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**INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION DAY 2025:**

**'AI AND EDUCATION:
PRESERVING AUTONOMY
IN AN AUTOMATED
WORLD'**



**DILEXIT NOS (GOD FIRST
LOVED US!)**

**SALIENT FEATURES OF
THE NEW ENCYCLICAL
BY POPE FRANCIS**



**IDENTITY OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL
FOR A CULTURE OF DIALOGUE**

**TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH ON CATHOLIC
EDUCATION SERIES 7**

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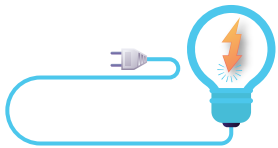
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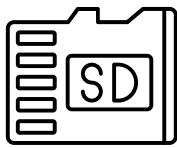
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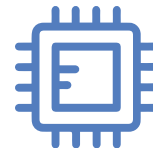
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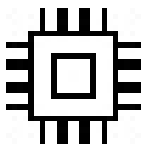
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LEADING WITH PURPOSE: THE CATHOLIC VISION FOR EDUCATION IN A CHANGING INDIA

In the year 2020, when our office organized a web series on "Catholic Education: Challenges and Possibilities", where we discussed five important themes namely, Digital Transformation, Student Empowerment, Teacher Engagement, Governance and Management and Apostolic Metanoia, we proposed 15 paradigm shift to Catholic Educators. I think they are still relevant today:

- From Administration to Animation
- From Control to Collaboration
- From Comfort Zones to Greater Networking
- From Management to Movement
- From Success to Efficaciousness
- From theory-oriented to Skill-oriented Education
- From being a Performer to Seeker
- From Conventional Thinking to Critical Thinking
- From seeking Knowledge to seeking Wisdom
- From Authority to Service
- From Mediocrity to Excellence
- From Status Quo to Renewal
- From Past Glory to Present Splendour
- From Stagnation to Creativity
- From Traditional Habits to Innovative Practices
- What do we need to make a great stride through these Paradigms?

We need a STRATEGIC AND VISIONARY LEADERSHIP today. Today, the challenges are a myriad whether you are running a State-aided school or running a private unaided school. We need Leaders who can traverse through deep waters and endless deserts. I shall share with you four

important aspects of these leaderships today.

- We need Visionary Educational Leaders who can anticipate future challenges in Education- technological disruptions, policy changes and social shifts and prepare institutions accordingly.
- We need Strategic Educational Leaders who can navigate present realities with purpose. We must be proactive in engaging with the Government to safeguard minority rights. We need to ensure financial sustainability, infrastructure development and efficient governance.
- We need leaders who can address issues like moral relativism and foster critical thinking, ethical leadership and vocational discernment.
- We need Educational Leaders who can leverage AI and digital tools for learning while maintaining a human-centred educational approach rooted in values and added to these four aspects, we need to remember that we need to care for the neighbourhood through outreach programmes and promote environmental stewardship through sustainable campus initiatives all through the year! If you have these traits, you can congratulate yourselves, but if you think you need a change, start today!



FR./DR. MARIA CHARLES SDB
National Secretary



DILEXIT NOS

The Context

The encyclical *Dilexit Nos* was released in response to several contemporary challenges that the world faces today. Here are some contextual reasons for its publication:

1. Crisis of Love and Compassion

In a world increasingly marked by division, hatred, and social fragmentation, Pope Francis emphasizes the need to return to Christ's model of selfless love. The Sacred Heart of Jesus serves as a call to embrace empathy, reconciliation, and solidarity.

2. Technological and Social Disruptions

As artificial intelligence, social media, and digital culture shape human interactions, Pope Francis warns against losing the essence of authentic relationships. He highlights the heart as the center of human connection and moral choices, resisting the impersonal nature of algorithm-driven decisions.

3. Global Conflicts and Social Injustice

With rising conflicts, inequality, and persecution across various parts of the world, *Dilexit Nos* underscores Christ's love as the foundation for peace and justice. The encyclical encourages Christians to actively engage in healing divisions and fostering a "civilization of love."

4. Spiritual Renewal and Evangelization

In line with the Church's ongoing mission, Pope Francis calls believers, particularly young people, to renew their faith and deepen their personal relationship with Christ. He presents the Sacred Heart as a model for living a faith-filled life that transforms not only individuals but also society.

5. Continuation of Catholic Tradition

The encyclical builds upon previous papal teachings, such as *Haurietis Aquas* (Pope Pius XII, 1956) and *Misericordiae Vultus* (Pope Francis, 2015). It reinforces devotion to the Sacred Heart and aligns with the Church's broader mission to spread the message of God's love.

These contextual factors highlight *Dilexit Nos* as a timely and urgent call to action, urging the faithful to embody Christ's love in a world that desperately needs healing and hope.



THE RELEVANCE OF DILEXIT NOS TO YOUNG PEOPLE



1. A CALL TO AUTHENTIC LOVE IN A SUPERFICIAL WORLD

Young people today navigate a world dominated by digital interactions, social media, and fleeting relationships. Pope Francis invites them to rediscover deep, authentic love through the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He challenges them to go beyond surface-level connections and cultivate meaningful relationships based on selflessness and compassion (*Dilexit Nos*, 9).

2. GUIDANCE AMIDST TECHNOLOGICAL INFLUENCE

In an era where artificial intelligence and algorithms shape thoughts, choices, and even emotions, the Pope emphasizes the heart as a space of true freedom and authenticity. Young people are encouraged to resist becoming passive consumers of digital culture and instead make conscious, values-driven decisions (*Dilexit Nos*, 14).

3. ENCOURAGING ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL JUSTICE

Young people are at the forefront of social activism, advocating for climate justice, equality, and human rights. *Dilexit Nos* aligns with their desire for a more just world by encouraging them to take Christ's

love as the foundation for their activism. Pope Francis urges them to build a “civilization of love” and combat injustice through small, daily acts of service and kindness (*Dilexit Nos*, 182).

4. PROVIDING A SOURCE OF STRENGTH AND HOPE

Many young people struggle with anxiety, uncertainty, and identity crises. The Pope presents the Sacred Heart as a place of healing and renewal, where they can find peace, purpose, and hope in a world that often feels overwhelming (*Dilexit Nos*, 38).

5. EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

Unlike previous generations, young people today feel an urgent responsibility to shape the future. Pope Francis acknowledges their potential and calls them to be leaders in love, reconciliation, and faith. He challenges them to embrace the Sacred Heart as their source of moral courage and social transformation.

By addressing the unique challenges and aspirations of young people, *Dilexit Nos* is not just a theological document but a practical guide for living a life of love, purpose, and positive impact.

DILEXIT NOS (GOD FIRST LOVED US!)

