture, Pope Leo XIV offers us a shining compass in his apostolic letter 'Drawing new maps of hope'. It is not just a document, but a call to become cartographers of hope, architects of the future, starting with our schools, families and educational communities.

Pope Leo, taking up Pope Francis' proposal on the **Global Compact on Education**, invites us to "put the person at the centre; listen to children and young people; promote the dignity and full participation of women; recognise the family as the first educator; be open to welcome and inclusion; renew the economy and politics in the service of the human being; care for our common home" (par. 10.1)..

He adds three priorities to the seven previous principles: "promoting the interior life as the foundation of discernment and freedom; training in the wise use of technology, always putting the person before the algorithm; and educating for unarmed peace, through non-violent language, reconciliation and bridges instead of walls" (par. 10.3).

### *An education that humanises*

For Pope Leo, educating does not only mean transmitting knowledge, but accompanying others in the discovery of the meaning of life (cf. par. 5.1). Today, amid social fragmentation, hyper-

digitalisation and growing social inequality, we need to recover the value of accompaniment, listening and dialogue as pillars of a new educational culture. He urges us to be "tireless seekers of wisdom, credible artisans of expressions of beauty," to put "fewer labels, more stories; fewer sterile contrasts, more symphony in the Spirit" (par. 11.3). In other words, he encourages us to continue the commendable task of building bridges, not walls, of opening paths of fraternity, not paths of solitude.

### *An urgent mandate*

But the Pope does not limit himself to exhorting us. He also entrusts us with

a mandate, and one of an urgent nature: "to draw up new maps of hope" (para. 11.1). Every educator, every family, every young person is called to be a living sign of hope, with a deep commitment to take up this letter, integrate it into daily life and transform its words into concrete gestures and consistent witness.

I invite the entire Conaced family and all educators in Colombia to feel called to be living beacons of hope in these uncertain times, to read and meditate on this masterful document by Pope Leo XIV and to bring it to life. Let us embrace this horizon, let us draw new and bold maps together, where faith and reason dialogue, where hope becomes action and where education is a laboratory of innovation, discernment and humanity.

I conclude with this appeal from Pope Leo XIV at the end of his letter, quoting St Paul: "You must shine like stars in the world, holding high the word of life" (Phil 2:15-16 in par. 11.2).

*Dear Conaced family, together we can rediscover the meaning of teaching, learning and accompanying, and ensure that, amid the rivers of confusion of our time, the Gospel continues to be that source of living water that renews the earth.*

The magazine is available at this link:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/BDDD859BDC9/final-revista-cultura-edici-n-300>

*Misael Enrique Meza Rueda, S.J. ■*



## A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN YOUTH



### ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV TO THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR RELIGIONS AND SOCIETIES

*Friday, 7 November 2025*

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

Dear brothers, good morning and welcome!

I am very pleased to meet you, members of the delegation of the Fondation Internationale Religions et Sociétés, who are committed to promoting quality Catholic education in Africa and fostering better missionary collaboration between the South and the North.

Your pilgrimage, which takes place a few days before the Jubilee of the World of Education, testifies to your desire to continue the work begun here in Rome and to respond to new challenges in the African context. This is the message of your second Congress, which will be held in two weeks' time in Nairobi, on the theme "Catholic education and the promotion of signs of hope in the African context".

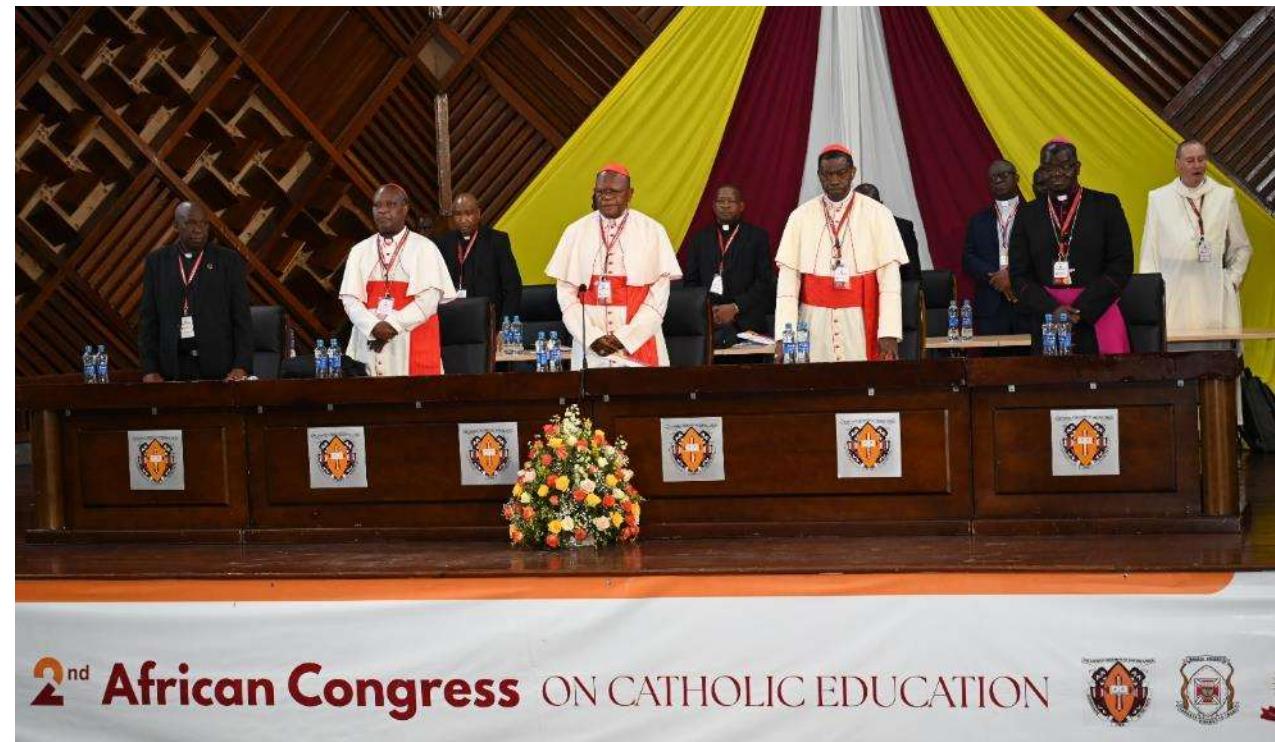
I am struck by the interest you show in the formation of African youth and the efforts you are making to offer them a quality education, imbued with African identity, as called for by the African Educational Pact. Indeed, "today, in our educational contexts, it is worrying to see the symptoms of widespread inner fragility growing at all ages. We cannot close our eyes to these silent cries for help" (Address to educators on the occasion of the Jubilee of the World of Education, 31 October 2025).

I encourage your commitment, which is not limited to Catholic education, but also extends to missionary cooperation between North and South.

