

## Report of the National Symposium on Catholic Education

The Inaugural Event for the National Symposium was held on 23rd November 2023 at 5.30 pm at St. Paul VI Auditorium, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru-560034. The Registration for the members commenced at 2.00 pm till 5.00 pm and around 230 participants had registered for the Programme from all across India.

The members that were present for the Inauguration ceremony were:

- The Convenor of the National Symposium, Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, Chairperson of CBCI Office for Education and Culture.
- Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker: His Excellency Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai.
- Chairperson: His Grace Most Rev. Dr Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bangalore & President of Karnataka Catholic Bishop's Council.
- Guests of honour: Guests of Honour: Dr. Victor Lobo SJ, Vice Chancellor, St. Joseph's University, Bengaluru, and Fr. Jesu Doss, Director, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru.
- Rev. Fr. Dr Maria Charles SDB, National Secretary of CBCI Office for Education and Culture, New Delhi.
- Rev. Fr. Francis Assisi Almeida, Secretary of Karnataka Regional Commission for Education, Karnataka.
- Most Rev. Msgr. S. Jayanathan, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Bangalore and Vice-President/Acting Secretary-cum-Treasurer of the Archdiocesan Board of Education, Bengaluru.
- The other dignitaries from the State/Regional/Provincials/Secretaries/Deputy Secretaries and others from all parts of India.



The meeting began with an invocation Song by Jyothi Nivas College Students and invoked God's blessings with a prayer. The Welcome speech was given by Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, Chairperson of the CBCI Office for Education and Culture. He delivered the key purpose of having this symposium and also elaborated on the issues presently affecting Education in the Country. He said that working together and thinking together is the essence of the Symposium. Then a welcome dance was performed by the Jyothi Nivas PU College students.



The Lighting of the Lamp was done by His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, His Grace Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, Chairperson of CBCI Office for Education and Culture, His Grace Most. Rev. Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bangalore, Dr. Victor Lobo SJ, Vice Chancellor, St. Joseph's University, Bengaluru, Fr. Jesu Doss, Director, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru, Bishop Eugene Joseph, and Dr. Fr. Maria Charles SDB, National Secretary of the CBCI Office for Education and Culture.



Our Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai then delivered the Keynote Address for the National Symposium. He emphasised that our schools/institutions need an Identity. He then went on to explain the Catholic Identity of a school which the Holy Father, Pope Francis, had brought out. He said, "Education is the key to human dignity, and Evangelisation is intertwined with education. Education is not a luxury that we are giving all at the moment. A Catholic School is a mixture of organized and systematic teaching to develop special care with the ability to judge rightly. The ability to carry

on the cultural legacy to the future to be preserved fostered with a sense of values for the professional health".



Then All India Catholic Education Policy 2023 and CBCI Child Protection Policy for Catholic Schools in India 2023 were released, and a book "Implementing NEP 2020 in the Higher Educational Ecosystem (State-Specific Implications and Outcomes)" authored by Dr. Sr. Teresa, CSST was released in the National Symposium.



His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bangalore delivered his Presidential Address. He stressed that the biggest crisis is the Crisis of Education. He asked everyone to check on what kind of students we are nurturing and producing for the future. He expressed his concern that Artificial Intelligence may replace all our teachers. He also spoke about six ways for positive transformation, i.e., Introspection, Inquiry, Inclusiveness, Innovation, Implementation, and Insight.





The vote of thanks was proposed by Fr. Maria Charles, which ended the first day of the National Symposium.



The second day started at 7.00 am on 24th November 2023 with the Holy Eucharist by His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias and concelebrated by Bishops. Session I started at 9.00 am with the Moderator, Dr Xavier Vedam S.J., National General Secretary, All India Association of Christian Higher Education, introducing the main topic of the Session, "Challenges in the Indian Social and Education Milieu", and both the speakers and their topics. He invited Dr Lancy Lobo, S.J. to deliver his talk on the topic "Challenges in the Indian Social and Education Milieu".



Dr Lancy Lobo said that the Primary role of Education is to provide mature citizens to the Society. He started his session by displaying a picture which can be viewed as a Bird and Rabbit

reflecting each individual's view about a person/situation. He said that the State's role in the field of education is to address Education disparities, and to monitor educationists alone is not to be left aside. He also spoke about the Inter-sectorality of Education that should be taken into account.

He presented his PowerPoint slides of his topic where he had a comparison of Old India and New India reflecting all the changes that have taken place in India in various factors. He also stressed on the Nature of Paradigm Shift. He spoke about the four domains: Religious, Cultural, Economic, and Political Domains. He also spoke about Jesus being the Model Educator.