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE NEW ENCYCLICAL BY POPE FRANCIS



INTRODUCTION

Pope Francis' fourth encyclical, *Dilexit Nos*, presents the Sacred Heart of Jesus as the ultimate remedy to the world's challenges, including individualism, indifference, and injustice. Rooted in divine and human love, the encyclical calls for a transformative embrace of Christ's love, particularly by young people. It encourages deep reflection on how this love can influence personal growth, relationships, and social action. As Pope Francis states, 'The heart is the symbol of that ardent charity which, infused in Christ, animates his human will' (*Dilexit Nos*, 65).

"Dilexit Nos" is Latin for "He loved us." It is derived from the biblical verse *1 John 4:19*: "Nos dilexit Deus prius" ("God first loved us"). The phrase emphasizes Christ's unconditional love for humanity, which is a central theme in Pope Francis' encyclical.

1. THE CENTRALITY OF THE HEART

Pope Francis underscores the heart as the core of human identity, where thoughts, emotions, and decisions originate. He contrasts this with an increasingly technological world dominated by algorithms, arguing that the heart remains a space of freedom, authenticity, and divine connection. *'In this liquid world, it is necessary to speak again of the heart, to point to the place where every person finds the source and root of all their other strengths, convictions, passions, and choices'* (*Dilexit Nos*, 9). By aligning our hearts with the Heart of Jesus, we cultivate meaningful relationships and contribute to a just and loving world.

Key Takeaways:

- The heart is the seat of emotions, thoughts, and moral choices.
- Despite technological influences, true freedom is preserved in the heart (*Dilexit Nos*, 14).
- Connection with Christ's Heart leads to genuine relationships and societal transformation.



2. LIVING OUT CHRIST'S LOVE

The encyclical highlights how Jesus' actions in the Gospels embody unconditional love, service, and inclusion. It invites believers to imitate Christ by offering acts of kindness, forgiveness, and solidarity. As Pope Francis reminds us, *'Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'* (*Mt 11:28; Dilexit Nos*, 43).

Key Takeaways:

- Christ's Heart is the source of peace and renewal for all (*Dilexit Nos*, 38).
- Service and love should be expressed through daily actions.
- Small gestures—such as listening, comforting, and helping—reflect Christ's love.

3. THE INFINITE LOVE OF THE SACRED HEART

The Sacred Heart represents both human and divine love, demonstrating an unbounded capacity for compassion, forgiveness, and transformation. Pope Francis urges believers to move beyond self-centeredness and embrace selfless love. *'To adore the Heart of Jesus is to recognize that everything about him—his life, his suffering, his resurrection—speaks of an infinite love that transforms us'* (*Dilexit Nos*, 65).

Key Takeaways:

- The Sacred Heart embodies limitless love that transcends human emotions.
- Worship and contemplation of Christ's Heart deepen faith and commitment.
- Adoration and reflection inspire self-giving love and social responsibility.

4. BUILDING A CIVILIZATION OF LOVE

One of the encyclical's strongest appeals is to construct a "civilization of love" based on Christ's teachings. This includes working for justice, reconciliation, and peace while combating hatred and division. *'The civilization of the Heart of Christ can be built on the ruins accumulated by hatred and violence'* (*Dilexit Nos*, 182).

Key Takeaways:

- Love is the antidote to violence and societal breakdown.
- True transformation happens through everyday acts of kindness and justice.
- Forgiveness, solidarity, and service are fundamental to social change.



CONCLUSION

Dilexit Nos offers a powerful vision of how the Sacred Heart of Jesus can transform individuals and society. By living according to Christ's love, believers become bearers of peace, justice, and hope. Pope Francis calls on young people to lead this transformation by aligning their hearts with Christ's, fostering genuine relationships, and engaging in compassionate action. Ultimately, the encyclical is a call to make love the foundation of personal and communal life. As the Holy Father concludes, *'May the open Heart of Jesus guide us and enlighten us always'* (*Dilexit Nos*, 220).





SAINT EDUCATOR SERIES- 16

SAINT EDITH STEIN

(1891-1942)

Saint Edith Stein, also known as Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, was a brilliant philosopher, educator, and eventually a Carmelite nun. Her life is a profound testament to the intersection of faith, reason, and sacrifice. Edith Stein was murdered in the gas chamber at Birkenau on 9 August 1942 and is canonized as a martyr and saint of the Catholic Church; she is also one of six patron saints of Europe.

Edith Stein was born on October 12, 1891, in Breslau (now Wrocław, Poland), as the youngest of eleven children in a devout Jewish family. Her parents, Siegfried and Augusta Stein, were hardworking and deeply committed to their faith. However, tragedy struck early in Edith's life when her father passed away suddenly when she was just two years old. This left her mother, Augusta, to manage both the family and their lumber business on her own. Augusta's resilience and strong faith became a cornerstone of the family's life, and she worked tirelessly to provide for her children, ensuring they were raised in a deeply religious household. Despite this, Edith showed an independent and inquisitive spirit from a young age, often questioning traditional beliefs and societal norms.

A highly intelligent and determined child, Edith excelled in her studies and was known for her sharp mind and thirst for knowledge. However, as she entered her teenage years, she experienced a crisis of faith. She abandoned prayer and openly declared herself an atheist, choosing instead to pursue truth through reason and intellectual inquiry. Her family was deeply saddened by her rejection of their faith, but they continued to support her ambitions. Edith's academic journey began at the University of Breslau, where she studied psychology and philosophy, fields that fascinated her with their exploration of human experience and

thought. She quickly distinguished herself as an exceptional student, earning the respect of her professors and peers.

Edith's early life was marked by intellectual brilliance, a search for truth, and a gradual distancing from her Jewish roots, a journey that would ultimately lead her to profound personal and spiritual transformation.

Edith Stein found the empirical methods of psychology at the time inadequate for exploring the deeper questions of human experience. This dissatisfaction led her to transfer to the University of Göttingen in 1913 to study under Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology. Phenomenology, which emphasizes the direct examination of human consciousness, offered Edith the tools she sought to explore the nature of empathy and existence.

At Göttingen, Edith flourished academically, joining a circle of renowned philosophers, including Max Scheler and Adolf Reinach. Under Husserl's mentorship, she developed a keen interest in understanding human relationships and the essence of empathy, which became the focus of her doctoral dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy*. Completed in 1916, her dissertation was groundbreaking in its exploration of how individuals perceive and connect with the experiences of others. Edith earned her doctorate *summa cum laude*, becoming one of the few women of her time to achieve such academic distinction in philosophy.

After completing her doctorate, Edith served as Husserl's assistant at the University of Freiburg. In this role, she helped edit his manuscripts and further refined her philosophical understanding. Despite her significant contributions, Edith faced systemic barriers as a woman in academia. She was denied professorships solely because of her gender, a limitation that deeply frustrated her. Nevertheless, she continued to lecture and write, gaining respect as a philosopher in her own right.