By sending his disciples out two by two (cf. Lk 10:1), the Lord himself also wanted to indicate the need for collaboration in proclaiming the Good News. Mission requires working in synergy, avoiding isolation and accepting to build a strong pastoral solidarity, which is not limited to economic means, between the Churches. This work deserves to be well organised in order to facilitate their smooth integration into the host dioceses. I therefore applaud your meeting last May at the Abbey of Maredsous, which allowed you to reflect on how to prepare well for this missionary cooperation between South and North, and above all on the decision to create an International Centre for Missiology and North-South Pastoral Care. I hope that this institution will see the light of day and, above all, that it will achieve its objectives, as formulated in your resolutions, because "we want to rediscover together the missionary zeal. A mission that proposes the Gospel of Jesus with courage and love" (Address to participants in the international meeting organised by the Dicastery for the Clergy, 26 June 2025).

Thank you, dear brothers, for all that you do: you remind everyone of the beauty of evangelisation. Let us ask the Lord for the grace to be missionary disciples and pastors according to his will. May he inspire your projects and may the Holy Spirit sustain you in your commitment to the service of the Gospel. Thank you!

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA AT THE CENTRE OF AN EDUCATIONAL CONSTELLATION



The African Educational Pact, signed in Kinshasa on 6 November 2022, is an African version of the **Global Educational Pact** promoted by Pope Francis in 2019 and further developed by the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, in 2025. It recommends the organisation of an African congress, in one of the Catholic universities involved in the African Education Pact process, in order to place Catholic education at the centre of the reflections of experts and the exchange of experiences of women and men working in the field. Following the first African congress on Catholic education, which was held at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa from 7 to 10 December 2023 on the theme of the restitution of the African Educational Pact, the second African congress on Catholic education was held at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa in Nairobi, Kenya, from 4 to 7 December 2025. Three Catholic universities hosted this ecclesial and educational event on the world's youngest continent. Tangaza University and Hekima University College, as well as the Catholic University of West Africa, hosted this congress promoted by the International Foundation for Religions and Society and the African Educational Pact Institute.

Catholic education in Africa at the centre of an educational constellation

The theme of the second African congress on Catholic education was: "Catholic education and the promotion of signs of hope in the African context". This theme was addressed by the various categories of people involved in the implementation of the African Educational Pact. Present were

Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo, Archbishop of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo and President of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar, Cardinal Antoine Kambanda, Archbishop of Kigali in Rwanda and Grand Chancellor of the African Educational Pact Institute. He is also president of the Commission for Relations with Episcopal Conferences and Religious Congregations for the African Educational Pact. Also noteworthy was the presence and active participation of Cardinal Protase Rugambwa, Archbishop of Tabora in Tanzania, a member country of the Association of Episcopal Conferences of East Africa. Also present were Archbishop Philip Anyoro, Archbishop of Nairobi, and other archbishops and bishops from various African countries. Representatives from the scientific world of African Catholic universities and European and American universities also participated in the Nairobi congress. The various Catholic education networks in different African countries, national coordinators of the African Educational Pact, participated in this congress with great interest.

Four areas to be strengthened to make Catholic education the engine of transformation in Africa. Human dignity and fraternity, the common good, ecology and the integration of educational paradigms of African values were the subject of various plenary conferences and workshops, exchanges and discussions. Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo sought to identify the different types of suffering that afflict Africans today. Fratricidal wars,

poverty, corruption, misgovernment and other challenges were presented by the Cardinal as problems that Catholic education must address today. Cardinal Antoine Kambanda recalled the need to prevent all forms of violence in Catholic education, placing children at the centre of all educational activities promoted by the Catholic Church. Cardinal Protase Rugambwa emphasised the need to critically articulate Gospel values, traditional African values and modern values in order to offer thousands of young Africans who attend Catholic educational institutions.

Also noteworthy were the speeches by Archbishop Fulgence Muteba, Archbishop of Lubumbashi and President of the National Episcopal Conference of Congo, who, since the beginning of the preparatory work for the African Educational Pact, has been a promoter of ecological education. Also noteworthy was the speech by Archbishop Jacques Assanvo Ahiwa, Archbishop of Bouaké in Ivory Coast, on the role of students from disadvantaged backgrounds in Catholic education. The Archbishop of Nairobi



recalled the need for Catholic education in Africa that combines the intelligence of the mind with the intelligence of the heart. There were two contributions, one from Bishop Ernesto Maguenge, Bishop of Inhambane, Mozambique, and the other from Bishop Moses Chikwe, Auxiliary Bishop of Oweri, Nigeria. The first concerned education in the culture of life as opposed to the culture of death that prevails in many African countries. The second addressed the urgent need to educate for dialogue despite the conflicts between religious and ethnic communities in Africa. Father Bernard Lorent Tayart's appeal on the issue of abuse in Catholic educational institutions aroused particular interest among those responsible for Catholic education and th on in Africa.

Representatives from various African Catholic universities enriched the discussions and exchanges with theoretical and practical contributions related to the four areas addressed by the congress. The national coordinators of the African Educational Pact welcomed the opportunity provided by the African Educational Pact Institute and the International Foundation for Religions and Society to exchange and share the opportunities but also the challenges they face daily in their countries.

A programmatic message from the Holy Father calling for urgent action

Participants at the African Congress on Catholic Education held in Nairobi welcomed Pope Leo XIV's message with joy and gratitude. He reiterated the importance of the work carried out by the International Foundation for Religions and Society and the African Educational Pact Institute in encouraging all actors involved in the African Educational Pact to continue with this project, which Africa and the world so desperately need. However, the Pope pointed out that it is time to pause and take stock of the situation of Catholic education in Africa. In fact, according to him, 'today, many African leaders and politicians were educated in our schools. But the situation on the continent remains critical in many respects'. He therefore calls for Catholic education to be reinvented so that it can respond to the current challenges facing Africa. It is necessary to accompany and strengthen the institutional capacities and actors of Catholic education in Africa. This requires new methodologies.

Encouragement for the African Educational Pact Institute and its strengthening

In his text read by Cardinal Protase Rugambwa, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça expressed his encouragement to the African Educational Pact Institute which, as a new educational constellation in favour of transformative education, serves Catholic educational institutions and actors in Africa to improve the quality of education.

The official communiqué published after the Nairobi congress reports the creation of two secretariats within the African Educational Pact Institute. One will be responsible for coordinating exchanges and sharing between Catholic educational institutions working with young people, namely Catholic primary and secondary schools in Africa. It will highlight how these institutions are rooted in the culture of the African Educational Pact. The other will be responsible for coordinating

Catholic universities in Africa around the guidelines of the African Educational Pact.

