

# Thanks!



**OIEC**

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
OFICINA INTERNACIONAL DE LA EDUCACIÓN CATÓLICA  
OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT CATHOLIQUE



# Editorial

**Hervé Lecomte**

Secretary General of the OIEC

*Dear friends,*

In these pages, the OIEC wishes to pay tribute to one of the most significant pontificates in contemporary history. Since his election in 2013, Pope Francis has constantly called on the Church and the world to overcome indifference, to go to the peripheries, to build bridges rather than walls, and to make mercy, fraternity and justice the pillars of a common future.

With the quiet strength of a pastor inhabited by the Gospel, he knew how to speak to the heart of everyone, whether believer or non-believer, young or adult, poor or politician. He sowed an active, humble and universal hope, breathing new life into a Church on the move, daring to reach out to those on the periphery, building fraternity and believing in education as a path to peace.

At the OIEC, we welcomed his words not as just another speech, but as a living call, a light for the road ahead. His invitation to a Global Compact on Education, to an integral ecology, to a fraternity without borders resonates deeply with our mission to accompany Catholic schools throughout the world in their commitment to the service of human dignity.

The purpose of this booklet is to recall, in a few pages, the main lines of his teaching and his witness, so that we do not lose the memory of him, and so that we can continue to make his call come alive in our hearts and in our actions. It is a mark of gratitude, but also a springboard: it is not just a question of remembering, but of acting. May it inspire new gestures of conversion, covenant and shared joy in every educational community. And may the voice of Pope Francis, full of the Spirit, continue to guide us in the ever-new adventure of education.

# *A few highlights from his pontificate*

- **13 MARCH 2013:** Election of **Pope Francis**, first Jesuit pope and first pope from Latin America (Argentina). He chose the name Francis in reference to Saint Francis of Assisi.
- **24 NOVEMBER 2013:** Publication of **Evangelii gaudium**  
✎ **A Church on the move, joyful and missionary.**
- **24 MAY 2015:** Publication of **Laudato si'**  
✎ **An integral ecology to safeguard our common home.**
- **19 MARCH 2016:** Publication of **Amoris laetitia**  
✎ **The family, a complex reality but a source of joy and love.**
- **8 APRIL 2018:** Publication of **Gaudete et exsultate**  
✎ **The universal call to holiness in everyday life.**
- **25 MARCH 2019:** Publication of **Christus vivit**  
✎ **A passionate letter to young people: 'He lives, Christ!'**
- **3 OCTOBER 2020:**  
Publication of **Fratelli tutti**  
✎ **Fraternity and social friendship as the foundations of a new world.**
- **4 OCTOBER 2023:**  
Publication of **Laudate deum**  
✎ **A renewed cry in the face of the ecological emergency.**





# The major appeals of Pope Francis

Throughout his pontificate, Pope Francis has made strong, simple and profoundly evangelical appeals to the world. These appeals outline the strengths of a Church that is humble, close, joyful and committed..

## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

Pope Francis invites us to a faith that is alive, joyful and mission-oriented:

”

*‘An evangelist should not constantly have a Lenten head without Easter!’*

(Evangelii gaudium, 6)

The Gospel is Good News to be shared with enthusiasm, reaching out to others, especially those on the margins.

## THE UNIVERSAL FRATERNITY

It calls for every person to be recognised as a brother or sister, whatever their origins, religion or situation:

”

*‘No one saves himself; no one saves himself by his own strength alone.’*

(Fratelli tutti, 54)

Against individualism, it advocates listening, meeting and building peace.

## THE FAMILY, YOUNG PEOPLE AND MERCY

The family is the heart of humanity; young people are God’s today; mercy is God’s very name:

”

*‘The joy of love experienced in families is also the joy of the Church.’*

(Amoris laetitia, 1)

” *‘Christ lives and he wants you alive!’*  
(Christus vivit, 1)

” *‘The true face of God is that of mercy.’*  
(Misericordiae vultus, 1)

## INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Francis links the protection of nature and social justice in an integral ecological vision:

” *‘Everything is connected.’*  
(Laudato si’, 91)

” *‘The earth, our common home, seems to be turning more and more into a huge rubbish dump.’*  
(Misericordiae vultus, 1)

It calls on everyone to care for Creation and the poorest.

