



EDUCATE TO EMPOWER

CBCI EDUCATION NEXUS NOVEMBER 2025

**CONSTELLATIONS
OF HOPE:**
THE JUBILEE OF THE
WORLD OF EDUCATION
2025

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION
ON EDUCATION 2025**
EDUCATING FOR HOPE AND
TRANSFORMATION
17-19 NOVEMBER 2025



**DILEXI TE
POPE LEO XIV**

APOSTOLIC LETTER
DRAWING NEW MAPS OF
HOPE

**HAPPY
CHILDREN'S DAY**

CBCI OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

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EDUCATE TO EMPOWER

NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON EDUCATION 2025

ORGANISED BY THE OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE, CBCI

The **Office for Education and Culture of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI)** is delighted to announce the upcoming **National Consultation on Education 2025**, a landmark gathering of Catholic educators, principals, education experts, and leaders from across the nation.

Dates: 17th – 19th November 2025

Venue: New Delhi

PROPOSED THEME

“Educating for Hope and Transformation: Catholic Education in a Changing India”

This theme calls Catholic educators to renew their vision and commitment — to form students not merely for academic success, but as agents of hope, healing, and transformation in an India marked by rapid technological, cultural, and social shifts.

Educators, diocesan leaders, religious congregations, and policy advocates will come together over these three days for **keynote addresses, panel discussions, and collaborative workshops**, ensuring that Catholic education continues to be a beacon of faith, excellence, and inclusion for generations to come.

Mark your calendars!

Further details on registration, program schedule, and resource persons will be shared shortly.

Office for Education and Culture, CBCI

New Delhi

CBCI EDUCATION NEXUS NOVEMBER 2025



DRAWING NEW MAPS OF HOPE

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TODAY

As I write this editorial from Rome, the Eternal City is alive with a deep sense of renewal. The **Jubilee celebrations for the World of Education** have gathered educators, university leaders, and Church officials from every continent to reflect on **“Educational Constellations – A Pact with the Future.”** It has been my privilege to participate in this historic **International Congress on Education**, to engage in dialogues on **global networking for Catholic education**, and to share, along with many of you in spirit, an **audience with the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV.**

The Pope's newly released **Apostolic Letter, *Drawing New Maps of Hope***, has set the tone for a new epoch in Catholic education. His vision is clear: **education is not a relic of tradition but a regenerative force for humanity.** The Holy Father calls Catholic schools and universities to form **“educational constellations — humble and powerful experiences capable of interpreting the times and preserving the unity between faith and reason, between thought and life, between knowledge and justice.”** These words struck me profoundly because they reveal the heart of the Church's mission in education — not to dominate, but to accompany; not to impose, but to illuminate.

Every conversation in Rome — from digital ethics and innovation to equity and inclusion — echoed the Pope's insistence that **education is a sacred act of hope.** In his words, **“where educational communities allow themselves to be guided by the Word of Christ, they do not retreat but are revitalized; they do not build walls, but bridges.”** This is the spirit we must carry back to our classrooms, our campuses, and our boards of education across India.

From the Global South to the Global North, Catholic education is rediscovering its prophetic identity: to be a **network of light** in a fragmented world. The Pope reminded us that education today must **“place the human person at the centre,”** forming hearts capable of mercy, dialogue, and ecological conversion. The world



does not need more knowledge alone; it needs wisdom — educators who combine intellect with compassion, professionalism with prophetic vision.

As I participated in the global discussions on collaboration, mentorship, and formation, I realized that **India's Catholic educators are part of this great constellation.** Our schools and universities — spread across villages and megacities — are not isolated stars but **part of a luminous global network that embodies the Church's educational mission.** The future of Catholic education will not be written in isolation. It will be written **together** — through shared research, global alliances, and a renewed commitment to the poor and the marginalized. **This is the “new choreography” Pope Leo XIV invites us to create: one that puts the human person, not technology or profit, at the centre of every learning process.**

As this Jubilee year unfolds, may we, Catholic educators of India, take our place confidently in this **global constellation of hope.** Let us educate not merely for success but for **significance**, not just for knowledge but for **communion** — **so that the light of truth may continue to shine through our classrooms and our witness.**



FROM ROME —
FR. MARIA CHARLES SDB
*National Secretary, CBCI Office
for Education and Culture*



ONE QUESTION CAN BE MORE POWERFUL THAN HUNDRED LECTURES

When I was in school, a teacher once asked us: What pushes the Earth to keep going around the Sun? 20 years later, I have still not forgotten this question. I had been riding on the Earth for a few years but had never wondered what was pushing it.

Another time, a new teacher who was going to teach us a course in Mechanics walked into the class and asked: 'Why does a cycle fall down as it slows down? Why do we need to keep pedaling?'. I used to cycle everyday. But, I had never thought about this.

I attended 10000+ classes in school and 4000+ lectures in college. I have forgotten almost all the lectures. I have forgotten everything that I have memorised.

But, I remember these questions more than the lectures that I attended. That is the power of good questions! They force you to think. They make you 'see' things that were in front of your eyes all this while. And yet, you could not see them.

How amazing it would be if we teachers started asking such beautiful questions!

Our brain grows when we think

Research shows that new neural pathways are formed when we learn by thinking. Blood flow increases into parts of the brain and new areas of the brain get activated.

In a study on London's taxi drivers, it was found that they have a much larger hippocampus – the part of the brain that plays a critical role in learning and memory – than bus drivers. Why? Because the taxi drivers drove through a new path every day. They were forced to think and remember new routes. On the other hand, the bus drivers drove through the same route every day.

Learning is much the same. Our brain grows when we are stretched to think. And, what better way to make children think than to ask them good questions?

The good news is that we don't even need to ask children to solve difficult puzzles in schools to make them think. Every subject that we teach in school – Science, Math, Geography, etc. – is filled with opportunities to ask questions.

For example - What would happen if light did not travel in a straight line? Why does the air move

from one place to another? Why can a dog not say 'Hello'?

Lectures vs Questions. Why do lectures not work?

A young Physics professor called Dr. Derek Muller from Australia set out to investigate this. He showed children a range of good Physics videos. After each video, the students mentioned that the videos were clear and concise. They also reported that they were very confident of their answers. But, when Dr. Muller asked them questions to test their understanding, the students scored abysmally low. Dr. Muller learned that these videos only informed the students about the Physics concepts but they did not result in any learning.

This and many other research has shown that lectures are passive. They do not push us to make any effort. And if we do not make any effort, we cannot learn anything.

The curse of knowledge

Teachers suffer from the curse of 'knowledge'. They tend to assume that just because they may be good at the subject, children will learn if teachers 'teach' very well. That is why you would see many teachers trying their best to explain slowly, repeat themselves and even show theatrics. They assume that if children are appreciating their classes or getting good marks in the exams, they must be learning.

Teachers need to think again. They need to ask themselves: Can I replace my statement with a question? How do I make children think without revealing the information?

This is hard to do but it is a habit that can be cultivated among teachers.

How can teachers involve more questioning in our classrooms?

Children are natural thinkers. They like asking their parents and teachers questions when they are young. But, they get lectured into becoming less curious. If teachers keep speaking so much, when will they get the time to think?

I was speaking to a teacher recently who has started

asking more questions in her classroom. She mentioned that she gave a question to children and there was a pin-drop silence in the class. It was an amazing sight for her to watch children engrossed in thinking. It also resulted into much deeper learning.

Questions can make children into innovators

Teachers have a wonderful opportunity to turn children into future innovators. Children who learn to think start asking more questions.

And, a question is the basis for every innovation around us. If no one had ever asked for a better way to store water, a bottle would have never got invented. If no one had ever asked if there is a way to talk to someone in a different city, a phone would never have been invented. We live in a world that has improved only because of asking questions.

The author of this article is Aneesh Bangia, co-founder of Open Door. He is reachable at aneesh@opendooreducation.in and +91 9764205878

Open Door works with schools to help teachers in asking beautiful questions to the process of teaching. Its programs - Thinking Classroom and Thinking Assessments - integrate with the CBSE and ICSE curriculum to add 'thinking' in thousands of classrooms. Open Door has also signed an MoU with NCERT to collaborate on the design of competency-based questions.

ANEESH BANGIA

Co-founder of Open Door





THE APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION 'DILEXI TE'

Pope Francis began to write the Apostolic exhortation 'Dilexi Te' as a continuation of 'Dilexit Nos,' in the last months of his life. Pope Leo the XIV has made it his own by adding some of his reflections to it. The document emphasizes that all Christians are called to appreciate the close connection between Christ's love and his summons to care for the poor. The love of the Lord and love for the poor go together. By saying that the poor are always with you (Mt 26:11), Jesus promises his continued presence with his disciples (Mt 28:20) and continues to speak through the poor. The preferential choice for the poor is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society. Poverty has taken many forms such as material, moral, spiritual and cultural poverty. The cry of the poor constantly challenges our lives. The increase of inequality with the increase of wealth can be seen in parts of the society. The fact is that the poor cannot be neglected.

God chooses the poor. This becomes clear in the mystery of incarnation. He is known in the smallness of a child laid in a manger and in the extreme humiliation of the cross, a sign of radical poverty which is death. We see in the Gospel poverty marking every aspect of Jesus' life. As a manifestation of 'privilegium pauperum' he presented himself not only as a poor Messiah, but also as the Messiah of and for the poor. In this we can clearly see the relevance of a preferential option on the part of God for the poor which, does not become exclusive. God asks his church to make a decisive and radical choice in favour of the poor and thus inaugurate a kingdom of justice. The Church can be Christ's Church only when she makes room for the little ones and walks with the poor. Without this choice prayer cannot be meaningful. Mercy towards the poor is well summarized in the twin commandments, the love of God and of the neighbor.

The Church for the Poor: Echoing Pope Francis' call for a church which is poor and for the poor, Pope Leo underlines the inseparable bond between our faith and the poor. He exhorts the Church to see its founder in the suffering poor. Two deacons initially St. Stephan and later St. Lawrence bore witness to this truth of faith. The Fathers of the Church recognized in the poor a privileged way to reach God. For St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Polycarp and for St. Justine worship could not be separated from the concern for the poor. According to St. John Chrysostom God does not need Golden vessels but golden souls and charity is a requirement for true worship. For Sts. Augustine and St. Ambrose almsgiving is justice restored. It purifies the heart of the giver and that doctrinal rigor without mercy is empty talk. This was practiced in a particular way in the care of the sick and suffering. St. John of God with his clarion call "Do good, my brothers" and the Camillians who embodied the mercy of Christ the Physician stand out as examples.

The women Congregations such as The Daughters Of Charity, The Hospital Sisters, The Little Sisters Of Divine Providence and the like have become a maternal and discreet presence in hospitals, nursing homes and retirement homes. In embracing monastic life monks and nuns left everything to encounter the poor Christ in their radical way of detached life of poverty. St. Basil with his monastic life lived the motto that to be close to God one must be close to the poor. Benedictine monasteries with their culture of cultivating the land and preparing medicines for the poor gave rise to new civilization where the poor were not problem to be solved but brothers and sisters to be welcomed. Thus they created a mysticism of God's presence in the little ones. This **life of monasticism** revealed itself as a style of holiness and a concrete way to transform the society. The realization that the church is fully the bride of the Lord only when she is also the sister of the poor and contemplation demands mercy as its purest fruit characterized the monastic spirituality. The holy religious orders such as the Trinitarians and the Mercedarians worked for freeing enslaved Christians offering often their own lives in exchange. The modern form of slaveries such as human trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation etc. are being helped by the new forms of these orders.