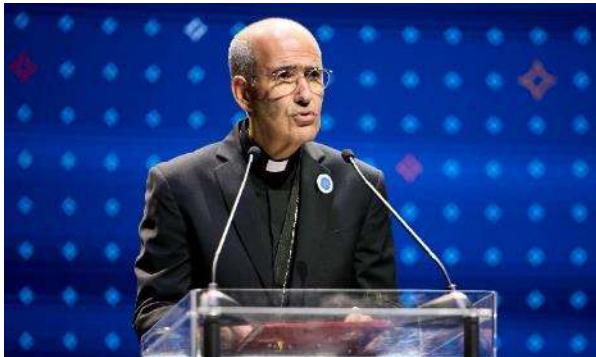
The third African congress on Catholic education will be held at the Catholic University of Angola in 2027. It will mark the fifth

anniversary of the African Educational Pact and will have as its theme: "The African Educational Pact. Five Years Later. Achievements and Prospects". Monsignor Joaquim Tyombe, Bishop of Uije, has been appointed as the canonical representative for this continental ecclesial and educational event.

Prof. Jean-Paul Niyigena  
Coordinator of the African Catholic Education Congress  
Coordinator of the African Education Pact Institute ■



## THE THREE NEW OBJECTIVES TO BE INCULTURATED



Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, dear brothers and sisters, educators, students and friends,

First of all, I would like to express my regret at not being able to be physically present, for reasons beyond my control, at this important Continental Congress. However, I am equally happy to be able to participate, even if only spiritually, through my words of greeting and encouragement.

With this African Congress on Catholic Education, Africa not only receives an educational project, but regenerates it. Here, the insights, struggles and hopes of the African peoples become a decisive contribution to the educational mission of the universal Church.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Cardinal Antoine Kambanda, whose clear vision, together with that of many collaborators, has guided the African Educational Pact from its inception. As he himself has stated, the African Educational Pact is the result of a collective and ecclesial commitment, born of the contribution of pastors, researchers, communities and operators in the field throughout the continent.

### 1. In light of the Jubilee of the World of Education: constellations of hope

At the end of October and beginning of November 2025, we celebrated the Jubilee of the World of Education in Rome, entitled 'Constellations of Hope'. Thousands of students, teachers, headteachers and educators from all over the world – and many from Africa – confirmed that education continues to be the greatest force for generating the future.

On that occasion, Pope Leo XIV inaugurated a new era in education, rekindling the legacy of *Gravissimum Educationis* and the **Global Compact on Education**, but also setting out three new goals for our time. He did so by publishing the Apostolic Letter 'Drawing New Maps of Hope', in which the Church is invited to recognise that every school is a star that illuminates the sky of humanity. However, says the Pope, one star alone is not enough. If it remains isolated, it is just a point in the universe; if it connects with other stars, constellations are drawn. It is necessary to draw constellations, networks, alliances, bridges between peoples and cultures.

This is precisely what is being celebrated in Nairobi these days: an African constellation of hope.

### 2. Africa, its educational tradition and its philosophy of life

Africa is not starting from scratch. Africa has an educational treasure to offer the Church and the world. The African educational tradition is deeply communal. The principle dear to the *ubuntu* philosophy echoes in all the peoples of the continent: 'I am because we are'. Education is never an individual act: it is a communal, ritual, spiritual and narrative process. It is a journey made

up of proverbs, wisdom, oral tradition, testimony, dance and shared experience.

In African pedagogy: the community shapes individuals, elders pass on memory (according to an African proverb, when an elder dies, it is a library that burns), spirituality permeates daily life, education is always linked to the earth, the body, the word and the sacred.

This is why the African proverb 'it takes a whole village to educate a child' is not just a phrase: it is a paradigm. Cardinal Kambanda recalls that it is precisely this community vision that animates the African Pact: pastors, scientists, families, young people, local and international experts work together on a common project.

### 3. Three fundamental insights

Allow me now to return to the three pillars that Cardinal Kambanda outlined in his speech at the International Congress on Education during the Jubilee of the World of Education, which are extremely relevant today.

(a) Educating for the challenges of today and tomorrow. In many regions of the continent, education is still a difficult path: lack of schools, precarious conditions, uncultured school programmes, exclusion of girls, absence of spirituality, widespread poverty. But, says the Cardinal, it is precisely for this reason that education becomes the first form of care, reconciliation and future.

(b) The educational village. No one educates alone. School is not enough on its own without the family; the family is not enough on its own without the community; the community is not enough on its own without the Church.

(c) A new educational alliance for social transformation. It is not a question of maintaining what exists, but of transforming it. Cardinal Kambanda speaks of a 'new alliance' between all the actors on the continent, capable of generating a reconciled, supportive and fraternal society.

### 4. The **Global Compact on Education 2.0**: three new objectives to be inculcated in Africa

During the Jubilee of the World of Education, Pope Leo XIV relaunched the **Global Compact on Education**, maintaining the seven fundamental objectives and adding three new ones, born precisely from dialogue with young people and deriving from the new challenges of our time. These three objectives find particularly fertile ground in African culture.

#### I. Educating for the interior life: the heart of hope

During World Youth Day and the Youth Jubilee, our Dicastery's **Global Compact on Education** Committee interviewed thousands of young people. When asked, "What is your dream for the future of education?", most responded, "Education for the interior life." The Pope, in his address during the Jubilee of the World of Education to students gathered in the Paul VI Hall, commented: "It is not enough to have great knowledge if we do not know who we are and what the meaning of life is. Without silence, without listening, without prayer, even the stars go out."

This insight resonates deeply in African philosophy, where all learning is also a spiritual journey. Africa does not separate rationality and spirituality; it does not separate the mind from the heart; it does not separate knowledge from ritual.

Inculcating this first new objective means rediscovering the meaning of silence, rediscovering the value of meditation and prayer, helping young people understand who they are, offering a place where they can heal their inner emptiness.

II. Generating a human digital: be prophets, not tourists of the network.

The Pope said in the same speech to students: "Do not let the algorithm write your story. Do not be tourists of the internet, but prophets of the digital world."

Africa is already among the regions of the world with the fastest digital growth. However, the challenge is not technology, but the humanity of technology.

Inculcating this goal means: preventing new forms of digital exclusion, training young people to use technology critically and creatively, integrating African values – communion, spirituality, harmony – into new digital ecosystems, promoting digital education that unites rather than isolates.

Africa must not only be a consumer of digital technology: it must become a producer, a creator, a protagonist.

III. Educating for peace: an unarmed and disarming peace

The Pope said: "It is not enough to silence weapons: we must disarm hearts."

In many regions of Africa, peace is not an abstract concept. It is an urgency, a wound, a desire, a responsibility. African wisdom is well versed in the art of reconciliation: shared words, the advice of elders, community reparation, the restoration of communion.

Inculcating this goal means: educating in non-violent language, training in inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue, creating schools where diversity is a blessing and not a threat, training young people to be builders of community.

Peace is an education of the heart even before it is an education of structures.