Dr. Xavier Vedam S.J congratulated Dr Lancy Lobo for his talk and introduced the next Speaker Dr. Paul Puduserry, CSC from Guwahati, Assam, and his topic was "Current Socio-Educational Challenge: A Renewed Synergy". Dr. Paul started his session by talking about the new concept of Education emerging all over the world and how all the students are affected by the new concept. He spoke about the Social Structure and Social Development consisting of Knowledge, Sustainable, Global, and Resilient society. He also expressed how the 21st-century understanding of Education is different from the 20th century and what it looks like in the milieu.



He gave a classic example of the Nokia effect saying that Nokia phones are gone, and they did nothing wrong, and the same kind of moment is happening with our Catholic identity. He also stressed what knowledge and skills we need to live safely in a Digital Society. He also said that if Students can think critically and bring about new ways of developing technology, what do we need to do? In such cases, we need to Relook, (Re) vision, (Re) learn, (Re) imagine, and (Re) Purpose. He told the participants the Four key points to reflect on Critical thinking, developing pedagogy, articulating education practices, and whether are we truly living our values. Then there was a Question-and-Answer session for both Speakers. A lot of participants had put up their Questions and Concerns to the Speakers which were then answered by them.



Session II started at 11.00 am with the Moderator, Dr. Pearl, Principal, Sophia College, Ajmer, Rajasthan, introducing the main topic of the Session, "Exploring our Universal and Particular Identity", and both the speakers and their topics. She invited Dr. John Ravi, SJ, Conference Secretary for Jesuit Secondary Education in South Asia, New Delhi, to deliver his talk on the topic "Global Compact on Education and Identity of Catholic Schools". He started his talk with an Introduction to the Global Compact on Education. He said that the compact is to call to action to ensure that Education is accessible, inclusive and of high quality.



Dr John said that Covid has made it possible to recognize globally that what is in crisis is our way of understanding reality and our relationships. Therefore, it is urgent to implement a new

cultural model to make real changes in our development model. He spoke about seven key values by Pope Francis to implement in Educational Institutions:

- Place the person at the centre of every Educational Program.
- Listen to the voices of Children and Young people.
- Encourage the full participation of girls and young women in Education.
- Establish the family as the first and essential place of Education.
- Educate and be educated on the need for acceptance and in particular openness to the most vulnerable and marginalized.
- Find new ways of understanding the economy, politics, growth, and progress.
- Safeguard and cultivate our common Home.



He also spoke about the implications for our Catholic Institutions. The Moderator Dr. Sr. Pearl thanked the Speaker Dr. John Ravi SJ for his talk on Global Compact on Education and Identity of Catholic Schools and invited the next speaker Dr. Jancy James, Former Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University and Founder Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Kerala, Kochi, Kerala, to present her talk on "Can Global Compact lead to a new paradigm shift?" She started her talk by saying that the concept of the Global Compact's realisation requires a basic change of mindset of the existing educational institutions. This will necessitate a discreetly blended pedagogy of Inclusiveness and Excellence which will let the young generation thrive in a rapidly evolving technology-mediated world, acquiring not only appropriate skills but also ethical values which accept fellow beings as a Fraternity bound by Solidarity.

She said The Global Compact on Education is an "invitation to dialogue on how we are building the future of our planet to rekindle the passion for education based on the philosophy of universal fraternity and solidarity". Holy Father's discourse is a wake-up call for re-visioning, re-orienting, and reconstructing education with the ultimate goal of creating mature individuals capable of overcoming division and antagonism and restoring the fabric of relationships for the sake of a more fraternal humanity. The grand principles of the Global



Compact have certainly the potential and power to transform our education. However, their full implementation is not easy due to several reasons.



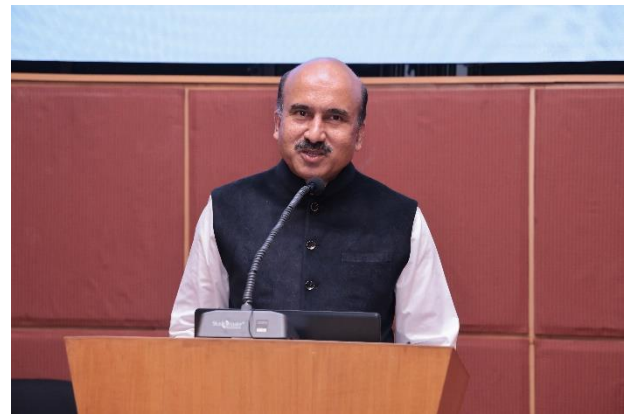
She explained all the Legal affairs of the court for the Minority institutions and the Minority rights of the people. She said that last but not least, the profile- the social image and reputation of the educational institution and its leader/head are crucial enabling factors in the realisation of the ideals of the Global Compact for Education. Then there was a Question-and-Answer session for both Speakers. A lot of participants had put up their Questions and Concerns to the Speakers which were then answered by them.