The Mendicants, such as the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and the Carmelites brought about evangelical revolution by entrusting themselves entirely to the providence and by becoming one with the poor. Thorough Education they gave dignity to the poor. The experience of migration is not new. It can be seen in the history of the people of God and also in Jesus who became a migrant in the episode of flight to Egypt. The Missionaries of St. Charles founded by Bp. Scalabrini offered a church and a world without barriers where no one was a foreigner. This work continues through the efforts of Caritas today. Our response to the challenges of contemporary migration and to all those living in the existential peripheries may be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. We realize the demand of faith that refugees are not problem to be solved but brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved. The church knows that Christian holiness flourishes in the most forgotten and wounded places of humanity and she rediscovers her most authentic self in the poorest of

the poor.

Along with Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Brazilian St. Dulce of the poor, known as 'the good angel of Bahia', St. Benedict Menni, St. Charles de Foucauld, St. Katherine Drexel, Sr. Emmanuelle and many such saintly people have shown that consecrated life is a journey of love at the existential peripheries of the world and teach us that serving the poor is an encounter between equals, where Christ is revealed and adored. The church assumes her highest posture when she bends down to care for the poor, making a preferential option for them because of the special presence of Christ in them. In this we must also recognize the popular movements throughout centuries of Christian history, involving everyone, forming solidarity of closely-bound community who fight against the structural causes of poverty and inequality. They invite us to make the idea of social policies not merely policies for the poor, but with poor and of the poor. This must apply to the institutions of the Church as well.

Social Doctrine: the church's social doctrine arose in response to technological and societal changes that led to contradictions, conflicts and social discrimination. The teaching of the Magisterium over the past 150 years highlight the church's concern for the poor.

Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* addressed the intolerable living conditions of the workers and argued for the establishment of a just social order. St. John XXIII in his *Mater et Magistra* called for justice on a global scale. The Vatican II emphasized that the "the mystery of Christ in the Church as the mystery of Christ in the poor", and "the mystery of the church as mother of the poor."

In his opening talk St. Paul VI highlighted the universal representation of Christ in the poor and the intrinsic link between the Church and the poor.

He said that **the poor man and Peter** can be one in the same person, that of poverty and that of authority. The Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium*

et Spes underlines the social dimension and the universal

destination of earthly goods. St. Paul VI urged the

international community to build a world of

solidarity. St. John Paul II upheld the

church's preferential relationship with

the poor. Pope Benedict XVI argued

for a net-work of economic

institutions capable of

guaranteeing regular access to

sufficient food and water for

nutritional needs.

Pope Francis echoing the teachings of his predecessors emphasized the church's need to identify with the poor and secure their freedom. St. Oscar Romero's martyrdom is a powerful witness to this commitment. This apostolic exhortation takes up the themes of 'the structures of sin that create poverty and Extreme inequality that undermines the dignity. The Puebla Conference described structures of injustice as a "Social Sin" and advocated for a prophetic option for the poor. Charity as a genuine force could resolve the structural causes of poverty. The "dictatorship of an economy that kills" must be denounced. Pope Francis in his *Dilexit Nos* reminds us of the danger of the gradual development of a mindset that considers selfishness and indifference as reasonable. All the members of the people of God have a duty to recognize the unjust structures and to eradicate them by the force of Good. It must be remembered that the Gospel message has to do with the Kingdom God also. It must be noted that the defenders of orthodoxy are at times accused of passivity and culpable complicity regarding the intolerable situations of injustice. Pastors and those in authority and responsibility are especially called to prioritize justice, peace and Gospel's teaching on the poor.



The poor as subjects: The Church's preferential option for the poor calls for greater commitment to sharing life with the marginalized. It means recognizing them as subjects capable of creating their own culture, not just objects of charity. Marginalized communities have the right to embrace the Gospel and express their faith in their own way. The Church should positively regard their 'popular' practice of faith. Loving attentiveness to others is key to true concern for their wellbeing. Appreciating the poor in their goodness and culture is essential. Real closeness allows us to accompany the poor on their path of liberation. Living with the poor, not just visiting, is a high form of evangelical life. We must 'let ourselves be evangelized' by the poor and vulnerable.

Loving care for and with the poor is the evangelical hallmark of a Church, faithful to the heart of God. The poor is not a social problem but they are “one of us”. The story of Good Samaritan remains timely even today. Encountering a lonely and needy person must make us see in him/her a dignity identical to our own. Again St. Gregory the Great would remind the faithful that every moment a Lazarus could be found if in faith and charity one looked for. The poor can also teach much about the gospel and its demands. By their silent witness they make us confront the precariousness of our existence. For Christians the poor are the very “flesh” of Christ. By her very nature the church is in solidarity with the poor, the excluded, the marginalized and all the outcast of society. Without creative concern and effective cooperation in helping the poor the church will easily drift into a spiritual worldliness camouflaged by religious practices, unproductive meetings and empty talk. **Almsgiving** though often neglected remains a vital means of encountering the poor. Helping the poor find a work is ideal. However where this is not possible almsgiving remains a necessary means of contact and encounter with the less fortunate. It offers us a chance to halt before the poor, to look into their eyes, to touch them and to share something of ourselves with them. 'It brings a touch of pietas into a society'. As St. John Chrysostom would say “almsgiving is the wing of prayer”. By its very nature Christian love is prophetic; it works miracles. Love is above all a way of looking at life and a way of living it. A church that sets no limits to love, that knows no enemies to fight but only men and women to love is the church that the world needs today.

Summary by Dr.A.Sebastian
 Rector, St. Joseph's Regional Seminary.
 Secretary for the CBCI office for Doctrine.

DRAWING NEW MAPS OF HOPE

A NEW APOSTOLIC LETTER BY POPE LEO XIV

The Apostolic Letter "Drawing New Maps of Hope", released on 28 October, marks the sixtieth anniversary of the conciliar declaration "Gravissimum Educationis". In it, Pope Leo XIV reaffirms and expands that document's vision, applying it to the challenges of the present time.

VATICAN NEWS

POPE SIGNS APOSTOLIC LETTER MARKING SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS

Reflecting on the millions of children who still lack access to basic education, and on the

educational crises caused by war, migration, inequality, and poverty, the Pope asks how Christian education can respond today. In his Apostolic Letter *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, signed on 27 October 2025 and released to mark the 60th anniversary of the Conciliar declaration ***Gravissimum Educationis***, he notes that the insights of *Gravissimum Educationis* remain relevant in today's fragmented and digitalised environment, continuing to inspire educational communities to build bridges and to offer civic and professional formation with creativity. This direction, first traced by the Second Vatican Council, has generated a rich array of works and charisms that remain a spiritual and pedagogical treasure for the Church.

EDUCATIONAL CHARISMS AS LIVING RESPONSES

The Letter emphasises that educational charisms are not fixed formulas but living responses to the needs of each age. Recalling the teaching of Saint Augustine on the true educator as one who awakens the desire for truth and freedom, the Pope surveys the tradition that spans from monastic communities to the mendicant orders and to the *Ratio Studiorum*, where scholastic thought met Ignatian spirituality. He recalls the contributions of educators such as Saint Joseph Calasanz, Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Saint Marcellin Champagnat, and Saint John Bosco, each of whom advanced distinctive educational methods serving the poor and marginalised. He also highlights the pioneering witness of women religious and laywomen—including Vicenta María López y Vicuña, Frances Cabrini, Josephine Bakhita, Maria Montessori, Katharine Drexel, and Elizabeth Ann Seton—who expanded access to education for girls, migrants, and the disadvantaged.

EDUCATION AS A SHARED MISSION

Pope Leo XIV underlines that education is always a collective effort in which teachers, students, families,



administrators, pastors, and civil society all participate. He recalls the thought of Saint John Henry Newman—now named co-patron of the educational world alongside Saint Thomas Aquinas—as a model of intellectual rigour united with deep humanity.

The Pope encourages renewal in educational environments through empathy and openness, insisting that education must form the whole person, integrating knowledge with the heart and the capacity for discernment. Catholic schools and universities are to be places where inquiry is guided and supported, not suppressed. Teaching, he adds, is to be understood as a vocation of service that offers time, trust, competence, and compassion, joining justice with mercy.

THE HUMAN PERSON AT THE CENTRE

The Letter reaffirms Paul VI's warning against reducing education to functional training or economic productivity. Education, Pope Leo XIV writes, must serve human dignity and the common good. A person cannot be confined to a set of measurable skills or to a predictable digital profile, but must be recognised as a unique individual with a face, a story, and a calling.



RESTORING TRUST AMID CONFLICT

Without indulging nostalgia, the Pope situates his reflection firmly in the present. Using the image of fixed stars to describe the principles guiding education, he stresses that truth is discovered in communion, that freedom implies responsibility, and that authority must be exercised as service.

He calls Catholic education to rebuild trust in a world marked by fear and division, cultivating a sense of shared belonging that fosters fraternity among peoples and nations.

THE INTERWEAVING OF FAITH, CULTURE, AND LIFE

Recalling his years of service in the diocese of Chiclayo in Peru, Pope Leo XIV reflects on education as a gradual journey of growth, built through dedication and perseverance. He presents Catholic schools as communities where faith, culture, and life are harmoniously united.

Technical updates alone, he writes, are not sufficient to meet contemporary challenges; what is needed is discernment and coherence of vision. The educator's witness, both intellectual and spiritual, is as important as classroom instruction. For this reason, the formation of teachers—academic, pedagogical, cultural, and spiritual—is described as essential to the mission of Catholic education.



THE FAMILY AS THE PRIMARY EDUCATOR

The Pope reaffirms that the family remains the first and fundamental place of education. Other institutions can assist but never replace it. Collaboration among families, schools, and the wider community is essential, based on listening, shared responsibility, and mutual trust.

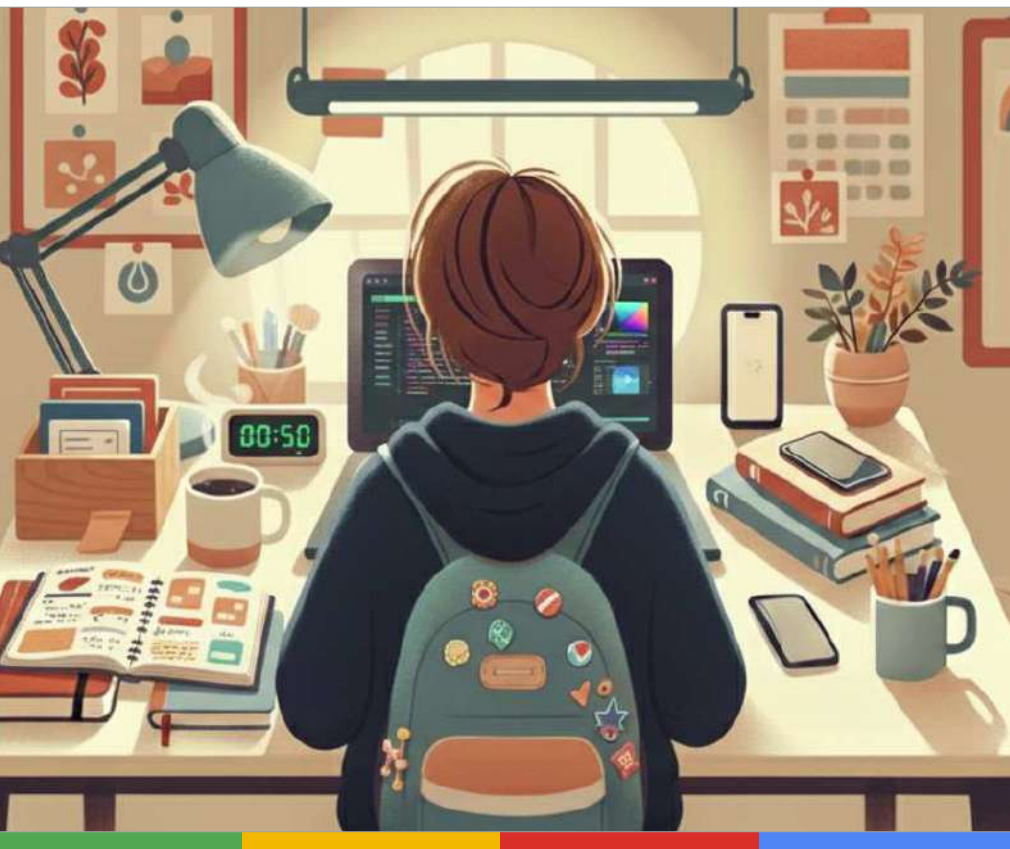
In an interconnected world, formation too must be interconnected. The Pope encourages greater cooperation between parish and diocesan schools, universities, professional institutes, movements, and digital and pastoral initiatives. Differences in methods or structures, he notes, should be viewed as resources rather than obstacles, contributing to a coherent and fruitful whole. The future, he says, demands growth in collaboration and unity of purpose.