5. The Institute for the African Pact on Education: a laboratory for the future

Cardinal Kambanda, in his speech, clearly stated that the Institute exists to prevent the **Global Compact on Education** from remaining on paper. It supports research, trains leaders, creates local multipliers, offers technical assistance and, above all, gives African cultures a voice in the global debate on education.

There is no shortage of challenges: scarcity of resources, lack of attention from the international academic world, issues related to the new digital culture. But the Institute represents the missing bridge between research and real life, between the local Church and the universal Church, between Africa and the world.

6. Nairobi 2025: building new constellations

The Nairobi 2025 Congress is not a technical event, but a spiritual moment, an ecclesial act, a call to responsibility.

In Africa, home to the youngest part of the world's population, every school is a frontier of hope and every educator is a builder of peace.

I would like to recall here the words that Pope Francis addressed to you when he was presented with the African Educational Pact: "You, brothers and sisters, are the shepherds of the youngest continent in the world: your greatest treasure is precisely them, the young people. [...] I urge you to listen to the voice of young people and their ideas, without authoritarianism: the Spirit also speaks through them, and I am sure that they will suggest beautiful and surprising things to you. May you invest your best energies in their education."

The Jubilee of the World of Education reminded us that we live under the same sky and that every educational institution is a star. But only together do we form constellations.

Conclusion.

Allow me to conclude with a look at three great figures who illuminate our educational journey.

First, St John Henry Newman, whom Pope Leo XIV proclaimed – at the very end of the Jubilee of the World of Education – a new Doctor of the Church and co-patron of education.

Newman reminds us that to educate means to accompany each person towards the full truth, towards that harmonious synthesis between faith and reason, between conscience and freedom, which is the heart of Christian humanism. May his intercession make our schools and universities true laboratories of wisdom, places where young people learn not only to 'know more', but to become more.

I would also like to mention Julius Kambarage Nyerere, father of the Tanzanian nation, whose beatification process is currently underway. Nyerere was not only a visionary statesman: he was an educator, a teacher, a man who believed that "the development of a people passes first and foremost through education." His vision — which harmonised social justice, community, sobriety, respect for tradition and openness to the world — is a shining example of how politics, when it is at the service of man, becomes pedagogy of the people.



Nor can we forget the African ecclesial figures who placed education at the centre of their pastoral mission. I think, among others, of Cardinal Laurean Rugambwa, the first African cardinal of the modern era, who understood the need to form and nurture African leadership capable of serving local Churches and societies with competence, faith and responsibility.

His contribution in the field of education was decisive: he considered education the most effective means of promoting human dignity and fostering the social and spiritual integration of communities. For this reason, he resolutely supported schools, educational initiatives and programmes for human and Christian growth. Thanks to witnesses such as him, Africa has understood that education is the most precious seed to be entrusted to the soil of the future.

And now, turning to our common Mother, I wish to entrust this Congress – and with it the journey of the African Pact, the work of the Institute, the dreams of young people and the dedication of their educators – to the intercession of Mary, Mother of Africa. May she, who carried in her womb the Word made flesh – and who brought to Africa, in her bosom, during the flight into Egypt, the Teacher par excellence – accompany every teacher and every student in the daily adventure of learning; may she watch over the peoples of this continent; may she protect families, children and young people; and may she make every small educational gesture fruitful, so that it may become a light for the whole world.

And like the stars that guide the traveller in the night, may Mary help us to draw new constellations of hope and to trace, together, the luminous maps of the future.

Thank you.

*Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça*  
Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education ■

# BUILDING PEACE AND HOPE IN A FRAGILE WORLD



## VI Global Symposium UNISERVITATE

6th & 7th November 2025

Service-Learning in a Fragile World:  
Universities nourishing Peace and Hope

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On 6 and 7 November, the 6th Uniservitate Global Symposium (CLAYSS–Porticus) was held in hybrid mode at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (Germany), the institution that coordinates the Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East node. Over 500 participants from 55 countries took part in this meeting, which brought together representatives from Catholic universities and international academic networks to reflect on the theme: "Service-learning in a fragile world: universities that nurture peace and hope".



Over the course of two days, panels and discussion forums highlighted how the pedagogy of service-learning contributes to responding with hope to the current challenges facing humanity. The Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, sent a video message in which he stated that "the Uniservitate Symposiums have now become an essential point of reference for all those in the academic world who recognise that education is not limited to the transmission of knowledge, but reaches its fullness in the act of serving." He added that service-learning fully embodies the vocation of "educating for service and through service: serving is not an appendix to the educational process, but its living heart."

Father Ezio Bono, coordinator of the **Global Compact on Education** and present in Eichstätt, referred to Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter *Disegnare nuove mappe di speranza* (Drawing new maps of hope), in which the Holy Father "explicitly referred to service-learning, describing it as one of the most promising ways to combine knowledge and solidarity, intellect and compassion." The

founder and director of CLAYSS, Nieves Tapia, recalled that education is truly transformative when it is rooted in solidarity and service: "Service learning was very important in the last century, but today it is more important than ever because it offers a type of education that cannot be found in ChatGPT or any other type of artificial intelligence we use."

Maria Rosa Tapia, coordinator of Uniservitate, who was present in Eichstätt together with Andrés Peregalli (deputy coordinator) and Candelaria Ferrara (coordinator of regional nodes), celebrated the consolidation of this global network, which currently includes 150 universities. "We know we live in a fragile world, but through service learning we are nurturing peace and hope," she said, pointing out that a "map of hope" is being drawn up from all regions of the world.

On behalf of the host university, Rector Gabriele Gien highlighted that the exchange promoted by the Symposium "is good for the intellect, but also for the heart," while Vice-Rector Klaus Stüwe emphasised that "academic work gains value when it responds to real social, environmental and cultural needs," recognising the role of



Uniservitate as "a platform that encourages international exchange." As Olha Mykhailysyn, lecturer at the same university and coordinator of the Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East node, stated, "the spirit of service learning knows no borders".

In addition to the plenary sessions, service-learning representatives from different countries shared

their experiences and exchanged reflections in parallel sessions dedicated to research (Thursday) and the **Global Compact on Education** (Friday). The research sessions addressed key themes of the network's work: institutionalisation, spirituality and impact on students and networks. In relation to the **Global Compact on Education**, sessions were held on dignity and human rights, fraternity and cooperation, technology and integral ecology, education and the promotion of peace and citizenship, culture and religions.



The Symposium also included a meeting of the rectors and authorities of the universities belonging to the global network, with the participation of 40 people, in which the contribution of Uniservitate to integral formation and the sustainability of the programme was discussed. The 6th Symposium was preceded by the 1st Global Student Symposium (23 October 2025), during which students engaged in solidarity service from different countries shared their service-learning projects; the conclusions of this meeting were read during the Eichstätt Symposium.

All the speeches, dialogues and experiences of those days wove together true 'constellations of hope', in harmony with the expressions of Pope Leo XIV in his recent Apostolic Letter on education. Next year, in October, the 7th Uniservitate Global Symposium will take place in Rome, attended by students, teachers, researchers and authorities from universities belonging to the global network, together with representatives from other networks linked to higher education and service learning.