Next was the presentation of the ATC (Asian Trading Centre). The ATC team took us through the journey of ATC from its start and the growth of their Company and also made us aware of the facilities that they provide. The Value Education Series from Class I to XII was released by Sr. Vishala, Principal of Sophia High School. Mr Noel Almeida, an Educationist, spoke about the students' minds and said that their hearts are not connected enough, and he also spoke



about the activity books, Bachpan Manao. Mr. Paul, CCBI told us about the health insurance scheme. There was a Finance app presentation by Mr. Rohit called LEO 1 APP which is the first such Education Bank where students earn rewards for playing games which in turn can be used for payments or pocket money. It can be used for paying fees in full and then later be repaid to the company through the app itself. The concluding remarks were given by Mr. Nigel.



Session III started at 2.30 pm with the Moderator, Dr. Thomas Thennadiyil, Principal, of St. Claret College, introducing the main topic of the Session, "Catholic Education Policy: Relevance and Effectiveness", and both the speakers and their topics. He invited Dr Maria Charles SDB, National Secretary, CCBI Office for Education and Culture, New Delhi, to deliver his talk on the topic "Catholic Education Policy: Its Relevance in Today's Context". He spoke about the Context and Challenges of the Catholic Education Policy. He stressed giving priority to faith formation and said Education and care must be given to the catholic students especially the poor and the marginalized, making a culture of faith and identity, religion, and faith-based values, enabling faith and moral Education, focusing on the poor and the marginalized, especially the children from special category. There should be faith formation for all.



Dr. Maria Charles also spoke about the identity and role of the Catholic Education Ministry in India, the Catholic Church, the importance of education in India, modern schools, and the church's contribution through Higher Education. He also gave information on what the Catholic institutions are doing for qualitative, and holistic education. Dr. Thomas then invited

Dr. Teles Fernandes, Deputy Secretary of the Western Region Bishop's Council GEBICI, Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat, to deliver his talk on the topic "Catholic Education Policy: How can it be effectively put into practice?" He started his talk by saying that we should never undermine any human being.



Dr. Teles Fernandes gave an introduction to a new era of Educational Commitment involving all members of Society. He then gave the pros and cons of it and then explained the Chapters of the Catholic Education Policy. He said that Rural and Semi-urban school students have to be given the benefit of Technology and innovation by aligning with international educational platforms, they have modules in Regional languages and hybrid models in teaching-learning. He said we should have a clear-cut fee policy and set up a transparent financial management system that can be accessed on the digital portal/School website.



Dr. Teles explained the Vision, Mission, and Priorities of Catholic Education. He said that the Christian Values of service, love without discrimination, openness to all faiths, respect, discipline, and adherence to ethical practices are guiding principles in all our Educational

Institutions. Organising an Integrated Teacher Education Programme with a view of churning Teacher-Education with good communication, collaboration, critical thinking, new pedagogies, and technological skill sets is a must. He said we should conduct regular online parent, teacher, and student surveys to gauge the pulse of the community. It's imperative to form a "Catholic School Education Board" to be leaders rather than followers in School Education. Then there was a Question-and-Answer session for both Speakers. A lot of participants had put up their Questions and Concerns to the Speakers which were then answered by them.



Session IV started at 4.15 pm with the Moderator, Dr John Joseph Kennedy, Dean, School of Arts and Humanities, Christ (deemed to be) University, Bengaluru, introducing the main topic of the Session, "Policies and Curriculum Framework of Education in India", and both the speakers and their topics. He invited Dr. Sanjeev Ranganathan, Principal of Auroville Institute of Applied Technology and Principal of the Isai Ambalam School- an alternative school, Pondicherry, to deliver his talk on the topic "Transforming Education from the Inside Out!". He started his talk by saying Transforming Education inside out is good, but the Conversation is "How do I bring the change?" He spoke about how we design for alignment.



He said Universal values mean self and dignity, fairness, equity, and compassion. Change is outside our comfort zone. He asked What should be done to make the change, he told



everyone to think of universal values. He said sourcing his inner capacity, the greatest potential of a Human Being is to have a discerning eye and stand for it. He said his discerning eye is to change unworkable systems and norms. Dr. John then invited Dr Joe Arun SJ, Director LIBA, Loyola College, to deliver his talk on the topic "Impact of Higher Education Directives on our Institutions. He started by sharing a story of who is the King of the jungle.