LINKING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Integral education, the Letter insists, unites every dimension of the person and treats faith not as an additional subject but as the breath that gives life to all learning. In this way, Catholic education becomes a

seedbed for an integral humanism that can respond to the urgent questions of our age.

The Pope situates this within a world wounded by conflict and violence. Education for peace, he explains, is not passive but active: it rejects aggression, teaches reconciliation, and cultivates a language of mercy and justice. He connects this mission with the need to link social and environmental justice, reminding readers that when the earth suffers, the poor suffer most. Education, therefore, must form consciences capable of choosing what is right, not merely what is advantageous, and of promoting sustainable and simple lifestyles.



TECHNOLOGY AT THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY

Drawing again on the teaching of Vatican II, Pope Leo XIV cautions against subjugating education to market logic or financial interests. He calls for the responsible use of technology, which should enrich learning rather than weaken relationships or community life.

He warns against purely technical efficiency that lacks soul, and against standardised knowledge that impoverishes the human spirit. No digital system, he observes, can replace the human capacities that make education fully alive—imagination, art, creativity, empathy, and even the willingness to learn through error. Artificial intelligence and digital environments, he adds, must be guided by ethical reflection and a

concern for human dignity, justice, and the value of work.

TOWARD A CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER

Building on the legacy of Pope Francis and the *Global Compact on Education*, Pope Leo XIV identifies three current priorities: the cultivation of interior life, which responds to young people's search for depth; the formation of a humane digital culture that places the person before the algorithm; and the education of new generations in the ways of peace, dialogue, and reconciliation.

He calls for a new educational culture marked by cooperation rather than rivalry, and by shared discernment rather than rigid hierarchy.

A SYMPHONY OF THE SPIRIT

In conclusion, the Letter invites educators to use language that heals, to keep an open and discerning heart, and to face today's challenges with courage and generosity. The Pope acknowledges the real difficulties of the present: fragmented attention caused by hyper-digitalisation, fragile relationships, social insecurity, and inequality.

Against these threats, he calls for a spirit of inclusivity and evangelical gratuity that expresses itself in concrete acts of justice and solidarity. When education loses sight of the poor, he warns, it loses its very soul.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

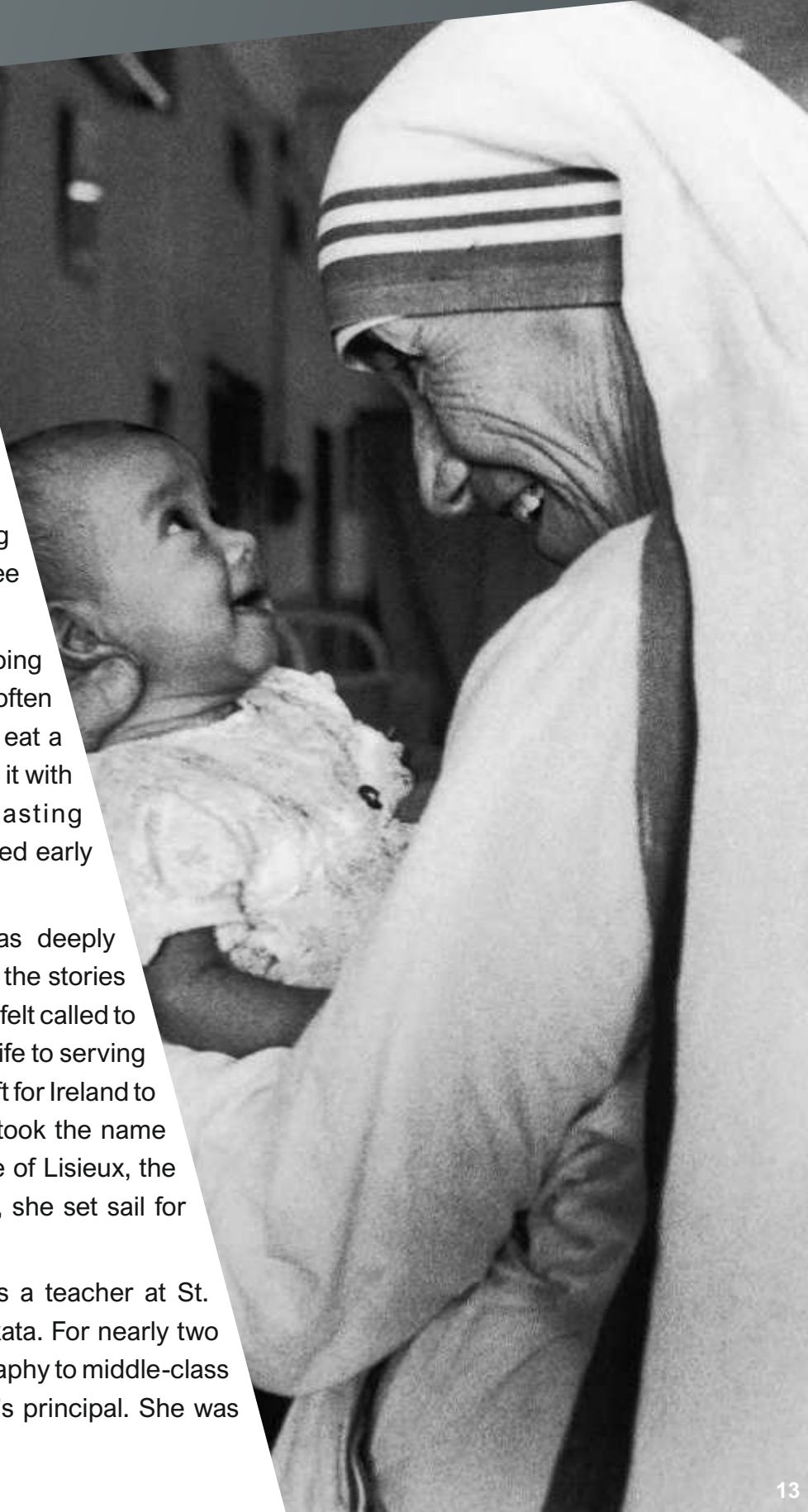
(26 AUGUST 1910 - 5 SEPTEMBER 1997)

Mother Teresa was born Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu on 26 August 1910 in Skopje, a small town that was then part of the Ottoman Empire and is today the capital of North Macedonia. She grew up in a deeply Catholic Albanian family that valued faith, hospitality, and charity. Her father, who was active in civic life, died suddenly when she was eight, leaving her mother, Dranfile, to raise the three children alone.

Dranfile played a decisive role in shaping young Anjezë's character. She would often remind her children: "My child, never eat a single mouthful unless you are sharing it with others." These words made a lasting impression on the little girl, who learned early that love must be practical and visible.

From her teenage years, Anjezë was deeply drawn to missionary work. Inspired by the stories of Jesuit priests working in Bengal, she felt called to leave her homeland and dedicate her life to serving in India. In 1928, at the age of 18, she left for Ireland to join the Sisters of Loreto, where she took the name "Sister Mary Teresa" after St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the patroness of missionaries. Soon after, she set sail for India, arriving in Kolkata in 1929.

Her first years in India were spent as a teacher at St. Mary's School for Girls in Entally, Kolkata. For nearly two decades, she taught history and geography to middle-class girls, eventually becoming the school's principal. She was





loved by her students for her kindness, discipline, and dedication.

Yet, while she was teaching in the convent school, she could not ignore the immense suffering just outside its walls. Kolkata was a city of contrasts—wealth and culture on one side, poverty and disease on the other. The sight of people dying on the streets, children going hungry, and families living in slums moved her deeply. She began to feel restless, sensing that God was calling her to something more radical.

In 1946, during a train ride to Darjeeling for her annual retreat, she experienced what she later described as a mystical encounter with Christ. She heard Him calling her to leave the school and live among the poor: “I thirst.” This phrase, taken from Jesus’ words on the Cross, became the central inspiration of her life.

For nearly two years, she sought guidance and wrestled with the practical difficulties of leaving her convent. Finally, in 1948, she received permission from the Vatican to begin her mission independently. She exchanged her traditional Loreto habit for a simple white cotton sari with a blue border, symbolizing simplicity and poverty, and stepped into the streets of Kolkata with nothing but faith.

Mother Teresa began by teaching poor children under a tree and visiting families in slums. She trained herself in basic medicine and tended to the sick and the dying. Soon, young women inspired by her work joined her. In 1950, she founded the Missionaries of Charity, a congregation whose mission was to serve “the poorest of the poor.”

The order grew rapidly. They opened the famous Nirmal Hriday (Home for the Dying), where people abandoned on the streets could die with dignity, cared for with love. They established orphanages, homes for lepers, and shelters for the homeless. Her sisters wore the same white sari, living a life of radical simplicity. Mother Teresa’s philosophy was not about numbers or grand gestures, but about personal love. She often said: “If you can’t feed a hundred people, then feed just one.”

For her, every person was a child of God, worthy of love and respect.

By the 1960s and 70s, Mother Teresa’s work had spread far beyond Kolkata. Houses of the Missionaries of Charity opened in other parts of India and eventually in more than 100 countries. She became a global figure, invited to speak at international gatherings and to meet world leaders. In 1979, she received the Nobel Peace Prize. Instead of attending the ceremonial banquet, she

asked that the \$192,000 prize money be given to the poor of Kolkata. In her acceptance speech, she said: “If you judge people, you have no time to love them.” Her words and witness touched millions, and she became a symbol of compassion in a world often divided by violence and injustice.



At the same time, her work was not free from criticism. Some questioned the medical standards in her homes, others disagreed with her strong pro-life stance, and some even accused her of romanticizing suffering. Yet Mother Teresa never wavered. For her, the purpose was not efficiency but love, not statistics but souls. She accepted criticism with humility, reminding people that she was not called to be successful, only faithful.

Behind her public image of radiant love, Mother Teresa also experienced deep spiritual struggles. Letters published after her death revealed that she endured decades of interior darkness, a sense of God's absence. Yet, she chose to continue her mission joyfully, seeing her suffering as a sharing in the thirst of Christ on the Cross. This hidden aspect of her spirituality makes her witness even more powerful, for it shows that holiness is not about feelings but about fidelity. Her spirituality was marked by simplicity: trust in God's providence, constant prayer, and joyful service. She encouraged her sisters to begin every day with the Eucharist and to see Jesus in the “distressing disguise” of the poor.

Even as her health declined in the 1990s, Mother Teresa continued to travel, open new missions, and encourage her sisters. She met popes, presidents, and ordinary people with the same warmth. In 1997, shortly before her death, the Missionaries of Charity had over 4,000 sisters serving in 123 countries. Mother Teresa died on 5 September 1997, at the age of 87. Her funeral in Kolkata was attended by dignitaries from around the world, but more importantly, thousands of ordinary poor people came to bid farewell to the woman they called “Ma.”