The proceedings of the VI Symposium are available in English and Spanish.

For more information on Uniservitate:  
[www.uniservitate.org.ar](http://www.uniservitate.org.ar)  
[uniservitate@clayss.org.ar](mailto:uniservitate@clayss.org.ar)

Andrés Peregalli ■



### Video message from the Cardinal Prefect of the DCE **UNISERVITATE: AN ESSENTIAL REFERENCE POINT FOR SERVICE LEARNING**



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Dear friends of Uniservitate,  
Although I am unable to be with you at this important sixth Global Symposium, I would like to send you my warmest greetings and best wishes for a fruitful journey of reflection, encounter and fraternity.

The Uniservitate Symposiums have become an essential point of reference for all those in the academic world who recognise that education is not limited to the simple transmission of knowledge, but reaches its fullness in the act of service. Educating means introducing people to responsibility, generosity and care for the common good. It means forming thinking minds and sensitive hearts, capable of combining knowledge and compassion, competence and solidarity.

We live in a world marked by tensions and polarisation that test trust and weaken the fabric of human relationships. In this context, education manifests itself as an act of courage and hope. And Service Learning fully embodies this vocation: educating for service and through service. Serving is not an appendix to the educational process, but its living heart. In service, knowledge becomes wisdom, theory is translated into life, and the university is transformed into a true community of learning and solidarity.

As Pope Francis reminded us, educating means setting the mind, hands and heart in motion, so that learning generates community and hope. The title of this Symposium, Universities that nurture peace and hope, invites us to imagine our institutions as laboratories of humanity, spaces for intercultural and interreligious dialogue, places where research and service intertwine to build a more just, fraternal and inclusive society.

In this spirit, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the University, the civil authorities, the faculty and the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt for their commitment to promoting a culture of education based on solidarity and service to communities.

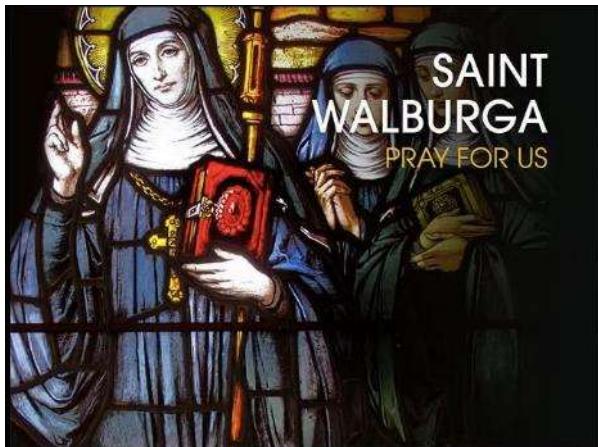
With the Jubilee of the World of Education, Pope Leo XIV opens a new educational season, inviting us to renew the **Global Compact on Education** and to place education for peace at the centre of our efforts, understood not simply as the absence

of conflict, but as the art of relationship, of dialogue that unites and of service that builds bridges. May these days of meeting and research be for all of you a school of listening and hope, in which discernment and service become concrete tools for regenerating the human and spiritual fabric of our universities and our societies. Thank you all for your presence and for your daily commitment to building compassion and faith, for a more just, more fraternal, deeply human and deeply university world. Vale!

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça ■

*Communication from the GCE coordinator  
at the VI Uniservitate Symposium*

## SAINT WALBURGA AND THE CONSTELLATIONS OF CARE: AN EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY THROUGH COURAGE, LEADERSHIP, INTERIORITY AND SERVICE



### INTRODUCTION

For this talk on the theme 'Service-Learning for a Fragmented World: Humanistic and Spiritual Approaches to Healing and Transformation', I had prepared a text in Rome that began with the figure of the fascinating and tormented young Swedish writer Stig Dagerman, who committed suicide at the age of 31, and then moved on to discuss the logotherapy of Viktor Frankl, the concentration camp psychologist, and concluding with a proposal for a 'pedagogy of the deep', anticipating some of the themes of my next book, which I hope to publish at the end of the year (at least I hope so).

Yesterday, however, I wrote a new speech, because I learned about an extraordinary female educator who fascinated me: Saint Walburga. And do you know where she is buried? Right here in Eichstätt, in the Abbey of Saint Walburga, to be precise. (Five minutes from the hotel where we are staying). So yesterday morning I went to visit the abbey and learn more about her.

I wanted to use her as a common thread to guide us in our reflection on the theme of education and, above all, service learning, understood as 'care'. I

would therefore propose a revision of the title as follows: 'Saint Walburga and the constellations of care: an educational journey through courage, leadership, interiority and service'.

Saint Walburga was born in Wessex, England, around 710, the daughter of Richard the Pilgrim, venerated as a saint, sister of Villibaldo, first bishop of Eichstätt (whose statue we see in the market square), and Vunibaldo, abbot of Heidenheim, also saints. Finally, Walburga was the niece of Saint Boniface. A family that is already a constellation of holiness. Her biography is an educational parable: every episode of her life is a pedagogical metaphor, a star that can guide our path.

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1. To educate is to embark on a journey  
Walburga leaves her native England to reach Germany. She crosses the sea, faces storms, and escapes a terrible end.

This is what educating is: daring to embark on a journey. Beginning a path of knowledge that leads us to discover new worlds. Educating is therefore helping young people to step outside themselves, to encounter others, to discover the world with courage and confidence. An outward-looking education.

2. Educating means guiding

In Heidenheim, Walburga and her brother took over the management of a 'double' monastery, for both men and women. After the death of her brother Vunibaldo in 761, she became abbess, guiding both the male and female communities. A woman who also 'commanded' men for eighteen years, until her death. This structure, transplanted from England, was an absolute novelty for Germany. This is what education is all about: guiding and teaching the art of living together. In a fragmented world, we need educators who know how to show the way — not to control, but to create spaces for respect and dialogue. Walburga did this with firmness and gentleness, embodying an inclusive and prophetic educational leadership.

3. To educate is to cultivate the inner life

In the monastery, Walburga lives a life of prayer and contemplation. Her spirituality is active, embodied, profound. Walburga is a witness to a transforming interiority: educating from within, unifying what the outside tends to divide.

This is what education is: as Pope Leo XIV recalled last week in his address to educators, educating — especially in Catholic schools — means forming saints, not saints from the calendar, but saints of everyday life. The first of the three new objectives of the **Global Compact on Education** that Pope Leo added to the seven pre-existing ones invites us to restore the spiritual dimension to education: spaces of silence, of conscience, of dialogue with God. In his Apostolic Letter on education, 'Drawing maps of hope', he calls for a spiritual pedagogy, which I would like to define as a *pedagogy of depth*,

which — unlike depth psychology, which goes into the depths of the human psyche — goes into the depths of the soul. It educates in the search for the meaning of life, because if life has no meaning, everything loses its meaning, including education.