## SYNODALITY AND THE CHURCH ON THE MOVE

He wants a Church that walks together, that listens, discerns and reaches out to the peripheries:

” *‘A synodal Church is a Church of listening.’*  
(Speech, 17 October 2015)

” *‘I’d rather have a Church that’s damaged, wounded and dirty from being out on the roads, than one that’s sick from closure.’*  
(Misericordiae vultus, 1)



# Key texts from the pontificate

Through his encyclicals, exhortations and apostolic letters, Pope Francis has mapped out a bold path for the Church today. These key texts serve as guideposts for building a world that is fairer, more fraternal and more filled with hope.

## **Evangelii gaudium – The joy of the Gospel (2013)**

The first apostolic exhortation of his pontificate, *Evangelii gaudium* outlines the mission of the Church today. In it, Francis calls for a Church that 'goes out', that reaches out to the peripheries, that lives in closeness and tenderness.

He denounces a routine faith and invites us to rediscover the enthusiasm of proclaiming the Gospel with courage, creativity and joy.

*'A Church that doesn't go outside itself will atrophy.'*



## **Laudato si' - Praise be to you (2015)**

In this prophetic encyclical on safeguarding our common home, Pope Francis proposes an integral ecology that unites care for creation, social justice and intergenerational responsibility.

He denounces the excesses of consumerism and ecological inequalities, and emphasises that the poorest are the first victims of climate change.

*'Everything is linked' becomes the leitmotif of this global vision.*

*'The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor can wait no longer.'*



## **Amoris laetitia - The joy of love (2016)**

The fruit of the synods on the family, this text takes a very human approach to the realities of the family, both its joys and its weaknesses.

In it, Francis stresses the need for attentive, merciful pastoral care, without rigidity or judgement, so that everyone can find their place in the Church.

*'Time is greater than space':* the Church is called upon to help each person progress at his or her own pace, with patience and hope.





### **Gaudete et exsultate – Rejoice and be glad (2018)**

In this vibrant call to holiness, Francis shows that holiness is not reserved for a few heroes, but is lived out in the ordinary gestures of daily life.

He encourages everyone to live the Gospel in concrete terms, to fight against relativism and spiritual individualism, and to discern God's will in simplicity.

*'Holiness is living with love and offering your witness in the occupations of each day.'*



### **Christus vivit – Christ is Alive (2019)**

Post-synodal letter to the young people of the world. In it, Pope Francis forcefully proclaims that Christ is alive and that he wants every young person to be fully alive.

He calls on young people not to resign themselves, to believe in their dreams, to live a faith that is joyful, free and incarnate. It is an invitation to rise up, to walk, to respond to Christ's call in the concrete reality of their own lives.

*'He lives, Christ, our hope, and he is the most beautiful youth in this world.'* (Christus vivit, 1)



### **Fratelli tutti - All brothers (2020)**

This social encyclical invites us to build a society based on fraternity, solidarity and social friendship.

In it, Francis addresses issues such as migration, populism, indifference, war, justice and inter-religious dialogue. He proposes a humanist political vision and a universal relational ethic.

*'Let's dream together as one humanity, as fellow travellers.'*



### **Laudate deum - Praise God (2023)**

A direct follow-up to Laudato si', this apostolic letter expresses renewed concern about the climate emergency and the inaction of governments.

In it, the Pope reminds us that the ecological crisis is a spiritual, moral and social crisis. He calls us to go beyond rhetoric, to take courageous decisions and to profoundly transform our economic models.

*'What we expect is not formal agreements that go unheeded, but a concrete and courageous commitment.'*





### **Dilexit nos – He loved us (2024)**

A new encyclical dedicated to the Heart of Jesus, published for the 350th anniversary of the apparitions to Saint Margaret Mary.

In it, Francis meditates on Christ's love as the source of transformation in the world: a love that is humble, burning and merciful. He calls everyone to love as Christ loved: with compassion, self-giving and fidelity.