Recognizing her extraordinary holiness, Pope John Paul II beatified her in 2003. On 4 September 2016, Pope Francis declared her a saint in front of thousands at St. Peter's Square, giving her the title Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Her feast day is celebrated every year on 5 September.

Today, the Missionaries of Charity continue her mission with thousands of sisters and volunteers in over 130 countries, running homes for the dying, orphanages, clinics, and schools. Her legacy is not just in institutions but in a way of life—a call to love without conditions, to serve without expecting reward. Mother Teresa's message is especially relevant in today's world, where technological advancement often coexists with loneliness, division, and indifference. She reminded us that the greatest poverty is not material but spiritual: the absence of love. Her words still echo: “The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved.”

Her life invites each of us to respond, not by doing extraordinary things, but by putting love into small, daily acts; listening to someone in need, sharing with the less fortunate, forgiving, and offering kindness.

Mother Teresa's story is not just the tale of one woman but a challenge to humanity. She embodied the truth that one person, guided by faith and compassion, can touch millions of lives. She transformed the streets of Kolkata into places of hope, and her witness continues to inspire the world. As she often reminded us: “Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.” In those small acts lies the power to change the world.

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturg/saints/ns_lit_doc_20031019_madre-teresa_en.html

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_Teresa

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mother-Teresa>

<https://www.motherteresa.org/mother-teresa>



THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Introduction:

On the eve of the third millennium, education faces unprecedented challenges shaped by sweeping social, cultural, and economic transformations. The document warns of a “crisis of values which is undoubtedly the most serious crisis of the contemporary era,” characterized by “subjectivism, moral relativism, and nihilism.” At the same time, it notes that “rapid structural changes,” fuelled by science, technology, and globalization, are reshaping societies in ways that widen inequality and drive migration. These shifts have given rise to “multicultural, multiethnic, and multireligious societies,” which, while enriching, also bring new tensions and complexities. In this context, Catholic schools are called to respond with conviction, remaining faithful to their Gospel mission while addressing the pressing realities of contemporary life.¹

Joys and difficulties:

Catholic schools have followed a “positive course” in recent decades, becoming powerful

instruments of evangelization, even in places where “no other form of pastoral work is possible.” They have shared in the “joys and hopes, sufferings and difficulties” of communities, fostered social and cultural growth, and pioneered new pedagogical methods through teachers who see their vocation as “a mission and true apostolate.”²

At the same time, schools face growing challenges: many students lack perseverance and authentic role models, families often view education only as a “certificate of studies,” and teachers experience “pedagogical tiredness.” Added to this are poverty, civil conflict, financial burdens, and restrictive policies, all of which threaten the survival of schools and their mission to remain “a school for all.”³

Looking ahead:

As we consider the “joys and difficulties” faced by Catholic schools, we are invited to reflect on their pivotal role in shaping the younger generation as we approach the new millennium,

“the future of the world and of the Church belongs to the younger generation,” as John Paul II reminds us. Catholic schools must equip young people not only with the technical and scientific knowledge necessary to navigate a complex society, but, above all, with a “solid Christian formation.” To fulfil their mission effectively as educational institutions in the modern world, it is essential that these schools strengthen certain fundamental characteristics.⁴

- **The human person and his or her education:** The Catholic school is envisioned as both a school for the human person and of human persons, placing “the person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, ... at the heart of Christ's teaching,” and affirming that promoting the human person is its very goal. In faithfully pursuing this mission, the school commits to nurturing the whole human being—integrating material, spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth—because authentic human values attain their unity and fulfilment only in Christ. This Christ-centred vision provides both the foundation and the guiding principle for the Catholic school's educational project, empowering it to form strong, well-rounded personalities equipped to engage with the world in truth and love.⁵
- **The Catholic school at the heart of the Church:** Amid a complex modern world, the Catholic school must nurture and deepen its ecclesial identity, for it is through this identity that the school truly becomes “a genuine instrument of the Church,” serving as a privileged venue for Christian

education and evangelisation. This mission is especially embodied by Religious Institutes, whose charisms have historically fuelled Catholic educational work, though today they face challenges, including declining numbers and misconceptions that may lead some to abandon teaching. Moreover, the Catholic school's effectiveness depends on the strength of its educating community, students, families, teachers, and staff, united in collaborative dialogue and joint commitment, especially through meaningful partnerships with families, such as parents' associations, to ensure a personalized and effective educational project.⁶

- **Cultural identity of the Catholic school:** Rooted in its identity, the Catholic school embraces a profound cultural synthesis of faith and culture, understanding that knowledge, when framed in the light of faith, transcends mere information to become wisdom and a vision for life. In its educational project, there is no separation between “time for learning and time for formation,” and school subjects are not simply conveyors of content but vehicles for values and truths, fostering unity, coherence, and articulation across disciplines. This approach requires an environment committed to the pursuit of truth, in which “competent, convinced and coherent educators, teachers of learning and of life,” can reflect, however imperfectly but vividly, the example of the one Teacher.⁷
- **Care for learning means loving:** In the Catholic school, authentic concern for learning is inseparable from love, for “care for learning means loving” and every true act of teaching must spring from this conviction. Education is not simply the transmission of knowledge or skills, but the patient accompaniment of students with respect, encouragement, and personal attention.

This attitude transforms the classroom into a space where competence is joined with compassion, discipline with understanding, and instruction with genuine care for each learner's growth. In this way, the Catholic school reflects





Christ's own pedagogical style, where love becomes the foundation and measure of all teaching.⁸

- The Catholic school at the service of society:** The Catholic school, while rooted in the life of the Church, also renders an essential service to society by promoting the integral development of the human person and preparing citizens committed to the common good. It contributes to social cohesion by fostering dialogue, solidarity, and respect for human dignity, offering young people the capacity to face life's challenges with responsibility and faith. In this way, it responds to the urgent need for education that forms not only skilled professionals but also “men and women of conviction, ready to place themselves at the service of the community,” ensuring that education becomes a leaven of justice, peace, and authentic human progress.⁹
- Climate of the educating community:** A Catholic school is called to create a genuine educating community, where relationships of trust, dialogue, and shared responsibility foster a climate that supports both learning and human growth. Such an environment is not limited to academic instruction but embraces the whole person, cultivating values, solidarity, and respect for others. The document stresses that this requires “a strong experience of shared responsibility

involving the participation of all” so that students, teachers, parents, and staff feel united in a common mission. Within this atmosphere, education becomes more than the transfer of knowledge; it becomes a communal journey where faith and life are integrated, and each member contributes to building a culture of hope and love.¹⁰

Conclusion:

The Catholic school stands as a vital instrument for the Church's mission, entrusted with forming young people who can face the challenges of a changing world with faith and integrity. Its task is not only to transmit knowledge but to “develop strong and responsible personalities who are capable of making free and correct choices,” shaping citizens who serve both the Church and society. Rooted in Christ and guided by the Gospel, the Catholic school must remain courageous and creative, drawing strength from the Spirit to respond with fidelity and hope to the educational demands of the new millennium.¹¹

¹ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1998), Introduction, §1.

² https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_27041998_school2000_en.html

³ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1998), “Joys and difficulties,” §5.

⁴ Ibid., §§6–7

⁵ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1998), “Looking ahead,” §8

⁶ “The human person and his or her education,” §9

⁷ “The Catholic School at the heart of the Church,” §§11, 13, 18, 21, 26

⁸ “Cultural identity of the Catholic school,” §§14–15

⁹ “Care for learning means loving,” §16

¹⁰ “The Catholic school at the service of society,” §§23–25

¹¹ “Climate of the educating community,” §§18–19

¹² Conclusion, §26



ARCHBISHOP ELIAS GONSALVES ADDRESSES THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON EDUCATION

His Grace Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, Archbishop of Nagpur and Chairperson of the CBCI Office for Education and Culture, addressed the International Congress on Education organized by the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Vatican, as part of the Jubilee of the World of Education 2025.

Archbishop Gonsalves spoke on the theme:

“Reviving the Pact with Hope: The Educational and Cultural Commitment of Catholic Schools and Universities.”

Drawing inspiration from Pope Francis' Global Compact on Education and the Jubilee theme Pilgrims of Hope, the Archbishop highlighted the transformative mission of Catholic education in forming compassionate, creative, and responsible citizens for a changing world. His address reflected the strong commitment of the Catholic Church in India to renew the educational covenant; promoting dialogue, inclusion, ecological awareness, and human fraternity.

Representing thousands of Catholic institutions across India, Archbishop Gonsalves' participation underscored the vibrant role of the CBCI Office for Education and Culture in shaping global conversations on education, faith, and cultural transformation in the 21st century.



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

ARCHBISHOP ELIAS GONSALVES^[1]

Dear Educationists, Your Eminences and Excellencies,

Greetings of peace and hope! It is a joy and privilege to reflect with you today on the vital theme: “Reviving the Pact with Hope: The Educational and Cultural Commitment of Catholic Schools and Universities.” This theme invites us to rediscover the heart of our mission — to educate with hope, to form with 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's 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 confidence 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 across all strata every year. Catholic education is a covenant between faith and reason, tradition and innovation — forming individuals of 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 enlightens reason, and where truth, beauty, and goodness inspire every learning experience.

2. Catholic Education: A Legacy and a Mission. From Loreto schools empowering girls in Kolkata to Jesuit and Don Bosco institutions serving 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 — nurturing intellect, virtue, and service. In a pluralistic society like





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 harmonize faith and reason to build communities of faith, dialogue, and peace.

3. Education 5.0: Hope for the Digital Generation

Education 5.0 invites Catholic institutions to form Gen Next as ethical digital citizens. In India's diverse educational landscape, innovation must go together with compassion. Catholic schools cultivate AI-resilient learners who use technology creatively and responsibly. To bridge the digital divide, institutions such as Don Bosco Media Network, Shillong, and Holy Cross Schools, Agartala, conduct digital literacy workshops that address misinformation, cyberbullying, and social media addiction. CBCI's *Digital Literacy for Life* initiative fosters discernment and responsible engagement with technology. Teacher formation is central to this renewal. The CBCI's *Mindful Educator, Compassionate Leader* programme promotes emotional intelligence and structured mental health support. Loyola College, Chennai, and Sacred Heart College, Tamil Nadu, have established counselling cells and wellness centers 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 Asia's diverse context. Beyond institutions, Catholic education nurtures learning ecosystems that unite families, civil society, and faith communities,

fostering collaboration and dialogue through a synodal spirit of communion and shared mission. We continue to promote 'Dialogue Schools' across 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 Skill Development. Informal collaborations, like parishbased Neighbourhood Learning Circles, engage 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. Seven Pathways for Renewal

Pathway 1: Placing the Human Person at the Centre

Education begins with the human person, not as an economic resource but as a child of God endowed with dignity. Catholic institutions like St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, and Christ University, Bengaluru, integrate service-learning and rural immersion into their curricula. Revitalizing value education, linking Gospel values with constitutional ideals, strengthens this foundation. Through reflective pedagogy, students learn empathy and civic virtue.

Let our schools and universities become communities of expression of the Synodal Church:

Communion – where teachers and students walk together in respect and listening.

Participation – where each voice contributes to the common good.

Mission – where learning leads to service and transformation of society.

As educators, we are not mere transmitters of knowledge; we are witnesses of values and builders of culture rooted in the Gospel, placing the Human Person at the Centre.

Pathway 2: Listening to Youth.

To truly listen to young people is to empower them to question and participate. Institutions such as Don Bosco, Matunga, and Loyola College, Chennai,

establish youth parliaments, innovation labs, and peer mentorship cells. Integrating 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 potent means to uplift and transform. Catholic institutions such as Loreto Convent, Kolkata, Sophia College, Mumbai, and Stella Maris, Chennai, have consistently empowered 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, mentorship programmes, and women's study centers. As Pope Francis reminds us, “A society that excludes women from decision-making is impoverished.”