#### 4. Educating for service (service-learning)

Walburga does not limit herself to praying: she works, cares for others and serves. Her monastery is a place of welcome, healing and fraternity. Walburga is a witness to a wisdom that heals, to a knowledge that becomes love.

This is what education is: transforming knowledge into service. Again in the Apostolic Letter, Pope Leo says that schools cannot lose the poor: they would lose themselves. Furthermore, he speaks several times of education and service as an indissoluble combination. Service-learning is the pedagogy of reciprocity: one learns by serving, one serves by learning.

After her death, an aromatic fluid flowed from Walburga's tomb — the 'oil of Saint Walburga' — which was considered miraculous. She was also called the miracle-working saint.

This is what education is: pouring the oil of love that heals the wounds of our students.



#### CONCLUSION

In 1835, on the initiative of Ludwig I, King of Bavaria, the abbey was renovated. The nuns were given permission to accept new novices, but on one condition: the nuns had to commit themselves to the education of the young women of Eichstätt.

This episode is not just a historical note: it is living proof that education, when born of spirituality and care, looks to the future and draws new maps of hope. Because educating is an act of hope. Walburga's light continues to shine, transforming itself into schooling, training and accompaniment. Saint Walburga is not just a figure from the past: she is an educational constellation that still shines today. In fact, speaking yesterday with a nun from the abbey, she told me that the community currently consists of about twenty nuns, including several young women.

I think we cannot leave Eichstätt without visiting the Abbey of Saint Walburga. But not as tourists, rather as educators in search of meaning. Entering the crypt, let us allow ourselves to be enveloped by silence, let us listen to the voice that does not speak but illuminates, like a constellation in the sky, to indicate the path to a pedagogy of spirituality — a *pedagogy of depth*.

Walburga teaches us that education is a journey, a guide, interiority, service. And if, as Pope Leo XIV says, we must draw new maps of hope in the constellations of the sky, Walburga shows us how to do it: with courage, with care, with silence, with love.

And we, as educators, can truly become constellations of meaning, capable of illuminating the nights of our time, illuminating the path for our young people who seem to have lost their way. Tonight, under the cloudy sky of Eichstätt on these November evenings, let us try to sharpen our eyes. Who knows if, beyond the blanket of fog, we will be able to see Walburga's star, which after centuries still illuminates the sky of this earth. In any case, even if we cannot see the stars, we can be sure that they are always there. So too are we educators: sometimes, or often, we may seem invisible, but the important thing is that we too, like the stars — even if we are not visible — are always there.

ELB ■

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Published in the academic journal EduCA  
**AN EMBODIMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PACT**



25 November 2025

The article "The Amazon University Programme (PUAM): an embodiment (under construction) of the **Global Compact on Education** in the heart of the Amazon", written by Mauricio López, rector and founder of PUAM, presents a profound reflection on how education can become a path of social, cultural and ecological transformation in the Amazon. Published in the open-access academic journal EduCA, the text explores how PUAM embodies Pope Francis' appeal through the **Global Educational Pact**, articulating the seven commitments of the pact with the four dreams of Querida Amazonía.

More than an academic proposal, PUAM is a commitment to socio-environmental justice, critical interculturalism and liberating spirituality, offering an educational model that arises from the margins and places the person and the territory at the centre.

<https://puam.org/noticias/investigacion/2025/11/en-carnacion-pacto-educativo-global-amazonia/> ■

Address by the Cardinal Prefect of the DCE for the 7th Congress and 30th anniversary of the founding of the UCM  
**CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MOZAMBIQUE: A BAOBAB TREE OF HOPE**



Your Most Reverend Excellency,  
Grand Chancellor,  
Magnificent Rector,  
esteemed professors, dear students, kind  
colleagues,  
civil, political and military authorities,  
ecclesiastical authorities present here,  
dear friends,

it is with great joy and profound gratitude that I wish to join you, albeit through this electronic medium, to celebrate a truly significant moment: the thirtieth anniversary of the Catholic University of Mozambique.

I had the joy of welcoming your delegation, led by the Rector, Father Filipe Zungo, to Rome during the Jubilee of the World of Education, celebrated in the heart of this Holy Year 2025. I remember with gratitude the gifts you brought me and which were also given to the Holy Father, true expressions of the creativity and beauty of Mozambique. And I remember, above all, the most important gift: the news you gave me about yourselves. Knowing that you are well is what gladdens our hearts most.

Today we recognise that among the most precious fruits born in Mozambique in recent decades is certainly our beloved Catholic University. A fruit ripened by the hope that the Mozambican Church was able to sow. When, in 1996, this seed was sown in Mozambican soil, the country was emerging from years of war, trials and wounds, immediately after the 1992 Peace Accords.

In that time of reconstruction, the Church believed that education was the path to healing and rebirth. Today we can say that that seed has become a great *embondeiro* of hope: a tree symbolising wisdom, resistance and life, rooted in faith, steadfast in resilience and generous in its fruits.

Like the *embondeiro* (baobab) tree, which stores water to nourish life even in dry seasons, the Catholic University preserves knowledge to regenerate generations in difficult times. It is a home of life and meaning, where generations and dreams, knowledge and fraternity meet. The very name *Universitas* embodies the idea of unity in diversity.

As St Thomas Aquinas recalled, the university is a *societas amicorum*, a society of friends. Teachers, students, staff and families all build a community that educates each other. This community dimension is deeply African and is one of the great teachings that African cultures offer to the world: the centrality of community in human life.

This is what the proverb quoted by our beloved Pope Francis in launching the **Global Compact on Education** reminds us: "It takes a whole village to educate a child." This is the spirit that animates the Catholic University: a supportive community in which, as the Pope says, we cultivate the mystique of living together, of reaching out to one another, of looking out for one another.

In the Jubilee of the World of Education, Pope Leo XIV spoke of the birth of a new educational season: a season of hope and alliances, in which education returns to being an act of love and trust in the future. The theme of this Jubilee, *Constellations of Hope*, invites us to look at educational institutions not as isolated points, but as stars that, when united, draw new maps of humanity.

At the major International Congress Educational Constellations: a pact with the future and also at the Global Educational Village, organised during those days, a special space was reserved for the African Educational Pact. It is a clear sign that Africa is not on the margins, but is the beating heart of a new humanism.

Africa is called to offer the world its communal vision of life and the human person, its great wisdom and its living faith. African Catholic universities have a vocation to be true laboratories of hope in a young and vibrant continent, albeit one marked by inequalities and conflicts. In a world that globalises fear and mistrust, they are called to globalise hope, forming men and women who believe in the possibility of a different world, who do not resign themselves to fatalism, but transform it with courage and tenderness. Educating for hope means forming citizens with a deep sense of community, capable of combining knowledge and service, competence and solidarity, professionalism and compassion.