Edith's intellectual journey began to take a spiritual turn after the traumatic experience of World War I, during which she served as a volunteer nurse. Witnessing the suffering of others deeply affected her and planted seeds of introspection. Her eventual reading of Saint Teresa of Ávila's autobiography in 1921 profoundly influenced her and led to her conversion to Catholicism. This spiritual awakening shaped her academic work, as she began to integrate phenomenology with Catholic theology.

Saint Edith Stein had a profound and impactful life as an educator. Her dedication to teaching, her intellectual depth, and her integration of faith and reason shaped her work and left a



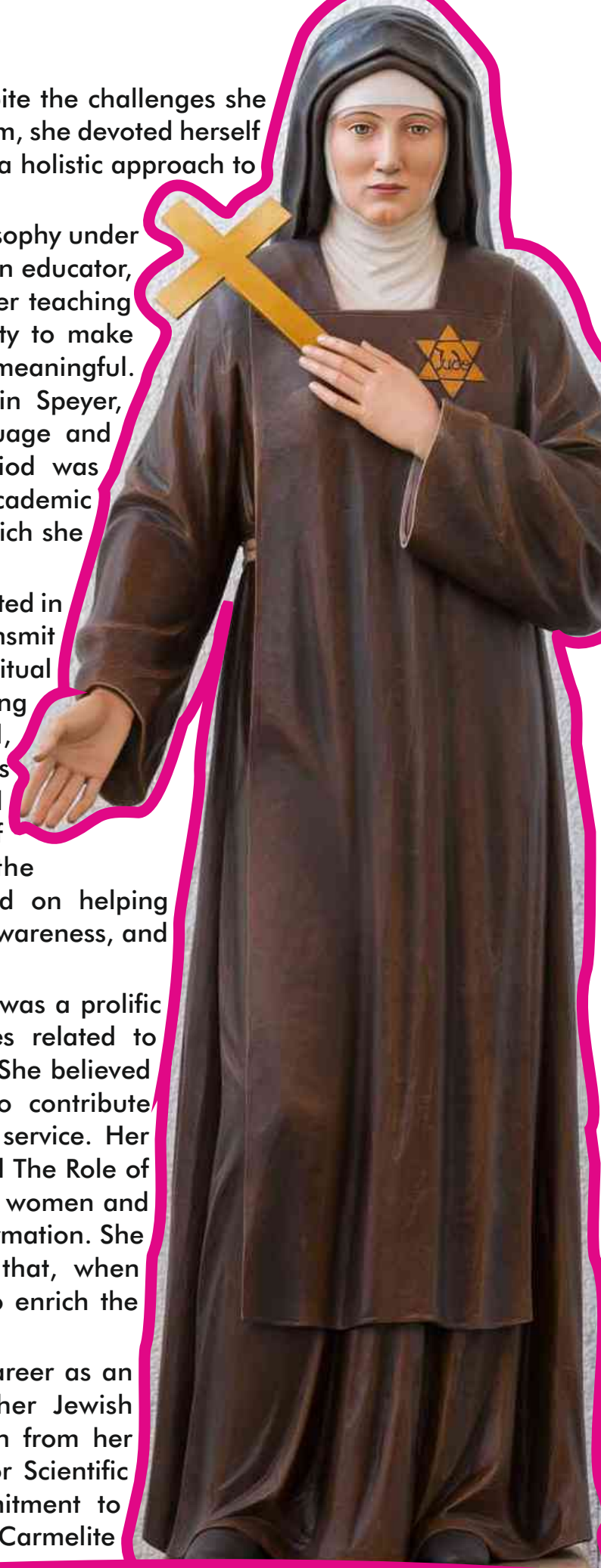
lasting legacy in the field of education. Despite the challenges she faced as a woman and a convert to Catholicism, she devoted herself to nurturing minds and souls, advocating for a holistic approach to education.

After completing her doctoral studies in philosophy under Edmund Husserl, Edith began her career as an educator, lecturing and teaching in various settings. Her teaching career was marked by her exceptional ability to make complex philosophical ideas accessible and meaningful. She worked at a teacher training college in Speyer, Germany, where she taught German language and literature, as well as philosophy. This period was pivotal, as it allowed her to combine her academic expertise with her growing Catholic faith, which she embraced after her conversion in 1922.

Edith's educational philosophy was deeply rooted in her belief that teaching should not merely transmit knowledge but also cultivate moral and spiritual values. She saw education as a means of forming the whole person, addressing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. This approach aligned with her phenomenological background, emphasizing the importance of empathy and personal relationships in the teacher-student dynamic. Her work focused on helping students develop critical thinking skills, self-awareness, and a sense of responsibility toward others.

In addition to her classroom teaching, Edith was a prolific lecturer and writer, often addressing issues related to women's education and their role in society. She believed that education should empower women to contribute meaningfully to both family life and public service. Her essays, such as *The Education of Women* and *The Role of Women in Society*, emphasized the dignity of women and the need for their intellectual and spiritual formation. She argued that women possess unique gifts that, when nurtured through education, enable them to enrich the world in profound ways.

As the Nazi regime rose to power, Edith's career as an educator was abruptly disrupted due to her Jewish heritage. In 1933, she was forced to resign from her teaching position at the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy in Münster. However, her commitment to education did not waver. She entered the Carmelite convent



in Cologne that same year, where she continued to write and reflect on the intersection of faith, philosophy, and education.

Her later writings, such as *Finite and Eternal Being*, explored the relationship between human existence and divine truth, offering profound insights into the nature of education as a path to ultimate meaning.

Edith's life as an educator exemplified her belief that teaching is a vocation of service, one that seeks to elevate the human spirit and guide others toward truth and goodness. Even in the face of persecution and hardship, her dedication to education and her faith remained unwavering. Her work continues to inspire educators to view teaching as a transformative and sacred calling.

Saint Edith Stein has left a lasting legacy as a philosopher, educator, and martyr. Her life, marked by the pursuit of truth, a profound integration of faith and reason, and an ultimate act of self-sacrifice, continues to inspire people across religious and academic communities. As a scholar, Edith made significant contributions to phenomenology, particularly through her dissertation *On the Problem of Empathy*, and later integrated her philosophical insights with Catholic theology. Her writings, such as *Finite and Eternal Being*, remain highly regarded for their exploration of human existence, spirituality, and the relationship between the finite and the divine. Edith's reflections on education, empathy, and the dignity of women have also had a lasting impact, influencing discussions on holistic and values-based education.

Edith's legacy extends beyond her intellectual work to her example of faith and courage in the face of persecution. As a convert to Catholicism from Judaism, she navigated her identity with humility and grace, ultimately choosing to embrace her Jewish heritage in solidarity with her people. Her martyrdom at Auschwitz on August 9, 1942, is regarded as an act of profound witness to her faith, as she offered her suffering for the salvation of others. Edith is remembered as a bridge between Judaism and Christianity, embodying the spiritual unity that transcends religious boundaries.