Pathway 4: Strengthening Families.

Families are the first educators. Many Catholic schools across India organize Family Academies, counselling sessions, and digital parenting workshops. Strengthening family-school collaboration fosters emotional resilience and spiritual balance, creating a pastoral community of care. The CBCI OEC encourages the creation of Family Academies, where parents are trained in communication, values formation, and emotional wellbeing. In a time of increasing isolation, the school-family partnership can become a pastoral community of care, ensuring that education is truly a shared journey of growth.

Pathway 5: Welcoming the Marginalized.

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, Trichy, and St. Xavier's College, Ranchi, support Dalit and first-generation learners through bridge courses and scholarships. The CBCI's Inclusive Education Mission renews this commitment by ensuring education remains a sanctuary of dignity

and inclusion. As *Laudato Si'* emphasizes, “Each person is equally sacred, endowed with inalienable dignity.” Catholic education thus becomes an act of justice and fraternity.

Pathway 6: Reimagining Economy and Politics.

Education forms ethical citizens who engage society with conscience. Strengthening social science foundations across all disciplines fosters civic literacy and reflective citizenship. Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, and St. Joseph's University, Bengaluru, lead civic formation through social entrepreneurship and governance modules rooted in *Fratelli Tutti*.

Pathway 7: Safeguarding Our Common Home,

Inspired by *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*, Catholic institutions in India are forming stewards of creation. Schools and universities promote eco-spirituality through biodiversity gardens, waste reduction drives, and renewable energy projects. Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, and St. Xavier's, Kolkata, integrate environmental ethics into daily learning. Across India, numerous Catholic schools have joined the **Planet Fraternity** movement — a global initiative aligning education with the call for ecological conversion and human fraternity. As Pope Francis states, “Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us.”

Pathway 8: Educating for Critical Consciousness

Catholic education must foster reflective engagement with reality. Embedding social analysis and community engagement into learning cultivates discernment and civic responsibility. Rural and urban immersion,





fieldwork, and community action projects allow students to connect faith with life, transforming awareness into compassionate action.

6. **Research, Innovation, and Alumni Impact** 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 inquiry that serves humanity. Alumni who are eminent scientists, distinguished educators, health workers, and social leaders embody Catholic education's transformative legacy. Their lives reflect excellence anchored in service.

7. **Conclusion**

These pathways 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 programs, and collaborative networks. By forming persons of character, conscience, compassion and commitment, Catholic education in India remains a luminous witness — a living covenant of faith, reason, and hope for generations to come.

Dear friends in education, the future of humanity passes through our classrooms. To revive the Global Pact with hope means 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 pursuit of truth. May Mary, our mother, accompany us as she did with her son on this Planet. Let us walk together — teachers, students, parents, and the Church, especially the church in Asia and the Global South — as pilgrims of hope, building a new civilization of love through education.

^[1] Most Rev Elias Gonsalves currently serves as Archbishop of Nagpur in India and is also the Chairperson of the Office for Education and Culture in the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India





“Every child is a dream of God come true — a spark of hope for the world. They remind us that joy is simple, kindness is powerful, and wonder never grows old. Let us nurture their innocence with love, their curiosity with learning, and their courage with faith — for in every child lives the promise of a brighter tomorrow.”

CHILDREN'S DAY 2025

Building A NATION WORTHY OF ITS CHILDREN



Children's Day is not a date on the calendar; it is a mirror we hold up to our society. When we ask, "How are the children?" we are, in truth, asking "Who are we becoming?" In India, we mark 14 November with colour, laughter, and affection for the young. But in 2025, as classrooms straddle chalk and code, and childhood spans playgrounds and phone screens, the day must become more than a celebration. It should be a pledge: to safeguard childhood, to widen opportunity, and to build a future where every child can thrive.

THE PROMISE OF CHILDHOOD IN A CHANGING INDIA:



Today's children are curious, connected, and courageous. They learn from grandparents and global videos, juggle textbooks with tablets, and navigate both neighbourhood friendships and online communities. They are "digital natives," but they are also poets, coders, caretakers of siblings, first-generation learners, climate advocates, and dreamers of equitable India. They want meaning as much as marks, belonging as much as bandwidth.

Children's Day 2025 invites us to revisit fundamentals: nutrition and health, safety and love, play and wonder, literacy and numeracy, creativity and conscience. It asks us to align homes, schools, faith communities, civil society, and the State behind a simple conviction: every child matters, without exception.

FIVE COMMITMENTS FOR THIS YEAR, AND EVERY YEAR:

1. Protect childhood before we "produce" achievement- The pressure to perform can steal joy far too early. Let us make room for play, curiosity, and mistakes. A school is healthy when a child feels safe to ask a "silly" question and to try again after failing.

2. Ensure learning that is joyful, rigorous, and relevant- Literacy and numeracy remain the non-negotiables. But let's pair them with life skills: critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, digital citizenship, and ethical discernment. Projects that connect classroom learning to real community issues, water conservation, neighbourhood mapping, local history, make knowledge stick and character grow.

3. Place mental health at the heart of care- Anxiety, bullying, and social isolation are real. Each school should have a simple, well-known help pathway: a trusted adult, a counsellor or trained teacher, and a crisis protocol. Regular class check-ins, peer support circles, and teacher formation in socio-emotional learning can transform school climate.

4. Inclusion as a daily habit, not an annual theme- Children who are differently abled, on the move (migrant), from minority or marginalised communities, or first-generation learners must feel wanted, not merely admitted. Universal Design for Learning, flexible assessment, language support, and bridge programmes are acts of justice, not charity.

5. Form stewards of our common home- From kitchen gardens to waste segregation, from energy audits to tree guardianship, ecological habits learned young become civic virtues for life. Children can lead "green teams" and write the school's own climate action plan.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO ON CHILDREN'S DAY 2025?

- **Student Parliament for a Day:** Hand over the timetable to students. Let them run assemblies, propose micro-policies (e.g., recess redesign, library hours), and present a "Children's Charter" to the school leadership.
- **Joy of Reading Festival:** A daylong book fair with read-aloud corners, mother-tongue storytelling, author interactions (in-person or virtual), and a "bring a book, gift a book" drive for a



partner school.

- **Learning by Making:** Set up maker stations: paper circuits, low-cost science experiments, recyclable crafts, robotics demos, and local-art workshops. Invite community artisans and alumni entrepreneurs.
- **Well-being Hour:** Guided mindfulness or prayer, music and movement, gratitude wall, and an open “listening booth” staffed by counsellors or trained teachers. Normalize seeking help.
- **Inter-School Inclusion Games:** Sports and cooperative games designed for mixed-ability teams. Celebrate participation, teamwork, and effort—not merely medals.
- **“Children Teach Adults” Class:** Students conduct short classes for teachers and parents on a topic they love—coding basics, climate tips, safe internet, origami, or debating. It flips roles and builds confidence.
- **Service with Neighbours:** Partner with an Anganwadi, government school, or shelter home for a shared art activity, a nutrition drive, or a play day. Reciprocity matters: learn with, not only for, others.
- **Green Pledge & Action:** Launch a campus “single-use plastic free” challenge, start a compost pit, or adopt a local water body for monthly clean-ups. Track and publish the impact.



WHAT CAN FAMILIES DO?

- **One Device-Free Evening:** Cook, play, or walk together. Ask open questions, “What surprised you today?”, and listen without jumping to advice.
- **Affirmation Notes:** Leave small handwritten “I noticed...” notes that name effort, kindness, or creativity. Children rise to the identity we reflect back to them.
- **Shared Service:** Visit a grandparent, deliver a meal to a neighbour in need, plant a sapling. Children learn compassion by doing, not only hearing.

WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS AND COMMUNITIES STRENGTHEN?

- **Early Childhood First:** Invest in anganwadis, nutrition, and pre-primary educators. The earliest years shape brain architecture and lifelong outcomes.
- **Teacher Development & Dignity:** Provide continuous professional development, reduce non-teaching burdens, and celebrate master teachers. A child's horizon rises with every inspired teacher they meet.
- **Safe Routes to School:** Work with civic bodies for child-friendly streets, safe transport, clean toilets, and drinking water. Infrastructure is pedagogy: it teaches children what we value.
- **Data that tells human stories:** Beyond enrolment figures, track attendance, foundational learning, well-being indicators, and inclusion metrics. Use data to help, not to shame.

LISTENING TO THE CHILD:

Perhaps the most radical act this Children's Day is also the simplest: listen. Invite students to describe the school of their dreams. Ask what makes them feel respected, what worries them, and what would help them to learn better. Then act on at least one idea within a month and report back. When adults keep their promises, children learn that democracy works.

A CLOSING WORD, AND A BEGINNING:

Children's Day should leave us with fewer speeches and more schedules; dated plans for literacy camps, counselling workshops, teacher mentoring, inclusion audits, and climate actions. Let's light lamps of learning that do not go out when the stage lights dim.

“The children of today will make the India of tomorrow. The way we bring them up will determine the future of the country.” -Jawaharlal Nehru

May this not just be a quote we print, but a covenant we keep, at home, in school, and as a nation.

-Brandon Arnold John





CHILD RIGHTS DAY

Observed on 20 November, Child Rights Day, also known as World Children's Day, marks the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989. It is not merely a symbolic day; it is a moral and legal reminder that children are not passive recipients of charity but active holders of rights. As Nelson Mandela once said, "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." The day invites every family, school, and community to reflect on how we treat our youngest citizens and how we can ensure that their dignity, safety, and growth remain at the centre of all decisions.

The UNCRC outlines four core pillars of child rights; Survival, Protection, Development, and Participation. Every child has the right to survive with adequate nutrition, healthcare, and a clean environment; the right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation; the right to develop through education, recreation, and cultural opportunities; and the right to participate in decisions that affect them. These rights are universal and unconditional, belonging equally to every child regardless of gender, caste, class, disability, religion, or background.

India, through its Constitution and various laws, has made strong commitments to upholding child rights. The Right to Education Act (2009) ensures free and compulsory education for all children aged 6–14 years, while the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act (2012) provides mechanisms for safeguarding children from abuse. The Juvenile Justice Act (2015) focuses on care, protection, and rehabilitation, and the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (2016) restricts hazardous work and protects adolescent workers. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006) and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) further safeguard children's rights to safety, equality, and inclusion. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also emphasizes early childhood education, foundational literacy, inclusivity, and the holistic development of every child.

Schools play a vital role in turning these legal commitments into lived realities. They can begin by creating a child-friendly and rights-respecting environment where every child feels safe, valued, and heard. This includes adopting a Child Protection Policy, displaying helpline numbers such as 1098, and forming Child Protection Committees with trained members. Schools should also encourage meaningful student



participation through class parliaments, suggestion boxes, and forums where students can express concerns and propose ideas to improve their environment.

A child's right to safety and inclusion must also translate into practical measures. This means ensuring that schools are free from bullying, corporal punishment, and discrimination. Classrooms should promote inclusion for children with disabilities, providing necessary aids, peer support, and teacher training. Mental health, too, must be prioritized through counselling, emotional well-being sessions, and social-emotional learning activities that foster empathy and resilience.