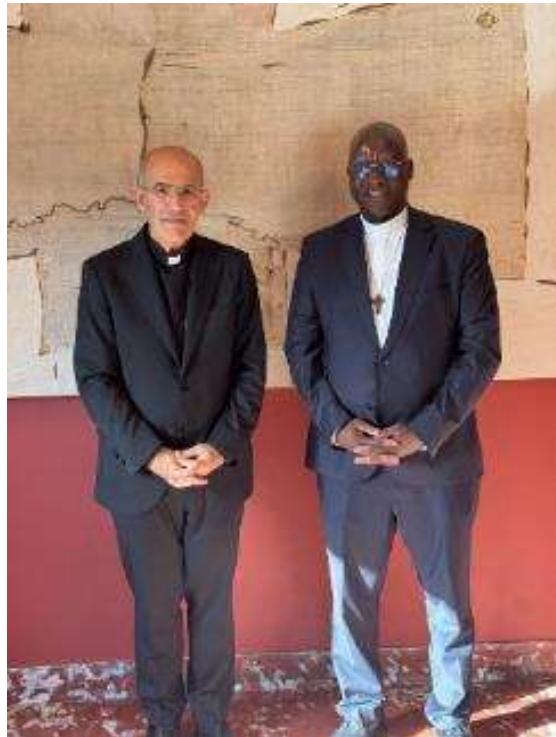
As the African philosophy of Ubuntu states: "I am because we are." And while Ubuntu values the "we," the Catholic university does not forget that it is the concrete, unique and unrepeatable person who remains the centre and goal of every educational process. This is the primary objective of the **Global Compact on Education**, as Pope Leo XIV recalls in his Apostolic Letter Drawing New Maps of Hope, emphasising the centrality of the person as the key to all authentic education.

We are living in a time of profound global transformation. Science and technology, artificial intelligence and biotechnology are opening up new horizons, but they also raise important ethical and spiritual questions. Education is facing new challenges.

For this reason, Pope Leo XIV, in relaunching the **Global Compact on Education**, has indicated three new horizons: cultivating the interior life; generating a human digital, through digital education; and building an education for peace, an unarmed and disarming peace.

Catholic universities are called to guide this cultural conversion, promoting a human digital world in which innovation is at the service of the person and the community, avoiding – as the Holy Father warns us – both technological idolatry and sterile technophobia. It is not a question of holding back science, but of giving it a soul and an ethic: a soul made up of discernment, responsibility, morality and compassion.

The apostolic exhortation *Ex corde Ecclesiae* reminds us that every Catholic university is born from the heart of the Church. From this heart spring forth a universal outlook, the language of dialogue and the mission of hope. The Catholic university is called to be a bridge between faith and culture,



between the Gospel and life, generating thought, innovation and fraternity. In Portuguese, to say "thank you," we use a word that implies a commitment. *Obrigado* means "to be obliged to," that is, to return the good received. This is also true for every student who passes through a Catholic university: gratitude is transformed into responsibility, knowledge into service, faith into action. Thirty years of the Catholic University of Mozambique are not just a memory of the past, but a mandate for the future. Giving back to Mozambique what Mozambique has given means continuing to be a school of light and a laboratory of hope for the entire African continent.

In recent months, Mozambique has gone through difficult times, marked by violence and tension. The Catholic University cannot be a source of division or conflict, but must be an instrument of reconciliation, promoting dialogue between the different social groups.

Dear friends, I wish to thank you for your loyalty, dedication and witness. I know how demanding it is to lead a Catholic university: for years I myself was vice-chancellor of a Catholic university, and I know that the challenge is even greater in contexts of limited resources. That is why I say to you: each of you is a true hero of education. Your passion and sacrifice are not in vain; they will be rewarded by God and by a more just and prosperous future.

Pope Leo XIV offers us a luminous image: that of the constellations of hope. Alone, we are only points of light in the sky; together, we become a constellation capable of drawing new maps of hope for the future.

As stated in his Apostolic Letter on education – which I strongly recommend that the Catholic University of Mozambique study and explore, perhaps dedicating a day of reflection to it with teachers and students – may this anniversary renew in each of you the certainty that education is the greatest force for transformation in your country and in the world.

I entrust you to the protection of Mary, Seat of Wisdom and Mother of Africa, and to the new co-patron of education, St John Henry Newman, and I cordially bless all of you, your students and your families.

Continue to be a University of Hope, a gift for Mozambique, for Africa and for all humanity.

A warm embrace.

## BUILDING BRIDGES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Magnificent Rector of the Catholic University of Mozambique,

esteemed fellow teachers,

dear students, members of the administrative staff, civil and religious authorities,

and everyone present,

it is with great joy that I return, even if only in words, to this land that I carry in my heart. I lived in Mozambique for more than twenty years and I confess that this land, with its light and its wounds, taught me a great deal. Today, in my service to the Holy See's Dicastery for Culture and Education, as coordinator of the **Global Compact on Education**, I continue to treasure what I learned with you: the strength of community, the dignity of the person and the resilience of the Mozambican people.

A few days ago, in Rome, we celebrated the Jubilee of the World of Education, on the theme "Constellations of Hope," which brought together thousands of educators. On that occasion, Pope Leo XIV inaugurated a new educational season, offering us guidelines for the path of Catholic education in the coming years.

As you well know, the Catholic Church is today the largest educational institution in the world, with 238,000 Catholic schools, 1,300 Catholic universities and 400 ecclesiastical faculties. Almost 40% of the students in these institutions live in Africa: this is a sign of the vitality and hope that the African continent represents for the universal Church.

From Pope Francis, we have inherited an extraordinary educational heritage, expressed in hundreds of speeches on education and, above all, in the great visionary project of the **Global Compact on Education**, with its seven objectives: the centrality of the person, young people, women and the family; attention to the poor; the renewal of politics, economics and ecology.

Now Pope Leo XIV, with his Apostolic Letter Drawing New Maps of Hope and his interventions during the Jubilee of the World of Education, not only takes up this great project, but advances it, adding three new goals that open up new and deeply relevant perspectives for the education of the future.

The first new objective stems from the numerous interviews that our Committee for the **Global Compact on Education** conducted with

thousands of young people during World Youth Day in Lisbon in 2023 and during this year's Youth Jubilee. When asked, 'What is your dream for the education of the future?', they replied, to our great surprise, 'to educate for the inner life'.

Pope Leo XIV said in his address to students during the Jubilee of the World of Education:

"Dear young people, you yourselves suggested the first of the new commitments of our **Global Compact on Education**, expressing a strong and clear desire: you said, 'help us to educate the inner life'. I was really struck by this request. It is not enough to possess great scientific knowledge if we do not know who we are and what the meaning of life is. Without silence, without listening, without prayer, even the stars go out. We can know a lot about the world and ignore our hearts: perhaps you too have experienced that feeling of emptiness, of restlessness that does not leave us in peace. In the most serious cases, we see situations of distress, violence, bullying, oppression and even young people who isolate themselves, no longer wanting to relate to others. I think that behind this suffering there is also the emptiness created by a society incapable of educating the spiritual dimension of the human person, and not only the technical, social and moral dimensions.