Edith Stein was beatified by Pope John Paul II on May 1, 1987, as a martyr for the faith, and later canonized on October 11, 1998. During her canonization, Pope John Paul II described her as "a martyr for love, a daughter of Israel who, as a Catholic during Nazi persecution, remained united to the faith and love of her Jewish people." Her life and martyrdom are seen as a testament to the transformative power of faith and the unyielding search for truth.

Saint Edith Stein is venerated as the co-patroness of Europe, alongside Saints Benedict of Nursia, Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Siena, and Cyril and Methodius. She is also a patron of educators, philosophers, and converts. Her feast day is celebrated on August 9, the anniversary of her death. Throughout the world, schools, universities, and institutions are named in her honour, and her writings continue to inspire those seeking to integrate faith, reason, and empathy into their lives.

Edith Stein's life remains a powerful example of intellectual rigor, spiritual depth, and self-sacrificing love. She challenges modern believers to courageously embrace their faith while remaining deeply engaged in the search for truth and justice in the world. Her legacy endures as a beacon of hope and reconciliation, uniting diverse communities in their shared humanity and faith.



TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERIES 7: IDENTITY OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR A CULTURE OF DIALOGUE



The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue is a document issued by the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education. It explores the mission and identity of Catholic schools in today's diverse and pluralistic society, emphasizing the importance of dialogue, inclusivity, and fidelity to Catholic values.

Chapter I- Catholic schools in the mission of the Church:

The Church, mother and teacher:

The Church, as both mother and teacher, plays a vital role in shaping the identity of Catholic schools, fostering a culture of dialogue rooted in faith and reason. As a mother, the Church nurtures students with Gospel values, guiding them toward personal and spiritual growth. As a teacher, she imparts wisdom, ensuring that education is holistic, integrating faith, culture, and intellectual development.

Catholic schools, inspired by this mission, serve as places of encounter, promoting respect, inclusivity, and open dialogue among diverse communities. While remaining faithful to Catholic teachings, they engage with contemporary social and

cultural challenges, fostering critical thinking and ethical responsibility. Educators, as witnesses to the faith, play a key role in transmitting this identity, ensuring that students grow in truth and love. In a pluralistic world, Catholic schools uphold their unique mission: to educate for peace, justice, and a deeper understanding of humanity through dialogue.

The “fundamental principles” of Christian education in schools:

Christian education in Catholic schools is rooted in fundamental principles that guide its mission and identity. At the core is the centrality of Christ, which means that Jesus is the foundation of all educational efforts. Catholic schools are not just academic institutions but places where students encounter Christ through learning, relationships, and daily experiences. This Christ-centred approach ensures that education is a journey toward truth, goodness, and beauty, shaping students into individuals who reflect Christian values in their lives.

Another key principle is the integral formation of the person, which emphasizes the holistic development of students—intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social. Education in Catholic schools is not limited to knowledge acquisition but extends to moral character formation, encouraging students to become responsible members of society. This principle aligns with the ecclesial and evangelizing mission of

Catholic schools, which calls them to transmit the faith and cultivate a strong sense of Christian discipleship.

Catholic schools promote a culture of dialogue, fostering mutual respect, inclusivity, and peaceful coexistence while maintaining a strong Catholic identity. Educators, as witnesses to the faith, play a vital role in shaping students' spiritual and



moral growth. Through these principles, Catholic education nurtures individuals committed to truth, justice, and the common good.

Further developments:

As society evolves, Catholic schools must continually develop their identity while remaining faithful to their mission. One significant development is the emphasis on intercultural and interreligious dialogue, recognizing the growing diversity within school communities. While maintaining their Catholic identity, schools are called to foster mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation among students of different backgrounds. This dialogue is not about compromising faith but about witnessing to Christ in a spirit of openness and love.

Another key development is the integration of new educational methodologies and technologies. The digital age presents both opportunities and challenges, requiring Catholic schools to adapt while upholding ethical responsibility in the use of technology. Schools must equip students with critical thinking skills, helping them navigate modern complexities while grounding them in Gospel values. There is a renewed focus on social responsibility and environmental stewardship, inspired by Catholic social teaching. Schools are encouraged to promote care for creation, solidarity with the poor, and active participation in social justice initiatives. Finally, the role of educators as faith witnesses is being reaffirmed. Catholic schools must invest in the formation of teachers and staff, ensuring they are prepared to model and transmit Christian values effectively. Through these developments, Catholic education continues to respond to contemporary challenges while remaining rooted in faith.

An education that goes forth:

Catholic education is called to "go forth," embracing a mission that extends beyond the classroom and engages with the world. Rooted in the Gospel, it seeks to form individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also compassionate, ethical, and socially responsible. This outward-looking approach fosters a deep sense of mission, encouraging students to be active participants in building a more just and peaceful society. Schools must cultivate a culture of dialogue, where faith and reason interact to address contemporary challenges with wisdom and discernment. Education becomes an instrument of evangelization, inspiring students to witness Christ's love through service, solidarity, and respect for human dignity. Teachers play



a crucial role in guiding students toward a life of purpose, equipping them with the moral and intellectual tools to engage with a diverse and ever-changing world. Through this dynamic vision, Catholic education prepares students to be agents of transformation in society.

Chapter II- The actors responsible for promoting and verifying Catholic Identity:

The educating school community:

The Catholic school is more than an institution of learning; it is an educating community where students, teachers, parents, and staff collaborate in forming individuals grounded in faith, knowledge, and service. This community fosters an environment where education is not just the transmission of information but a shared journey of growth, dialogue, and mutual respect. The Catholic identity of the school is enriched by the active participation of all members, ensuring that faith is not confined to religion classes but integrated into every aspect of school life.

Teachers serve as witnesses to faith, not only through instruction but also by embodying Gospel values in their interactions with students and colleagues. Parents, as the primary educators, play a vital role in reinforcing the values taught in

school, creating a strong home-school partnership. Students, in turn, are encouraged to be active participants in their own formation, learning to respect differences and engage in meaningful dialogue. This community-centred approach ensures that Catholic education remains holistic, inclusive, and mission-driven. By fostering a spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility, the educating school community becomes a living testimony to the Church's call for dialogue, evangelization, and the pursuit of the common good.

Educational charisms in the Church:

Educational charisms in the Church play a vital role in shaping the identity of Catholic schools, offering unique spiritual and pedagogical approaches that enrich the learning experience. Rooted in the mission of various religious congregations and traditions, these charisms bring diverse educational philosophies that emphasize faith, service, and human dignity. Whether inspired by the Jesuit commitment to intellectual rigor, the Salesian focus on youth and pastoral care, or the Franciscan call to simplicity and stewardship, each charism contributes to the holistic formation of students. These traditions foster a culture of dialogue, helping schools respond to modern challenges while remaining deeply anchored in Gospel values. Educators, as stewards of these charisms, are called to witness their faith through teaching and personal example. By embracing their unique spiritual heritage, Catholic schools cultivate environments where students grow academically, morally, and spiritually, preparing them to engage with the world in a spirit of love and service.