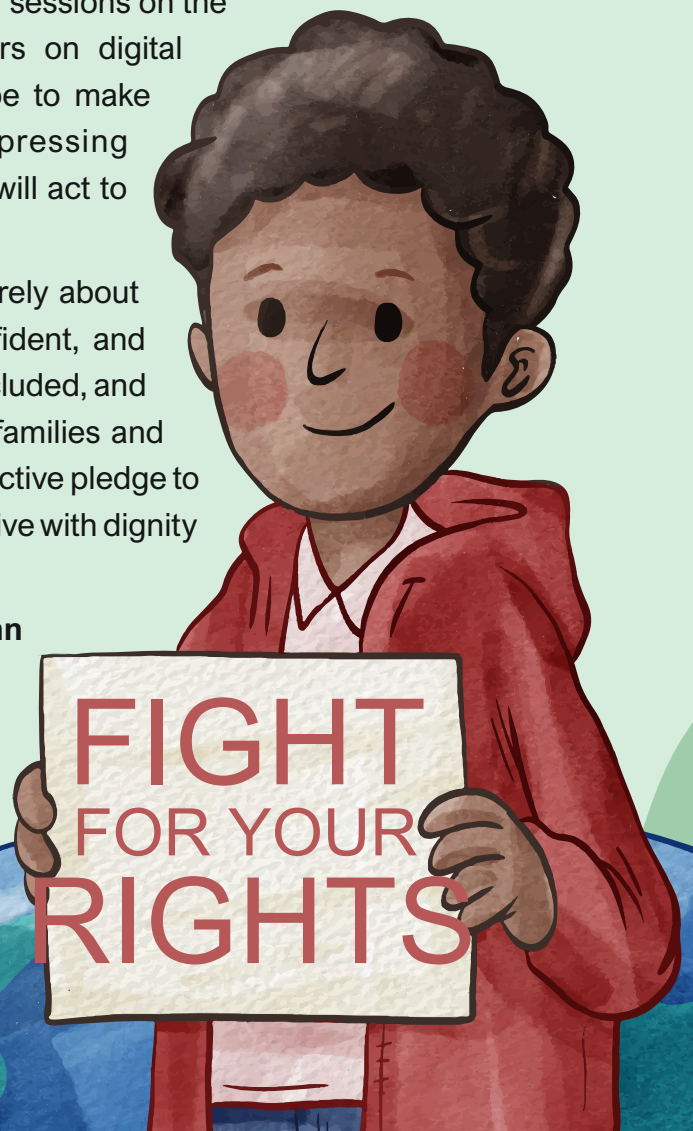
In our increasingly digital world, child rights extend into the online space. Schools and parents share the responsibility of teaching children digital safety, privacy, responsible social media use, and awareness of cyberbullying. Technology, when used ethically, can be a tool for creativity and collaboration, but without proper guidance, it can also become a source of harm and exploitation. Therefore, teaching digital literacy and cyber ethics becomes a modern extension of protecting and empowering the child.

Faith-based schools, in particular, can draw inspiration from their spiritual traditions which affirm that every child is made in the image and likeness of God. Nurturing a culture of compassion, justice, and participation aligns deeply with the mission of holistic education. Activities such as community service, environmental action, and prayer assemblies that celebrate children's dignity can powerfully reinforce these values.

Child Rights Day is best celebrated not through a single event but as an ongoing culture of care and accountability. Schools may mark the day with skits, debates, art competitions, and pledges reaffirming the rights of every child. Teachers can attend refresher sessions on the POCSO Act, while parents can engage in seminars on digital parenting and child safety. The aim should always be to make children aware of their rights, confident in expressing themselves, and secure in the knowledge that adults will act to protect them.

Child Rights Day reminds us that education is not merely about academic success; it is about forming humane, confident, and empowered young citizens. When children feel safe, included, and respected, they flourish as agents of change in their families and communities. As we celebrate this day, let it be our collective pledge to ensure that every child's right to learn, to dream, and to live with dignity is protected, not just in law, but in life itself.

-Brandon Arnold John



BUILDING A WORLD OF DIGNITY AND EQUALITY



Elimination of Violence Against Women's Day

Observed globally on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women calls the world to confront one of humanity's most persistent injustices; the violation of women's dignity and rights. Declared by the United Nations in 1999 in memory of the Mirabal sisters, who were brutally murdered in the Dominican Republic in 1960 for resisting dictatorship, this day reminds us that violence against women is not merely a private tragedy but a profound moral, social, and political issue. It is a violation of human rights that undermines peace, development, and justice everywhere.

Violence against women takes many forms; physical, sexual, psychological, and economic. It can occur in homes, schools, workplaces, streets, or even online. The World Health Organization estimates that one in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence in her lifetime, most often at the hands of an intimate partner. In India too, domestic violence, dowry deaths, sexual harassment, trafficking, acid attacks, and cyberbullying continue to threaten the safety and dignity of women and girls. Each act of violence destroys not just an individual's well-being but also the moral fabric of society.

At the heart of this crisis lies inequality, the unequal distribution of power between men and women, reinforced by harmful cultural norms, silence, and impunity. Therefore, eliminating violence is not just about punishing offenders; it is about transforming attitudes, institutions, and systems that enable such injustice. Education, awareness, and empowerment are the true instruments of change. As Pope Francis often reminds us, "Violence against women is a blight on our society and a wound in humanity's flesh." The call, then, is to create cultures where women are respected, protected, and celebrated as equal partners in human flourishing.

India has taken important legal steps to address this issue. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) provides civil remedies and protection orders for victims. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act (2013) expanded the definition of sexual offences after the Nirbhaya



case, ensuring stricter penalties. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (2013) mandates every institution to form an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to investigate and redress grievances promptly. The POCSO Act (2012) safeguards minors, while the National Commission for Women works to uphold women's rights and monitor implementation. Yet, laws alone cannot change hearts; education and awareness must accompany enforcement.

Educational institutions have a critical role in building a society free from gender-based violence. Schools and colleges can create safe and inclusive campuses by ensuring the presence of Internal Complaints Committees, conducting gender-sensitivity workshops, and integrating discussions on equality and respect into the curriculum. Teachers must model mutual respect and challenge stereotypes that promote dominance or discrimination. Introducing students to women's struggles and achievements in history, literature, and civic life can nurture empathy and justice-oriented thinking.

Faith-based institutions, too, can contribute by affirming the sacredness of womanhood as part of God's design and by fostering communities of compassion, equality, and responsibility. The Church, in particular, recognises that violence against women is a sin that contradicts the Gospel of love. The words of Pope John Paul II remain profoundly relevant: "Respect for women's dignity and vocation is essential for the renewal of society and of the Church."

The elimination of violence against women is not a women's issue alone, it is a human issue, a moral imperative, and a social responsibility. Every act of respect, every word of support, and every policy that promotes equality becomes a building block of peace.

As we mark this day, let us pledge to raise our voices against violence, to protect every woman's right to live in safety and dignity, and to nurture a culture where respect is natural and equality is non-negotiable.

"When we stand up for women and girls, we stand up for humanity." -
UN Women

-Brandon Arnold John





CONSTELLATIONS OF HOPE

THE JUBILEE OF THE WORLD OF EDUCATION 2025

In 2025, the global Catholic educational community will converge in Rome to celebrate a landmark event — the Jubilee of the World of Education, an initiative of the Dicastery for Culture and Education of the Holy See. Scheduled from 27 October to 1 November 2025, this extraordinary gathering carries the evocative theme “Constellations of Hope” and invites educators, students, families, and institutions from across the world to become pilgrims of hope. Rooted in the spirit of the Holy Year 2025 proclaimed by Pope Francis, this Jubilee envisions education as a radiant force that renews humanity and bridges the world's divisions through faith, dialogue, and creativity.

The Jubilee coincides with the 60th anniversary of *Gravissimum Educationis* (1965), the Second Vatican Council's declaration on Christian education. This historic document continues to illuminate the mission of Catholic education in forming persons who are fully human and fully alive in Christ. As Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, observed, “*Gravissimum Educationis* has not lost its bite — from it, a constellation of works and charisms has been born.” The Jubilee thus becomes both a commemoration and a recommitment: a time to recognize the vast global network of Catholic educational institutions — more than 231,000 schools and universities across 124 countries, serving millions of students — and to renew their shared vocation of hope and transformation.

The concept of “Constellations of Hope” reflects a powerful image of connectedness. Just as stars form constellations in the night sky, so too do schools, universities, and educators form networks of light — each unique, yet united in illuminating humanity's path toward peace, fraternity, and justice. These educational “constellations” include religious congregations, diocesan institutions, lay educators, and student communities who, through their charisms, sustain the Church's educational mission. The Jubilee emphasizes that education is not a solitary enterprise but a shared pilgrimage — one that unites different cultures, nations, and generations in a collective pursuit of truth and goodness.

Throughout the Jubilee week, a rich array of events will take place in Rome. The Opening Mass at St. Peter's Basilica will set the tone for prayerful reflection and gratitude. On 28 October, the Church will commemorate the 60th anniversary of *Gravissimum Educationis*, with the anticipated release of a new papal document on education. This will be followed by an International Congress on “Educational Constellations: A Pact with the Future,” featuring dialogues, exhibitions, and an “Educational Village” where creative

initiatives and best practices from around the world will be showcased. On 31 October, educators will participate in a symbolic pilgrimage through the Holy Door, marking their commitment to form new generations as bearers of hope. The Jubilee will culminate on 1 November with a solemn Eucharistic celebration in St. Peter's Square, during which St. John Henry Newman will be proclaimed Doctor of the Church and co-patron of education alongside St. Thomas Aquinas — a profound reminder that faith and reason are inseparable in the pursuit of wisdom.

At its heart, the Jubilee seeks to reaffirm education as a sacred act of hope-giving and peacebuilding. In a world fragmented by inequality, conflict, and technological disruption, education emerges as a path to humanization — forming consciences capable of empathy, discernment, and service. The Dicastery proposes three major directions for this renewal: education for the interior life, the humanization of digital technology, and education for peace. These resonate deeply with Pope Francis' Global Compact on Education, which calls all stakeholders — families, schools, governments, and churches — to rebuild the “village of education” where relationships, values, and responsibility are at the centre.

For the Catholic educational community in India, this Jubilee carries profound significance. Catholic schools and colleges across the nation have long served as “lamps of hope” in diverse cultural and social landscapes, particularly among the poor and marginalized. The image of “constellations” invites these institutions to form stronger networks of collaboration — diocesan boards, teacher-formation centres, minority institutions, and faith-based organizations — working together as part of the universal Church's educational mission. The Jubilee's call to humanize technology is also timely, aligning with India's push toward digital learning and your own ongoing efforts to integrate Artificial Intelligence and formative pedagogy within a values-based framework. It challenges educators to ensure that technology serves humanity, not the other way around.

Moreover, the Jubilee invites Indian Catholic educators to reaffirm education as an act of hope, dignity, and accompaniment, especially in the face of growing challenges to minority rights and social equity. Education, Pope Francis reminds us, must be a covenant of relationships — not merely a transmission of knowledge, but the formation of persons capable of compassion and critical thought. In this light, initiatives such as Mindful Educator programmes, Happy Classrooms, and Planet Fraternity movements within Catholic institutions in India are concrete embodiments of this Jubilee spirit — nurturing a pedagogy of peace and fraternity.

The Jubilee of the World of Education thus calls every Catholic educator, leader, and student to rediscover the spiritual dimension of their vocation. To educate is to light a flame, to kindle hope, and to walk together toward a horizon of fraternity. As Cardinal Tolentino beautifully expressed,

“Education is the new name for peace — it places hope on the map of the present and the future.”

The Constellations of Hope invite us all to be stars in this luminous map, radiating faith, truth, and love in the heart of our schools, universities, and societies.





EDUCATE TO EMPOWER



CBCI **NATIONAL** **CONSULTATION** **ON EDUCATION** **2025**

Educating for Hope and Transformation: Catholic Education in a Changing India

In a rapidly changing world marked by technological disruption, cultural transitions, and new emotional and social challenges among youth, education must go beyond instruction—it must inspire transformation. The CBCI National Consultation on Education 2025 brings together Catholic educators, leaders, and thinkers from across India to reimagine the future of education through the lens of faith, hope, and human flourishing.