*'The Heart of Christ still beats for this wounded world today'.*  
(45)



### **Other significant texts:**

- Misericordiae vultus (2015) - Bull of Indiction for the Holy Year of Mercy: God is mercy.
- Patris corde (2020) - Letter for the Year of Saint Joseph: the figure of a father, discreet, faithful and courageous.
- Aperuit illis (2019) - Letter introducing Word of God Sunday.
- Admirabile signum (2019) - On the spiritual significance of the cot.
- Desiderio desideravi (2022) - On the liturgical formation of the people of God, and the beauty of the Eucharist.
- Totum amoris est (2022) - Letter for the 400th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis de Sales.



# The "testament" of Francis

Pope Francis is leaving more than just his writings. He leaves a style, a tone, a spirituality of closeness. The visual on the following page sums up the broad outlines of his pontificate as a living fresco of his legacy to the Church and the world.

**Live in the joy of the Gospel:** Evangelii gaudium (2013)

A joyful faith, a missionary Church, close to the poor, free from cumbersome structures.

**... by being brothers:** Fratelli tutti (2020)

A fraternity without borders, based on love, dialogue, peace and social justice.

**... a family that loves each other:** Amoris laetitia (2016)

An invitation to love as a family, despite our frailties, with tenderness and support.

**... call to holiness :** Gaudete et exsultate (2018)

Sanctity incarnate, in everyday gestures, within everyone's reach.

**... discover the living Christ who loved us:**

→ Christus vivit (2019) and Dilexit nos (2024)

Christ loves you, he calls you, he lives. His Heart is the source of life, mercy and mission.

**... take care of the Earth and praise the Creator of the 'common home'.**

→ Laudato si' (2015) and Laudate deum (2023)

Everything is connected. An integral ecology to protect creation and the most vulnerable.

**... contemplate in missionary silence :**

→ Desiderio desideravi (2022)

A life nourished by liturgy, beauty and interiority, in the service of mission.

**... accept the Word as your guide:**

→ Aperuit Illis (2019)

The Word of God is alive, it enlightens, it transforms, it sends...

**... by being humble like Saint Joseph:**

→ Patris corde (2020)

A model of tenderness, courage of discreet loyalty in the service of others.

**... proclaim God's mercy to ALL, ALL, ALL:**

→ Misericordiae vultus (2015)

Mercy is the very heart of God. It excludes no one.

**... change education to change society:**

Invitation to a Global Education Pact (2019)



# TESTAMENT of *Francis*

culture of  
encounters

go to the  
outskirts

make some  
noise

4

...call  
to  
holiness.  
"GAUDETE  
ET  
EXSULTATE"

3

...a family that loves each other...  
"AMORIS LAETITIA"

2

...by being brothers...  
"FRATELLI TUTTI"

1

Live in the joy of the Gospel...  
"EVANGELI GAUDIUM"

Invite everyone to a  
'GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION'.  
that transforms lives and contexts  
ALL EDUCATORS

synodality

with the  
she





# Missionary Disciples

5

Discover the living Christ who gives us the delights of his heart.

CHRISTUS VIVIT  
DILEXIT NOS

6

Take care of the earth and praise the creator of the 'common home'

"LAUDATO SI"  
"LAUDATE DEUM"

7

Contemplate in missionary silence  
"C'EST LA CONFIANCE"

8

Welcome the WORD as your guide  
"APERUIT ILLIS"

9

by being humble like Saint Joseph

"PATRIS CORDE"

10

Proclaim God's mercy  
to ALL, ALL, ALL

"MISERICORDIA ET MISERA"

smell of  
sheep

# Global Compact on Education

On 12 September 2019, Pope Francis launched a solemn appeal to ‘rebuild the Global Compact on Education’, aware that the anthropological, social and environmental crisis our world is going through is rooted in a breakdown in transmission, alliance and trust. Education, he says, is an act of hope. It carries within it the power to transform societies and shape generations capable of dialogue, peace, fraternity and mutual care.

*'It takes a whole village to educate a child.'*

This expression sums up the heart of the Global Compact on Education: rebuilding an alliance between all the stakeholders in education - families, teachers, young people, institutions, churches, political, economic and cultural players - in order to put the human person back at the centre, in all his or her dimensions: body, heart, mind and memory, intelligence, volonté, relations.