The service of ecclesiastical authority:

Ecclesiastical authority plays a crucial

role in guiding and safeguarding the identity of Catholic schools, ensuring they remain faithful to the Church's mission while fostering a culture of dialogue. Rooted in the pastoral responsibility of bishops and religious superiors, this service is not about mere governance but about accompaniment, support, and formation for the entire educational community. The Church, as both mother and teacher, provides Catholic schools with clear principles grounded in Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium, helping them navigate contemporary challenges while staying true to Gospel values.

Ecclesiastical authority also ensures that Catholic schools maintain their evangelizing mission, promoting faith-based education that integrates reason, culture, and social responsibility. Through collaboration with educators, parents, and students, Church leaders encourage the development of policies that uphold Catholic identity while fostering inclusion and dialogue with the broader society. Additionally, bishops and religious superiors support the formation of teachers, ensuring they are prepared not only academically but also spiritually and morally.

By exercising this role with wisdom and pastoral care, ecclesiastical authority helps Catholic schools become places of intellectual growth, moral integrity, and faith formation, equipping students to live out their Christian vocation in service to the common good.

Chapter III- Some critical aspects: Divergent interpretations of the term "Catholic":

The document acknowledges divergent interpretations of the term "Catholic" in education. Some view it as strictly doctrinal, emphasizing adherence to Church teachings, while others adopt a broader, more inclusive perspective, focusing on dialogue and openness to diverse cultural and religious



contexts. The Vatican stresses that Catholic identity must balance faithfulness to tradition with engagement in contemporary society. This tension can lead to differing applications in governance, curriculum, and teacher expectations. Ultimately, the document seeks to clarify that Catholic schools must maintain their mission while fostering respectful dialogue.

Clarity of competences and legislation: This emphasises the need for clarity in competencies and legislation to safeguard the Catholic identity of educational institutions. It distinguishes the roles of ecclesiastical authority, school administrators, and educators in maintaining faith-based education while respecting local and national legal frameworks. The document stresses that Church authorities have the right and duty to ensure that Catholic schools adhere to their mission, particularly in hiring practices and curriculum design. At the same time, it acknowledges the complexity of operating within diverse legal systems, advocating for cooperation between Church and state. The text highlights the importance of contractual agreements that explicitly outline expectations regarding upholding Catholic values. By clarifying these competencies, the document aims to



prevent conflicts over governance, ensuring that Catholic schools can maintain their religious character while engaging in meaningful dialogue with pluralistic societies and legal institutions.

Some sensitive issues and areas:

This addresses several sensitive issues, particularly regarding the balance between Catholic doctrine and contemporary societal values. One key area is the hiring and retention of teachers, as the document insists that educators in Catholic schools must align with Church teachings, sparking debates on employment rights and inclusivity. Another contentious issue is the approach to gender identity and sexual orientation, where the Vatican upholds traditional Catholic teachings, sometimes conflicting with secular laws promoting LGBTQ+ rights. The document also touches on interfaith dialogue, urging openness while reinforcing the distinctiveness of Catholic

education, which can lead to tensions in multicultural societies. Additionally, the relationship between Church governance and state regulations remains a delicate matter, particularly where national laws challenge the autonomy of Catholic schools. These areas require careful navigation to uphold Catholic identity while fostering respectful engagement with diverse perspectives.

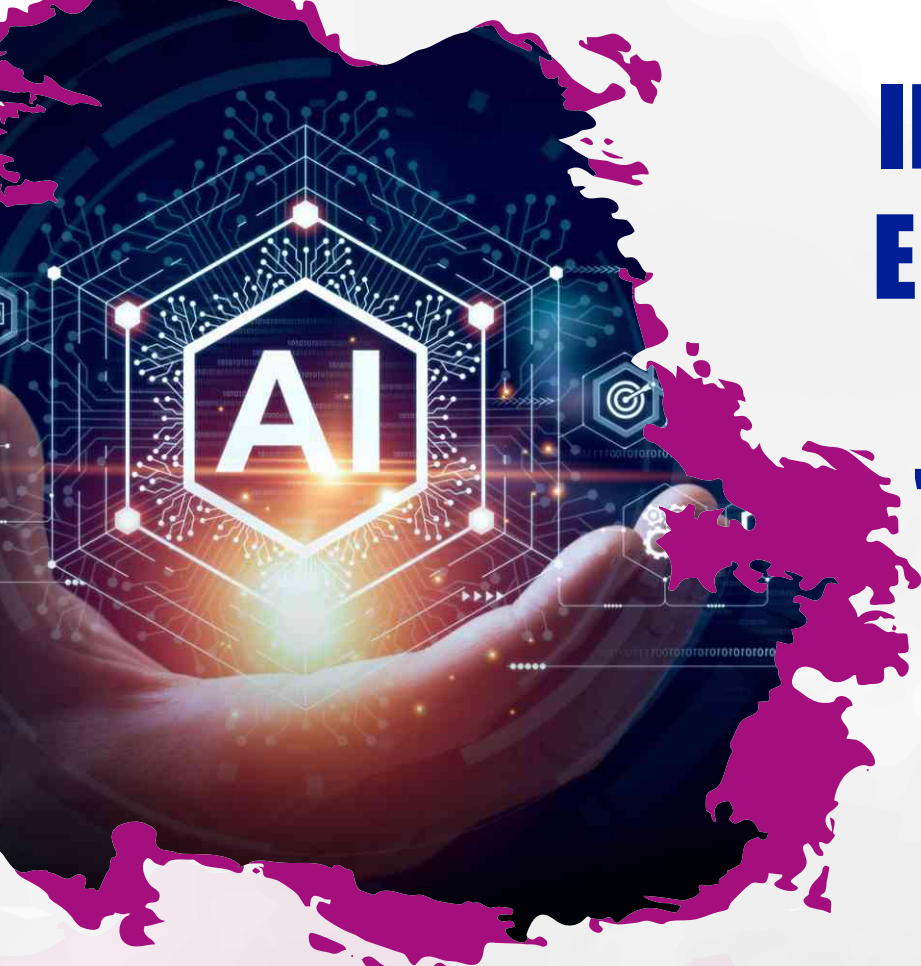
Encounter and convergence to consolidate Catholic identity:

This highlights the concepts of encounter and convergence as essential for consolidating Catholic identity in an increasingly pluralistic world. Encounter refers to the openness of Catholic schools to engage with diverse cultural, religious, and ideological perspectives while remaining rooted in the Gospel. The document emphasizes that dialogue should not dilute Catholic values but rather strengthen them through respectful exchanges that affirm truth and human dignity. Convergence, on the other hand, refers to the process of harmonizing Catholic educational principles with contemporary societal challenges.