Anchored in Pope Francis' Global Compact on Education, this national gathering seeks to renew the prophetic mission of Catholic education—to form compassionate, creative, and critically aware learners who embody Gospel values while engaging with the realities of a changing India.

Key Themes and Highlights:

- **Educating for Hope and Transformation-** Renewing Catholic education as a covenant of conscience, community, and creativity in service of humanity.
- **AI-Embedded Education-** Integrating Artificial Intelligence with ethics, discernment, and digital confidence.
- **Formative Assessment: Opening Doors to Thinking Classrooms-** Redefining assessment as a process of reflection and growth.
- **Social and Emotional Learning-** Addressing the mental health crisis with empathy, moral formation, and pastoral care.
- **Global Perspectives in Education-** Building bridges of collaboration, intercultural understanding, and innovation

Objectives:

The Consultation will reaffirm Catholic education's vital role in shaping India's moral and cultural landscape; integrate emerging innovations like AI within ethical frameworks; strengthen emotional well-being among students; and foster global competencies that prepare learners for a connected and compassionate world.

Expected Outcomes:

Participants will work toward a renewed vision of Catholic education, empowered educators, a national well-being framework, and greater global engagement through shared commitments aligned with the Global Compact on Education and the CBCI's mission for transformative learning.

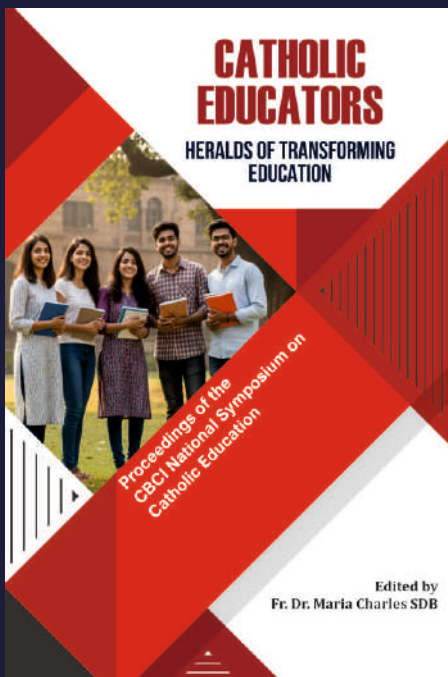
Call to Participation:

This historic Consultation is not merely an event—it is a movement to rekindle the soul of education. Catholic leaders, principals, regional secretaries, and educators are invited to join this journey of renewal and collaboration. Together, we can shape an education that teaches not only to know, but to love, serve, and transform.

“Education remains our greatest act of hope, and our deepest response to the call of humanity.” -Fr. Dr. Maria Charles SDB, National Secretary, CBCI Office for Education and Culture.

CBCI OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE RELEASES FOUR LANDMARK VOLUMES ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION

In a landmark contribution to the field of faith-based education, the CBCI Office for Education and Culture has released four new books that together chart a comprehensive vision for Catholic education in India and beyond. These volumes—Catholic Educators: Heralds of Transforming Education, The Teachings of the Catholic Church on Education, Saint Educators: The Story of Holiness and Education in the Church, and Education 5.0: Nurturing Gen Next for Excellence and Service—reflect the Office's ongoing mission to form leaders, inspire renewal, and strengthen the Catholic educational apostolate across the nation.

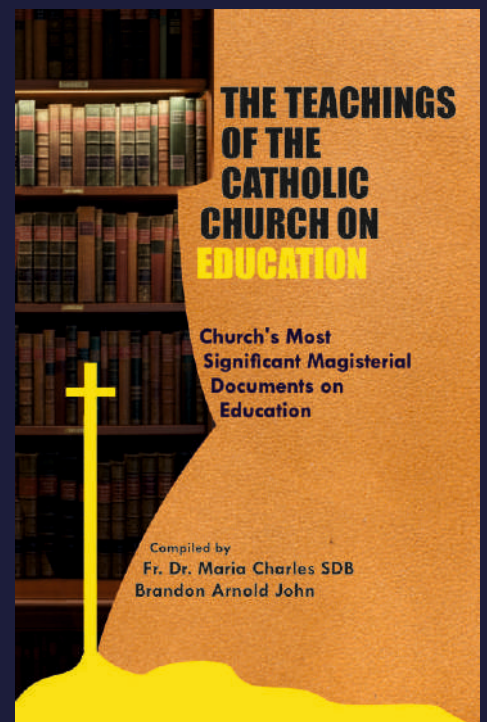


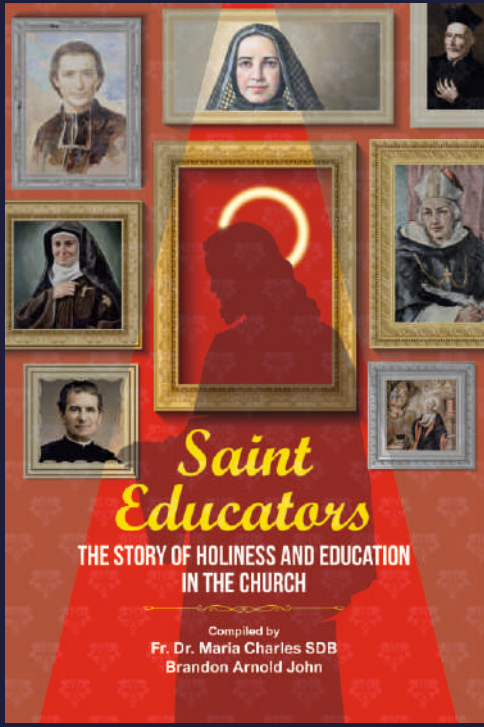
CATHOLIC EDUCATORS: HERALDS OF TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

This volume celebrates the vocation of Catholic educators as agents of transformation in today's complex world. Through reflective essays and case studies, it highlights the sacred calling of teachers who not only impart knowledge but awaken faith, compassion, and moral vision in their students. Rooted in Pope Francis' Global Compact on Education, the book reminds educators that true education transforms both the learner and the teacher through a dialogue of life, values, and hope.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON EDUCATION

Drawing from the rich magisterial tradition of the Church—from Gravissimum Educationis to Veritatis Gaudium—this scholarly volume presents the foundational principles of Catholic education. It serves as a vital reference for educators, administrators, and researchers who seek to understand education as a ministry of integral human formation. The book traces how the Church views education as a partnership between faith and reason, nurturing wisdom, conscience, and the pursuit of truth.



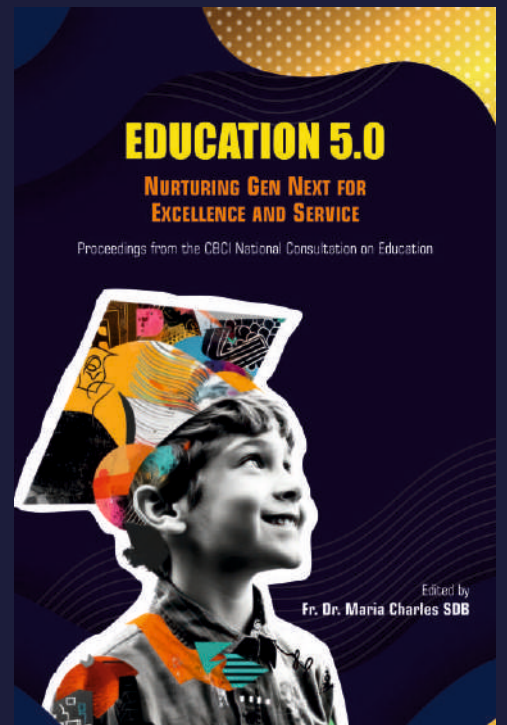


SAINT EDUCATORS: THE STORY OF HOLINESS AND EDUCATION IN THE CHURCH

This inspiring collection brings to life the stories of great saint-educators—from St. John Bosco and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to St. Albertus Magnus and St. Claudine Thévenet—whose lives embody the union of holiness and pedagogy. Each chapter illustrates how education becomes a path to sanctity, and how holiness itself becomes the most compelling form of teaching. The book invites today's educators to rediscover the spiritual roots of their vocation in the witness of these luminous figures.

EDUCATION 5.0: NURTURING GEN NEXT FOR EXCELLENCE AND SERVICE

Addressing the challenges and opportunities of the digital age, this forward-looking volume explores how Catholic education can respond to emerging technologies, innovation, and socio-cultural shifts while remaining grounded in Gospel values. It proposes a model of “Education 5.0” that combines excellence with service—forming young people who are intellectually competent, ethically grounded, and socially engaged. With insights on AI, digital literacy, ecological education, and inclusive pedagogy, it calls Catholic institutions to lead with creativity and conscience.



Together, these four publications form a constellation of thought and action—linking the wisdom of the Church, the example of the saints, the dedication of educators, and the promise of future generations. They reaffirm the CBCI Office for Education and Culture's vision: to make Catholic education in India a beacon of faith, excellence, and transformative hope for the world.

Building Teacher Competency and Confidence in Using AI Tools

By Venkata Aditya S, Vice President - Business, Teachmint

In the history of education, few shifts have been as transformative or as misunderstood as the rise of artificial intelligence. The classroom has always mirrored the world outside it, and as our societies become more digitised, our methods of teaching and learning are inevitably evolving too.

The question today is no longer whether AI will play a role in education, but how we can equip teachers to lead this change with competence and confidence.

Where are we heading?

Education is entering a period of extraordinary transformation. The world's first generation to grow up surrounded entirely by intelligent technology, Gen Alpha, is already in our classrooms. They learn through screens, explore through voice assistants, and consume information in fragments and reels. For teachers, this means rethinking the way lessons are delivered, attention is sustained, and learning is reinforced.

We stand at an inflection point where human intelligence and artificial intelligence can converge to unlock new forms of creativity and connection. But this transition must be led by educators, not algorithms. AI is not here to replace teachers; it is here to amplify their potential. The future of learning depends on how confidently teachers can adapt, experiment, and personalise their approach using these emerging tools.

Understanding the landscape of AI in learning

Globally, the adoption of AI in classrooms is accelerating. From lesson planning and grading to simulations and personalised tutoring, AI is becoming an invisible co-teacher that simplifies tasks, saves time, and opens new dimensions of interactivity.

Consider the average student today. Research indicates that Gen Z learners spend over seven hours a day on screens, while Gen Alpha averages nearly five hours, often engaging in multiple forms of media simultaneously. For educators, this presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Students are digital natives, but their engagement often lacks depth. Teachers, on the other hand, are digital migrants, adapting to tools that their students seem born understanding. Bridging this gap requires not just technology, but training, empathy, and a reimagined pedagogy.

AI can be the great enabler here, helping teachers capture the same digital attention spans that entertainment platforms already command, but channeling them toward meaningful learning. Whether through adaptive quizzes, visual simulations of scientific concepts, or summarisation tools that make revision more efficient, AI can support a teacher's creativity instead of constraining it.



The teacher's evolving journey: from instruction to intelligent facilitation

A teacher's day has always extended far beyond the classroom, planning lessons, marking papers, recording attendance, managing assessments, and ensuring each student's progress is tracked. AI can now ease these pressures, allowing educators to focus more on their true calling: inspiring minds.

Before the class, AI can assist with pre-planning by helping teachers prepare lesson plans aligned to curriculum standards, generate quick quizzes or worksheets, and recommend relevant videos or real-world examples. These tools save time while providing rich content diversity.

During the class, digital pedagogy powered by AI helps teachers engage students interactively. Speech-to-text, real-time translations, and visual simulations enable inclusive teaching for diverse learning needs. Teachers can explain complex ideas through instant visualisation, manage discussions more fluidly, and track classroom participation seamlessly.