Dr. Joe said that Education has been historically, a great instrument both for social transformation and colonization of minds and appropriation of power. He spoke about the three P's- Polarization, Populism, and Post-truth. He informed us about Liberal Education and Guidelines/Regulations/Framework for schools. The contribution of Christians towards education is enormous but the NEP is silent about it. NEP 2020 does not mention minority institutions anywhere. He said we need to protect our Minority rights and constitutional rights, and we must continue to serve the marginalized. He also gave strategies that could be followed to make our schools better.



Then there was a Question-and-Answer session for both Speakers. A lot of participants had put up their Questions and Concerns to the Speakers which were then answered by them. Dr. John gave the concluding remarks for the Session. The Region-wise meeting took place at 6.00 pm followed by dinner at 7.45 pm. This concluded the second day of the National Symposium.



The third day started at 7.00 am on 25th November 2023 with the Holy Eucharist by His Grace, Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, Chairperson, CBCI Office for Education and Culture. Session V started at 8.45 am with the Moderator, Sr. Elsa Muttathu CRI National Secretary, New Delhi, introducing the main topic of the Session, "Rights of our Children and Educational Institutions", and both the speakers and their topics. Sr. Elsa invited Mr Pradeep, CACA, to deliver his talk on the topic "Enabling a Safe Environment for Children and Staff: Cyber Security and Safeguard Protocol (POCSO, POSH, and JJ Act).



Mr Pradeep discussed the Child Protection Policy in detail, and the stakeholders' (Staff and Management) training was emphasised. Most importantly there was emphasis that the police verification and background check should be done with all those working with the children in

our education environment. He also illustrated the norms of critical safeguarding provisions that help to create a secure learning environment.



The session provided practical strategies with a focus on the essential protocols to achieve the requirements for child safety and the well-being of children in today's digital age. Integrating these safeguarding measures into the educational framework, the schools can ensure a nurturing and secure environment conducive to the holistic development of our children. Sr. Elsa then invited Adv. Jessy Kurian, Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Former Member, National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions, Government of India, New Delhi, to deliver her talk on the topic "Ensuring the Educational Rights of our institutions: Policies and Legal Provisions". She started her talk by establishing the concept of "Minority" in the Educational Institutional setting.

In the session, the following rights were taken into account:

- Right to admit students.
- Right to use its properties.
- Right to set a fee structure.
- To make the students participate in the decision-making of the Nation.



Adv. Jessy Kurian also emphasized the legal aspects which illustrate the general laws of the land applicable to minority educational institutions. Then there was a Question-and-Answer



session for both Speakers. A lot of participants had put up their Questions and Concerns to the Speakers which were then answered by them.



Session VI started at 10.15 am with the Moderator, Prof. Sevuga Pandian Asirvatham, Head, Department of Computer Science, Kristu Jayanti, introducing the main topic of the Session, "Emergence of Education Technology", and the speaker and his topic. Prof. Sevuga invited Fr. Arockia Selvakumar SDB, to deliver his talk on the topic "Emergence of Education Technology". He explained the ever-evolving education landscape which is profoundly transforming, reshaping the traditional paradigms, and opening new avenues for learning with the rapid integration of modern technologies.



The emergence of education technology, encompassing Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Mobile platforms, presents a dynamic landscape with both challenges and exciting possibilities. The disparities in accessing technology, data privacy concerns, and empowering educators with the knowledge and skills to adapt to the technology and cost implications pose significant challenges. He also explained AI's data-driven analytics and insights for targeted interventions and the creation of interactive and dynamic educational content.



The presentation Reports by the Regions started at 11.30 am and was Moderated by Most Rev. Fr. Joseph Jayanathan, Vicar General, Archdiocese of Bangalore. After the presentation, Most Rev. Fr. Joseph Jayanathan thanked the speakers and emphasized Collective Leadership and Collective Thinking. The takeaways of all the regions consolidated were to focus on Collaboration, Research/Training, Promotion of Human/universal values, and Inclusiveness.



The NEP book was released by Sr Teresa, Xavier Board of Education. This was followed by the CBCI Open Session with the Chairperson, Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves. The Concluding remarks of the Symposium were also given by the Chairperson. He thanked the audience for responding well and for the opportunity to share their concerns. In response to many communities who felt that we were fighting battles alone and to help face the challenges, suggestions were given to empower others.



The vote of thanks was given by Fr/Dr. Maria Charles SDB, National Secretary, CBCI Office for Education and Culture, after which the Participant's certificates were distributed. With this, the National Symposium on Catholic Education 2023 ended.