This involves integrating faith, reason, and culture in a way that fosters unity while respecting differences. By encouraging dialogue without compromising Catholic doctrine, the document seeks to reinforce the unique mission of Catholic schools: to form students in faith while equipping them to contribute positively to a diverse world. However, achieving this balance requires careful discernment, particularly in areas where Church teachings may conflict with secular ideologies. The Vatican urges Catholic schools to act as spaces of both conviction and compassion, where engagement with the modern world does not lead to relativism but instead deepens the commitment to truth, justice, and the common good.

Conclusion:

The document reaffirms the mission of Catholic education to integrate faith, culture, and life while fostering respectful dialogue in a pluralistic society. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining Catholic identity through clear governance, teacher formation, and adherence to Church teachings, while also encouraging openness to diverse perspectives. By balancing fidelity to tradition with engagement in contemporary challenges, Catholic schools can serve as spaces of encounter, where truth and dialogue coexist. Ultimately, the document calls for a renewed commitment to Catholic education's evangelizing mission while promoting justice, inclusion, and the common good.



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DAY 2025: 'AI AND EDUCATION: PRESERVING AUTONOMY IN AN AUTOMATED WORLD'

This 24 January let's celebrate the power of education to shape our technological and human future. This year's theme highlights a key challenge: how to preserve our autonomy and humanity in an increasingly automated world.

A STRONG COMMITMENT TO OUR VALUES:

At a time when artificial intelligence is redefining our world, we must ensure that it is a tool that serves the common good, enhances human dignity and promotes justice. The OIEC subscribes to this vision by putting the human person at the centre, valuing solidarity, respect for creation and building a sustainable future. These principles, taken from The Global Compact on Education, remind us that education is above all an act of faith in humanity and a call to build a world of peace and fraternity.

THE OIEC INITIATIVE:

The International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC) is actively involved in this essential subject with the publication of a groundbreaking work:

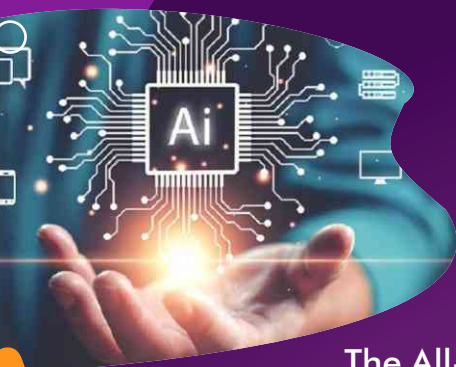
'AI AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT SCHOOL: Understanding, reflecting, using and acting with the Global Compact on Education'

A book that speaks directly to young people, helping them to discover the opportunities offered by AI while reflecting on the ethical and human challenges it raises. The aim is to use AI as a lever for a more humane and inclusive education.

Download the booklet: <https://bit.ly/OIEC-IAjeunes>

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS TO GUIDE US:

'Education is not just learning to think, but also passing on values and a heritage. It is not just a matter of passing on technical knowledge, but of forming citizens of the world capable of dialogue, fraternity and compassion'. (The Global Compact on Education)



AICTE DECLARES 2025 AS 'YEAR OF AI' TO SHAPE INDIA AS GLOBAL LEADER

By Sanjay Maurya: December 25, 2024

The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has announced 2025 as the “Year of Artificial Intelligence (AI)” to shape India as a global leader in AI. The initiatives under this declaration by the technical education regulator will span across AICTE-approved institutions, impacting over 14,000 colleges and 40 million students nationwide.

AICTE chairman TG Sitharam in a letter has urged all its affiliated institutions to submit their AI implementation plans by December 31, 2024, which will be reviewed by its approval bureau, with top submissions featured as benchmarks for other institutions. He has urged the AICTE-approved institutions to adopt five measures to “affirm India's leadership in AI”. Five measures include institutions taking pledge to make India a global leader in AI through innovation, ethics, and education, displaying this commitment prominently on campuses; launching AI awareness campaigns; updating curricula to include AI topic fostering interdisciplinary approaches; conducting workshops and certifications to equip faculty with AI teaching expertise; and partnering with AI-driven organisations to provide real-world exposure through internship, projects and mentorship.

AICTE will organise workshops and certifications to upskill faculty in AI education. Students will receive real-world experience through internships, projects, and mentorships through collaborations of their colleges with global companies like Adobe, Cisco, and International Business Machines (IBM). Top-performing institutions will be recognised with awards as models of AI excellence.

https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/aicte-declares-2025-as-year-of-ai-to-shape-india-as-global-leader-101735055534296.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

UGC DRAFT REGULATIONS 2025 FOR FACULTY RECRUITMENT: WHAT'S CHANGING AND WHAT WILL REMAIN THE SAME

By TOI Education: January 7, 2024

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently released the draft of its 2025 regulations for faculty recruitment, marking a significant shift in how academic appointments and promotions are envisioned in India. These proposals aim to align the recruitment process with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, while introducing the draft, emphasized its transformative nature, stating, “By promoting flexibility, inclusivity, and recognizing diverse talents, we are paving the



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये
UGC

University Grants Commission

way for a dynamic academic future for India.”

The proposed changes within the UGC's Draft Regulations 2025 for Teacher Recruitment cover various aspects ranging from academic requirements to a more streamlined promotion criteria:

- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Increased academic flexibility-** Under the proposed 2025 draft guidelines, candidates can teach subjects based on their highest academic specialization. For example, a Ph.D. holder in chemistry, even if their prior degrees were in different subjects, would qualify to teach chemistry. NET/SET qualification in a subject also enables candidates to teach that subject, regardless of their previous academic focus.

- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Revised evaluation metrics-** While the previous UGC guidelines relied heavily on the Academic Performance Indicator (API) system, which reduced academic contributions to numerical scores. The 2025 draft completely eliminates score-based shortlisting, introducing a holistic evaluation system that values innovative teaching, research funding contributions, and digital content creation.

- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Specific provisions for inclusivity-** In the proposed 2025 guidelines, dedicated recruitment pathways for experts in arts, sports, and traditional disciplines are introduced. Accomplished sportspersons, including those with disabilities, can now access teaching roles more easily, ensuring a broader and more inclusive talent pool.

- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Promotion criteria and professional development-** The 2025 draft streamlines promotion criteria to prioritize teaching effectiveness, research output, and academic contributions. Faculty development programs are given greater importance to encourage continuous learning and skill enhancement.