## The Global Compact on Education is based on strong principles:

1. **HUMANISE: Putting people at the centre**  
Mettre au centre de tout processus éducatif la personne,
2. **LISTEN: Listening to the younger generation**  
Écouter la voix des enfants, des adolescents et des jeunes
3. **ENCOURAGE: Encouraging women's participation**  
Favoriser la pleine participation des fillettes et des adolescentes à l'instruction.
4. **STRENGTHEN: Strengthening the family**  
Considérer la famille comme le premier et indispensable sujet éducatif.
5. **WELCOME: Opening yourself up to welcome**  
Educate and be educated to welcome, by opening up to the most vulnerable and marginalised.
6. **COMMIT: Renewing the economy and politics**  
Study new ways of conceiving the economy, politics, growth and progress, at the service of mankind and the whole human family, from the perspective of an integral ecology.
7. **SAFEGUARD: Taking care of the common home**  
Preserve and cultivate our common home by protecting its resources, adopting more frugal lifestyles and focusing on renewable and environmentally-friendly energies.



## A compass for schools and educational communities

This Pact is not an option, nor a slogan. It is a compass for rebuilding education on sustainable foundations.

In Catholic schools all over the world, it invites us to :

- Live a pedagogy of relationship, listening, respect for others and compassion.
- To place integral ecology at the heart of the educational mission.
- Cultivate interiority, the search for meaning and the spiritual dimension.
- Giving every child a place, a voice and dignity.
- Working for a fairer, more caring and more humane society..

## A prophetic call for our time

With this Global Compact on Education, Pope Francis is echoing the calls of *Laudato si'* and *Fratelli tutti*. He reminds us that education is an act of love, of collective responsibility, a path of cultural conversion, service, and personal, social, and environmental transformation.. It is a concrete response to the crisis of connection, memory and solidarity. By responding, we are building a new world, where unity prevails over conflict, dignity over utilitarianism, encounter over indifference.

# Testimonies and commitments

## What Pope Francis taught me

Pope Francis has not only marked his era through his writings and speeches. He has touched hearts, awakened consciences, inspired vocations and shaken up routines. His direct language, his humility, his closeness to the least of these have awakened a new desire in many people: to live differently, to love more, to serve better.

The OIEC wanted to give a voice to educators, religious and committed lay people to say in a few words what Pope Francis has changed in their outlook, their faith and their mission.

These testimonies are echoes of a living call that continues to bear fruit wherever it is received with simplicity and courage.







**Juan Antonio  
Ojeda Ortiz**

Manager  
for OIEC projects

*Pope Francis has brought us a fresh, innovative and prophetic wind by inviting us to a Global and Local Compact on Education. We need to unite our wills and efforts with courage and generosity, working together more closely to change education and, with it, to transform life and societies in favour of a more fraternal world, centred on people, their needs and their challenges, without exclusion and paying particular attention to the 'least of these'.*

*Through his words and deeds, he called us to completely banish indifference and inaction, telling us repeatedly: 'smell the sheep', 'make a noise', be 'good Samaritans', 'to educate is to serve, and we educate for service', show compassion and grow in relationship with yourselves, with others, with the 'common home' and with God, making his love transparent.*

### **In memory of Pope Francis**

*On the beautiful day of 21 April, Easter Monday, at 7:35 am, Pope Francis died in his residence Domus Sanctae Marthae in the Vatican. He left us, as he lived, after the 'urbi et orbi' blessing followed by the embrace of his people, 50,000 of whom were present in St Peter's Square on Easter Sunday.*

*For me, the memory of Pope Francis evokes a few key words from his pontificate: mercy, tenderness, peace, joy, hope, faith, integral ecology, fraternity, women, family, poor, migrants, peripheries, young people/children, the elderly, culture of encounter, dialogue, building bridges not walls, mission, gospel, synodality, evangelisation, education, Global Compact on Education, networking, choir, 'all, all, all'. These are some of the themes that run through his rich magisterium, contained in encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, papal bulls, apostolic letters, apostolic constitutions, messages, speeches, audiences, catecheses, homilies, meditations, journeys, the Angelus, and so on.*