This appeal to the inner life is not just a spiritual reflection: it is a real educational urgency. Mozambique is among the ten countries with the highest number of suicides in the world. This is an alarming statistic, which should be read as a silent cry for help. There are many causes, including the loss of meaning in life.

When a person's soul loses dialogue with its inner self, existence becomes heavy and even the dawn ceases to shine. Educating for the inner life therefore means educating for hope: helping every young person to discover a meaning, a voice, a presence that dwells within them. It is not just a matter of preventing suicide, but of rekindling the desire to live, of teaching that every existence, even a wounded one, is a bearer of light.

As Pope Leo XIV reminds us: "Without silence, without listening, without prayer, even the stars go out."

One of the challenges for the Catholic university in Mozambique is precisely this: to teach people to see the stars again.

The second new goal of the **Global Compact on Education** concerns the creation of a human digital world. Pope Leo XIV said to the students: "The second of the new educational commitments is a challenge that concerns us daily and in which you are masters: digital education. You live in the digital world, and this is not a bad thing: it offers enormous opportunities for study and communication. However, do not allow the algorithm to write your story! Be the authors

yourselfs: use technology wisely and do not allow technology to use you.

Artificial intelligence is a great novelty of our time, a true *rerum novarum*: but it is not enough to be "intelligent" in virtual reality; humanity is needed in relationships, cultivating emotional, spiritual, social and ecological intelligence. That is why I say to you: educate yourselfs to humanise the digital world, building it as a space of fraternity and creativity, not as a prison, an addiction or an escape. Instead of being tourists on the web, be prophets in the digital world!

This invitation asks us to look at Mozambique with realism and hope. The digital revolution is also reaching our country, but in an unequal way: while some young people have access to computers and high-speed networks, many others do not even have electricity or the internet.

Humanising the digital world therefore means, first and foremost, democratising access to it, making technology a bridge rather than a barrier. It means using digital technology to connect distant schools, train teachers and give a voice to forgotten communities.



But it also means educating people in the critical and ethical use of social networks, which too often hurt, divide or create dependencies.

The real challenge is this: teaching people to be connected without losing their hearts, transforming digital technology into a space of fraternity rather than isolation. Educating people about a human digital technology in Mozambique means educating them about presence, responsibility and intelligent solidarity capable of combining the local and the global.

The third objective concerns the construction of peace: a disarmed and disarming peace, humble and persevering; a peace that is not imposed by force, but built day after day, building bridges and not walls.

Pope Leo XIV invites us to disarm words, purifying language of all aggression and violence; to disarm the heart, freeing it from hatred and resentment; and to disarm education itself, because even

schools and universities can sometimes become places of competition or exclusion.

In his address to the students, the Pope said: 'Look how our future is threatened by war and hatred that divide peoples. Can this future be changed? Certainly! But how? Through an education for peace that is disarmed and disarming. It is not enough to silence weapons: we must disarm hearts, renouncing all forms of violence and vulgarity. An unarmed and disarming education creates equality and growth for all, recognising the equal dignity of every young person, without dividing them between the privileged few who have access to expensive schools and the many who do not have access to education. With great confidence in you, I invite you to be peacemakers, first of all in the places where you live: in your families, at school, in sports, among your friends, and when meeting people from other cultures.'

This appeal for peace is particularly urgent in the Mozambican context, marked in recent decades by various conflicts: the struggle for independence, the long civil war, episodes of guerrilla warfare that have bloodied various regions and, more recently, the unrest of recent months.

Today, Mozambique needs an education system capable of healing the wounds of memory and teaching the language of forgiveness. Pope Leo XIV invites us to make schools and universities true laboratories of peace, where differences of opinion do not become enmity, but opportunities for dialogue and common growth.

In conclusion, in the many years I have lived in Mozambique, I have learned to look at the sky and admire constellations different from those visible in Rome.

Yet, despite the differences, something remains the same: the same sky that covers us, the same sun that warms us, the same hope that unites us. We contemplate different constellations, but we shine under the same sky, each with our own light, illuminating together the same horizon of humanity. May the Catholic University of Mozambique continue to be a shining star in this firmament of hope, helping young people to discover the meaning of life and to transform the world with the light they carry in their hearts.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart and hope that the sky of Mozambique will continue to teach us to look up, with our feet firmly planted on the ground and our hearts turned to the stars, so that we can draw new maps of hope together.

May the new Doctor of the Church, proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV at the end of the Jubilee of the World of Education as the new co-patron of education, St John Henry Newman, bless our mission — the most beautiful of all: to educate the new generations.

Thank you very much.

# *Building Constellations of Hope*



*Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year*



GLOBAL COMPACT  
ON EDUCATION

# DECALOGUE OF EDUCATION

 **GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION** 

**Building constellations of hope**

**PUTTING THE PERSON AT THE CENTER**

**1** Place the human person at the heart of every educational process, to help each one discover their uniqueness and capacity for relationship, in contrast to the culture of waste and exclusion.

**LISTENING TO YOUNGER GENERATIONS**

**2** Listen to the voices of children, adolescents, and young people in order to build together a future of justice and peace — a life worthy of every human being.

**PROMOTING WOMEN**

**3** Encourage the full participation of girls and young women in education, recognizing their equal dignity and essential contribution to society.

**EMPOWERING THE FAMILY**

**4** Recognize the family as the first and indispensable educator, the primary space where love and values are learned and transmitted.

**WELCOMING ALL**

**5** Educate and re-educate ourselves to welcome others, opening our hearts to the most vulnerable and marginalized.

**RENEWING THE ECONOMY AND POLITICS**

**6** Seek new ways of understanding the economy, politics, growth, and progress — always at the service of the human person and the whole human family, in the perspective of integral ecology.

**CARING FOR OUR COMMON HOME**

**7** Care for and cultivate our common home, protecting its resources, embracing simpler lifestyles, and promoting renewable and environmentally sustainable forms of energy.

**CULTIVATING AN INNER LIFE**

**8** Education for an inner life, learning to listen to the heart, to cherish silence, and to seek the meaning of life — through a spiritual pedagogy that leads to fullness and joy.

**GENERATING A HUMAN-CENTERED DIGITAL WORLD**

**9** Generate a human-centered digital world, guiding technology and artificial intelligence toward dignity, freedom, and fraternity, for an inclusive and high-quality education for all.

**BUILDING PEACE**

**10** Build bridges, not walls, through educational paths rooted in dialogue and the pursuit of a more just world, promoting a peace that is disarmed and disarming, humble and persevering.





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