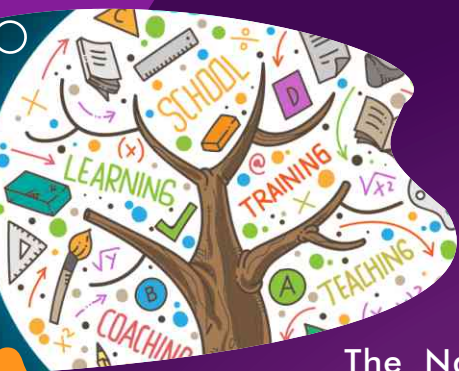
- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Vice-Chancellor selection process-** The 2025 draft broadens eligibility to include distinguished professionals from fields like industry, public administration, and policymaking, provided they have proven academic contributions. The selection process is redesigned for greater transparency.

- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Transparency and governance-** The 2025 draft enhances transparency by promoting accountable processes for recruitment, promotions, and grievance redressal, fostering trust and efficiency within institutions.

- **UGC Draft Regulations 2025: Promoting Indian languages-** The 2025 Draft encourages the use of Indian languages in academic publications and degree programs, making education more accessible and inclusive. The previous guidelines had limited emphasis on the inclusion of Indian languages in academia.

UGC asks for feedback on Draft Guidelines 2025:

The UGC has invited feedback from stakeholders on the proposed regulations, underscoring the importance of collaboration in shaping the future of higher education in India. With its focus on flexibility, inclusivity, and holistic evaluation, the 2025 draft marks a progressive step forward, aligning faculty recruitment and development with the goals of NEP 2020; whether these changes will meet the expectations of the academic community remains to be seen.



NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2025: WHAT'S CHANGED AND WHAT'S YET TO COME?

By TOI Education: December 31, 2024

The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 was introduced as a transformative framework aimed at revamping India's education system. Replacing the 34-year-old NEP of 1986, it focused on bridging gaps in quality, equity, and access to education at all levels.

In December 2024, a significant change was implemented regarding the detention policy for students in Classes 5 and 8. The 'No Detention Policy' re-introduced under the Right to Education Act (2009). This had earlier prohibited schools from holding back students in these grades regardless of academic performance. At the time, the provision was aimed at promoting a 'stress-free' learning environment but often led to students progressing without a grasp of foundational concepts.

Current status of NEP implementation:

- Foundational stage curriculum: The National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) and the "Jadui Pitara" learning kit have been launched, focusing on play-based learning for children aged 3-8.
- Regional language inclusion: AICTE-approved engineering courses and medical programs are now offered in regional languages. Key entrance exams like JEE and NEET are conducted in 13 languages.
- Four-year undergraduate program (FYUP): Over 105 universities, including 19 central institutions, have adopted FYUP, offering flexibility and multiple exit options.
- Global expansion of IITs: Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are establishing campuses abroad, with IIT-Madras opening in Zanzibar and IIT-Delhi planning a campus in Abu Dhabi.
- Digital and multimodal learning: Initiatives like PM e-VIDYA and DIKSHA have integrated digital platforms for universal access to quality education.

Challenges and delays holding back NEP:

Despite progress, several areas have seen slower implementation for varied reasons:

- Integration of the 5+3+3+4 structure: Aligning curricula across states and training educators to adopt the new pedagogical methods remains a challenge. The foundational textbooks for some grades have only recently been prepared.
- Single higher education regulator: While the policy proposes consolidating UGC, AICTE, and NCTE into a single regulatory body, the legislative framework for this reform is still pending.
- Lack of uniform monitoring mechanisms: Effective evaluation of NEP's impact is ongoing but lacks standardised metrics across regions.

Looking ahead to 2025- What to expect:

The focus is expected to shift towards a broader and deeper implementation of NEP's reforms. Key areas of priority include the expanded rollout of the 5+3+3+4 structure to all grades and regions, ensuring that foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary stages are seamlessly integrated nationwide across school boards.

Another significant development to look out for is the anticipated tabling of the bill for a unified higher education regulator in Parliament, a move aimed at streamlining governance across UGC, AICTE, and NCTE. Further, in terms of teaching-staff mentorships, enhancing teacher training programs under NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement) will also likely remain a key focus, equipping educators to align their pedagogy in-tune with NEP's larger transformative goals.



WHAT'S THE MARK OF AN EDUCATED PERSON?

By Rodger Dean Duncan: January 24, 2025

Many years ago, when headlines focused on social turbulence (sound familiar?), I was exploring the current state of American education. It was at a time when many people were demanding more “relevance” in their book learning. At dozens of colleges, teachers of non-required courses were either advertising their curricula with an eye toward current moods or lecturing to half-empty classrooms.

To get a taste of the day's thinking, I interviewed more than 20 prominent Americans. I asked each of them a single question: “What's the mark of an educated person?” Their views varied, but their responses reflected some common themes. In all the interviews I conducted, not a single respondent mentioned time in the classroom as the mark of an educated person. In fact, it seemed that they went to great lengths emphasizing that the real mark of an educated person is about behaviours and relationships, not about degrees or certificates.

To be effective in our thinking, we can adopt a growth mindset that we are indeed capable of solving problems in fresh ways. That includes exercising curiosity by asking smart questions to explore and discover. It includes challenging our own conclusions to ensure that our assumptions are valid. And it includes making appropriate connections that lead to breakthrough ideas.

The way we talk can benefit from the behaviours and skills of collaborative dialogue and appreciative inquiry. We can listen to learn and understand rather than to rebut and overpower. We can strive to exercise influence rather than authority. We can be more willing to be influenced rather than assuming that the views of others should always be subservient to yours.

What about trust? We can mindfully choose to behave in ways that earn trust. And we can be more willing to extend trust to others. Finally, to enhance the strength and capacity of our work colleagues, we can strive to foster genuine collaboration by engaging their heads, hearts, and hopes. Communicate with them openly and often. Seek their opinions. Brainstorm with them. Openly acknowledge their contributions.

What's the mark of an educated person? It's arguably less about diplomas and certificates and more about curiosity and good manners.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/rodgerdeanduncan/2025/01/24/whats-the-mark-of-an-educated-person/>



AT VATICAN JUBILEE, POPE FRANCIS SKIPS PREPARED TEXT FOR HEART-TO-HEART WITH JOURNALISTS

By AC Wimmer: January 25, 2025

“Communication means stepping outside ourselves a bit to give something of myself to another,” Pope Francis told hundreds of communications professionals Saturday, speaking spontaneously after setting aside his prepared remarks at the Vatican's Jubilee of the World of Communications. “To know how to communicate is a great wisdom, and I am happy that this jubilee of communicators is taking place. Your work is one that builds. It builds society and it builds the Church,” the pope said, provided journalists are truthful and “real” in their interior life.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The event began with a dialogue featuring Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Ressa and author Colum McCann, moderated by veteran Italian journalist Mario Calabresi. The pope's prepared message, later shared with participants, addressed several pressing concerns facing modern communications. The text called attention to journalists who died covering conflicts in the past year, noting that more than 120 media professionals lost their lives in 2024.