After the class, AI continues the journey by auto-summarising lessons, generating homework, and offering analytics on student understanding. This data-driven insight helps teachers identify learning gaps early and personalise follow-up sessions effectively.

At a broader level, schools can integrate these practices into structured teacher development frameworks. Classroom observation matrices, performance dashboards, and digital lesson repositories can help institutions measure adoption, encourage peer learning, and celebrate success stories. When teachers see AI as a trusted ally rather than a technical hurdle, adoption becomes both organic and joyful.

From competence to confidence

Competence begins with understanding; confidence comes from experience. The transition to AI-enabled teaching will not be uniform since every educator has a different comfort level with technology. That is why institutions must approach this change with empathy.

Encouraging micro-learning modules, collaborative workshops, and one-on-one mentoring can accelerate digital comfort. Schools can also identify "AI champions" among staff, teachers who can guide their peers in experimenting with new tools. When teachers see their progress acknowledged and their ideas implemented, confidence becomes self-sustaining.

Moreover, school leaders play a pivotal role in shaping this culture. They can design one-year adoption roadmaps, recognise small wins, and integrate AI use into performance reviews not as an assessment criterion but as a growth indicator. Most importantly, they must communicate that technology is not the goal; learning is.

A glimpse into the future

The classrooms of the future will be spaces of co-intelligence, where teachers and machines collaborate seamlessly. Imagine a world where lesson planning takes minutes instead of hours, where every child's learning pattern is instantly visible, and where administrative work is handled quietly in the background. AI will not diminish the teacher's role; it will restore its soul by removing the noise that often clouds creativity.

But technology alone cannot deliver transformation. The true revolution will come from teachers who are curious, courageous, and compassionate enough to embrace change. Their leadership will determine whether AI becomes a tool for efficiency or a catalyst for equity and excellence.

As we prepare for this next chapter in education, let us remember that the most intelligent system in any classroom will always be the human heart that chooses to teach.

“TEACHERS ARE LEAVING THEIR JOBS – THE BITTER TRUTH”

By Fr. John Ravi SJ, South Asian Coordinator for Jesuit Schools

An article by NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) Director Krishna Kumar Haya was published in The Indian Express.

Here's a summary:

Today, there is a silent “unrest revolution” happening in the country's schools — Teachers are feeling exhausted, helpless, and hopeless. They are quitting their jobs — some quietly, others withdrawing emotionally. And the new generation doesn't even want to become teachers.

Why is this happening?

1. **A Web of Bureaucracy:** Instead of teaching, teachers are constantly busy with reports, forms, and data uploads. “Send photos,” “Provide proof,” “Upload reports” — this has become their daily routine. Their presence in classrooms has decreased, while their presence in front of screens has increased.
2. **Overemphasis on Technology:** The forced use of digital tools, apps, and smart boards for everyone — without considering the subject, age group, or context — has made teaching mechanical. Education has lost its “human interaction” and become machine centred.
3. **Teachers Turned Into Event Managers:** Every day must be celebrated — Yoga Day, Mother Language Day, Environment Day... Instead of improving educational quality, the only measure of performance has become how many events are conducted. Both principals and teachers have been trapped in this endless “show.”
4. **Plight of Rural Teachers:** Two or three teachers handle hundreds of students. In addition to teaching, they are responsible for midday meals, scholarships, uniforms, bicycles, and government reports. Collecting and sending “data” has become more important than real education.
5. **Psychological Stress and Loss of Self-Esteem:** Constant top-down monitoring has eroded teachers' confidence. Every task demands “proof,” destroying trust. Dealing with students' stressful behaviour leaves teachers emotionally drained. Unrealistic expectations from parents add more pressure — they must provide evidence for everything.
6. **The Core Purpose of Education Is Lost:** Teachers are under immense pressure to finish the syllabus. Subjects have multiplied. Schools are no longer “places where human beings are shaped.” Today's education system has turned into a “project of performance metrics.” The teacher–student bond — once the essence of education — has been lost amid numbers and deadlines. Students now see teachers merely as service providers, not as guides worthy of respect.

Time to Reflect:

Education must once again centre around the child and the teacher, not around data and reports. If teachers are not given freedom, respect, and trust, tomorrow's education will become lifeless. Let's once again trust the teacher. Because if the teacher leaves, the school may remain — but education will not.





HOTMAIL COFOUNDER SABEER BHATIA BLASTS INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: 'WE ARE PRODUCING AN ARMY OF USELESS KIDS'

By ET Online: May 06, 2025

Hotmail co-founder Sabeer Bhatia has strongly criticised India's education system, saying it produces “an army of useless kids” who follow instructions rather than think independently. In an interview, he argued that the country's obsession with marks, ranks, and conformity has replaced curiosity with obedience. Children are trained to memorise and replicate instead of creating or questioning, which, he says, stifles innovation and breeds dependency rather than leadership.

Bhatia contrasted this with Western education, where students are encouraged to express ideas freely, even when they make mistakes. In India, he noted, failure is punished rather than treated as part of learning. This culture discourages risk-taking and creativity, resulting in bright students choosing “safe” careers and a society that undervalues arts, sports, and originality. Until India learns to reward critical thinking and experimentation, Bhatia warns, it will keep producing workers, not creators.

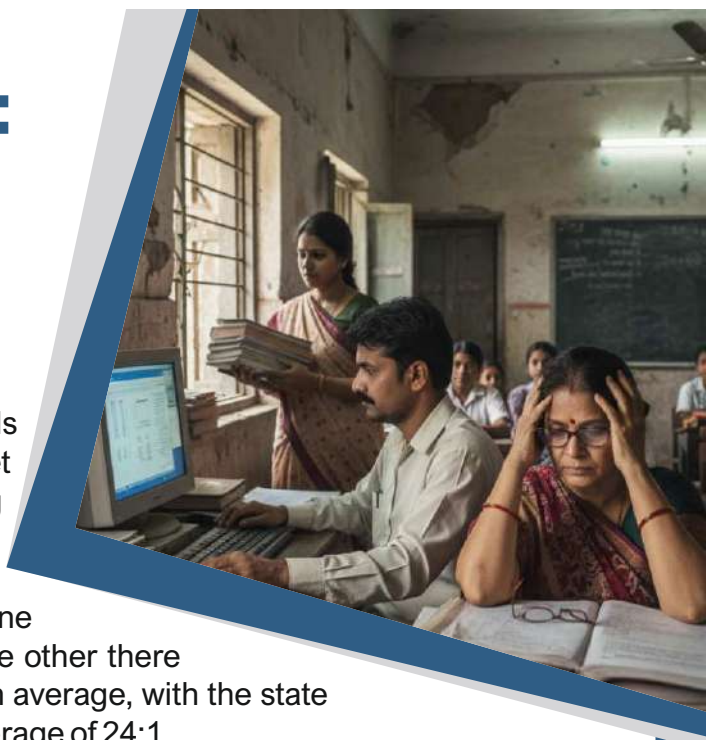
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NEARLY 18,000 TEACHERS AT 3,800 EMPTY SCHOOLS: SPOTLIGHT ON BENGAL'S EDUCATION CRISIS

By Our Bureau: 27 October 2025

In West Bengal, nearly 3,812 government schools registered zero student enrolment in 2024-25 yet employed a staggering 17,965 teachers — accounting for 86.3 % of the national total of teachers posted in zero-enrolment schools. This situation highlights a major mismatch in the state's education system: on one hand there are many schools with no students, on the other there are single-teacher schools still managing 36 pupils on average, with the state pupil-teacher ratio at 29:1—well above the national average of 24:1.

Experts say the crisis points to systemic issues: wasteful deployment of teachers in unused



schools, and at the same time schools with students suffering from understaffing. According to lawyer Ashok Agrawal, this indicates government schools are being reduced to “rehabilitation centres for teachers”. He argues that the real problem lies not only in resource allocation but also in parental trust, the perception of poor quality in public schools, and the lack of meaningful teaching-learning focus.

https://www.telegraphindia.com/west-bengal/nearly-18000-teachers-at-3800-empty-schools-spotlight-on-bengals-education-crisis-prnt/cid/2129728#goog_rewarded



POPE RELEASES APOSTOLIC LETTER ON EDUCATION

By Vatican City: October 30, 2025

The Pope released an apostolic letter titled Drawing New Maps of Hope, on 28 October 2025, to mark the 60th anniversary of the Gravissimum Educationis (the Second Vatican Council's declaration on Christian education). In this letter he emphasises that education is not merely about transmitting information but forming the whole person—intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and socially. He affirms that Catholic educational institutions

should unite faith and reason, avoid reducing education to mere functional training, and be places of hope, service and transformation in a world marked by digital fragmentation, inequality and instability.

The letter highlights three key priorities: first, the cultivation of interior life, providing students spaces of silence, discernment and dialogue with God and self; second, fostering a humane digital culture in which technology and artificial intelligence serve people and not the other way around; and third, promoting education in non-violent language, peace, reconciliation and the common good. The Pope also reminds that the family remains the primary place of education, that Catholic schools must be accessible to all (not just the privileged), and that educators are called to a vocation of service—not mere employment—and must witness faith through their lives.

<https://catholicconnect.in/news/pope-releases-apostolic-letter-on-education>



ALL INDIA CATHOLIC EDUCATION POLICY

PUBLISHED BY CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF INDIA. (CBCI)

All India Catholic Education Policy 2023 is brought out by the CBCI Office for Education and Culture of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India. This revised edition offers many avenues for relevant pedagogies and educational choices. This comprehensive policy contains norms and directives for all the Catholic educational institutions of India regarding the multi-dimensional approaches of our education ministry. The Policy emphasizes the care of Catholics, especially the poor and the marginalized; the identity and role of the Catholic education ministry in India and our contribution to school education, higher education and technical and vocational education. This policy offers guidelines for a value-based educational climate, administrative and management policy and sets standards for our education ministry in the future.

PRICE: RS. 160

All India Catholic Education Policy 2023



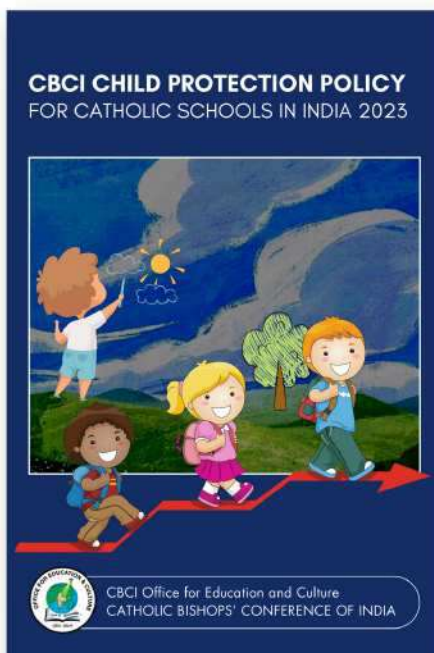
CBCI Office for Education and Culture
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF INDIA

CBCI CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PUBLISHED BY CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF INDIA. (CBCI)

The Catholic Church in India operates and manages nearly 20,000 educational institutions which include formal primary schools, middle schools, high schools, colleges and trade schools. The Catholic Bishops' Conference (CBCI) of India envisions not only providing quality education for the children and youth but also creating a safe and conducive environment for enabling the well-being, growth and development of each child it serves. This child protection policy brought out by the CBCI Office for Education and Culture is an expression of the commitment of the Catholic Church to ensure that each child feels secure and receives an enabling environment for their development. This policy establishes processes procedures and duties for all stakeholders working directly or indirectly with children in their schools.

PRICE: RS. 140



CBCI CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN INDIA 2023



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CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF INDIA



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