The written remarks also warned against what the pope termed "brain rot" caused by constant social media scrolling, calling for greater media literacy and critical thinking, especially among young people. "We need courageous entrepreneurs, courageous information engineers, so that the beauty of communication is not corrupted," the prepared text stated.

The message for participants in this Saturday jubilee gathering concluded with an appeal for what the pope called "hopetelling" - urging communicators to tell "stories of hope" that nurture life. In the text shared on Saturday, the reality of war and suffering was not omitted. The Jubilee of the World of Communications is taking place amid what the pope's written message described as "a difficult moment in the history of humanity, with the world still wounded by wars and violence, by the shedding of so much innocent blood."

"When you report on evil, leave space for the possibility of mending what has been torn," the pope's message advised.

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/261811/pope-francis-tells-vatican-media-jubilee-communication-is-divine-journalism-must-foster-hope>



IN A FRACTURED WORLD TECHNOLOGY MUST SERVE THE COMMON GOOD

By Deborah Castellano Lubov: 27 January 2025

In an interview with Vatican Media, tech guru, Eli Pariser, the founder and current co-director of New Public Network, a nonprofit dedicated to building thriving digital public spaces, launched this appeal, as he discussed how to promote and invest in meaningful online communities that contribute to the good. The comments were made during the Jubilee of the World of Communications on the sidelines of a global conference, organized by the Vatican's Dicastery for Communication, in partnership with the Dicastery for Evangelization, which is seeking to address some of the most frequent questions that communicators in the Church face today.

Mr Pariser, what has drawn you to this Jubilee of Communications in the Vatican and what message are you sending?

Well, what's drawn me is we live in a very fractured and dangerous time. Not just in the world, but in the way that we communicate with each other online. Therefore, it seems so important to me that we remember the moral quality of how we're communicating, and that we also think about how to structure our communications media in a way that supports our 'angels' rather than our 'demons.' Therefore, that's the message that I'm here to talk about. I'm here to discuss how we build online spaces that actually pull out the best in us and not the worst.

Social media platforms occupy an incredibly powerful space across the globe. Observing their immense influence, what obligation do they have to the common good?

NEWS IN BRIEF

I think the problem is that the social media platforms that we have right now are not built for the common good. They're built for advertisers. They're built in this top-down way where they're essentially kings [such as] Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk. And that's not very helpful when we're trying to come together as a community. Given this, I think we need to think beyond the commercial platforms and start thinking about how do we build community in other ways online and in ways that foreground civic virtue rather than just commerce.

You have much expertise and understanding of civic engagement and fostering community. What is needed to build and drive this momentum, so that it can truly be a resource useful and reliable, to its users and followers?

I take great inspiration from the way that we've built communities in the offline world, and we've invested in parks and libraries and churches and all these places that are about bringing people together in a different way rather than just selling people things. I think we need to make that investment online, which seems hard to imagine now. But it was hard to imagine when people started making parks that you could have public parks for everyone. Therefore, I think we need to have some faith, and we need to get building, and there are many people around the world who are already building today.

Could you speak a little bit about the activities of New_Public, and what you are working on now?

New_Public is an R&D lab looking at how we build digital public spaces that really serve the whole person, the soul and the community rather than just the advertisers. We're working with a bunch of public media organizations from Australia to Europe to Canada and also starting to build local digital public spaces where people can communicate with other people in their community and get together offline.

As is well known, you brought to light the phenomenon of the 'filter bubble...' After your analyses, what has this taught you about the power of communication? According to you, what sort of power does communication possess?

I think Colin McCann said yesterday that the shortest distance between two people is a story, and I think that's both the shortest distance and it's also the farthest distance, depending on whether we share the same stories, or whether we can hear each other's stories. And so, what we need is communications media that help us hear each other's stories and help us understand where we're each coming from, that has to be designed in a different way from the communications media that we have now, which really trap us in a very small 'bubble' of a story alone.

This global conference on communication, here, has it been enriching for you?

It's been enriching, and it's been very inspiring to hear the Pope, and to hear the Holy Father and other people, really speaking to the moral importance of building a communications medium that works for everyone. This isn't just a matter of technology; it's a matter of morality and the spirit. That's been really, really moving to hear.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2025-01/eli-pariser-founder-of-new-public-network-interview.html>

1ST NATIONAL WELLBEING CONCLAVE 2024

9th-10th November 2024



The National Wellbeing Conclave 2024, held on November 9-10, 2024, was organized by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with IIT

Hyderabad. The event brought together over 350 stakeholders from nearly 100 centrally funded higher education institutions to discuss strategies for enhancing mental health and wellbeing on campuses. Key speakers, including Chief Economic Advisor Dr. V. Anantha Nageswaran and Secretary of Higher Education Shri K. Sanjay Murthy, emphasised the connection between mental health and national development, highlighting the role of cultural practices like Yoga in building resilience.

The conclave proposed several key recommendations to address mental health challenges in higher education. It advocated for the development of comprehensive mental health policies focusing on prevention, early intervention, and ongoing support, tailored to local institutional contexts. The importance of holistic wellbeing programs was also stressed, including stress management training, life skills development, mindfulness practices, and peer support systems to help students navigate academic and personal challenges.

A major recommendation was the establishment of integrated mental health services on campuses, ensuring access to medical, psychological, and social support. The report suggested maintaining a student-counsellor ratio of 1000:1 to provide timely interventions. Faculty and staff were also identified as crucial stakeholders, and the conclave recommended training them as mental health first responders to identify and assist students showing early signs of distress.

Another key focus was the adoption of digital mental health resources, such as virtual counselling sessions and mobile apps, to enhance accessibility. The conclave also stressed the need for a supportive campus culture, advocating for awareness campaigns and community-building activities to reduce stigma and encourage open discussions on mental health.

Finally, the report called for collaboration among institutions, mental health professionals, and external organizations, ensuring a multidisciplinary approach to mental wellbeing. It also emphasised parental involvement, recommending orientation programs to help families support students' mental health. The conclave's findings underscore a multi-faceted strategy integrating medical, psychological, and social interventions to foster a healthier and more inclusive educational environment.



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

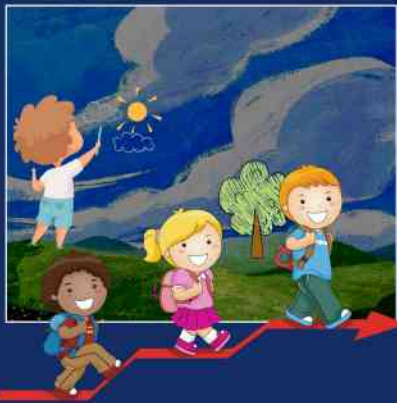


CBCI Office for Education and Culture
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF INDIA

CBCI CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PUBLISHED BY CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF INDIA. (CBCI)

CBCI CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN INDIA 2023



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

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



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