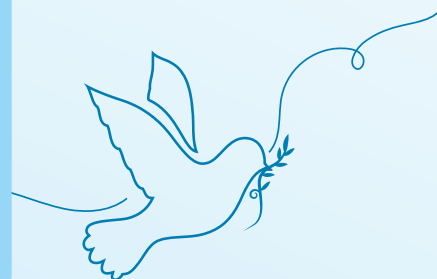
*In recalling the life of the Pontiff, what struck me most was his witness to radicalism in the way he lived the Gospel. For me, Pope Francis is a pastor who lived the Gospel 'sine glossa', that is, without compromise or conditioning. As he used to say, he was the shepherd with the scent of the sheep. For him, the Gospel was not an abstract reality, but rather 'facts and deeds' that bore witness to the life and actions of Jesus. He did what he said with simplicity and closeness to everyone, which is why he aroused a fascination that attracted people of all social strata and all ages. He demonstrated that living the Gospel seriously is an act that goes against the grain and is therefore a sign of contradiction. He was a free man in the logic of the freedom of God's children.*

*Thank you, Pope Francis, for your lesson in life. You have been an exceptional gift not only to the Church, but to all humanity. As we pray for you, we also commend ourselves to your prayers in the certainty that you are already enjoying eternal happiness.*



**Martha Seide**

Head  
of the OIEC  
Congregations  
Region



*Pope Francis has left his mark on the Church with reforms at every level... Personally, I have identified two poles that are the compass guiding my mission in this time of great crisis.*

- *'The shepherd must smell like his flock'.*
- *'The Church is called to go beyond itself to reach out to those on the periphery'.*

*So, as a daughter of the Church, I am called to be close to those around me, to give them all my affection and attention, but at the same time to reach out to those who are far away and marginalised.*

*This constant vigilance between the inside and the outside is remarkable in Pope Francis and has left a deep impression on me. Let us give thanks to God for his life, given in joy and hope.*



**Sister Jihane Attalah**

Religious Sister of the Sisters of Charity of Sainte-Jeanne-Antide-Thouret in Damascus (SYRIA)



**Fernando Ignacio ONDO NDJENG**

Responsable  
de la Région  
Afrique & Madagascar  
de l'OIEC

*First of all, I thank Almighty God for the pontificate of Pope Francis. The choice of his name was of particular interest to me.*

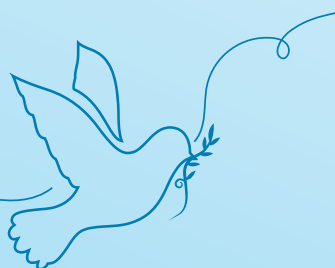
*From my point of view, this pontificate has highlighted the renewal of the Church in line with the Second Vatican Council, a pontificate that has sought to bring the Church closer to the people of God in a spirit of humility and simplicity. In other words, a Church at the service of the people of God.*

*Pope Francis, aware of the challenges of the 21st century, wanted to innovate by leaving us with an integral educational approach, where we educate and form not only the head, but from the head to the heart and from the heart to action. Pope Francis' teaching represented an important and transformative moment for the Catholic Church in many respects: a process of reform within the Roman Catholic Church, a clear and decisive stance on the cases of sexual abuse in the Eglisen recognising past mistakes and advocating a commitment to impartial justice. He expressed his desire to make the Church more inclusive, opening up dialogue on issues such as the family, homosexuality and the role of women in the Church. Pope Francis' leadership was characterised by closeness, humility and service. With his hand on his heart, Pope Francis brought a more universal perspective to the Church, highlighting the reality of communities in the global South and addressing issues that affect these contexts, such as migration and the refugee crisis.*

*The teaching of Pope Francis is one of the major keys to meeting the challenges of today's world, while remaining faithful to the essence of the Christian message.*

*Drawing inspiration from his teachings means not only facing up to criticism with serenity, but also embodying a resistance imbued with mercy, in the service of proclaiming the Gospel.*

*This is how we can develop the pastoral care so longed for in the 21st century.*





# Proposals of concrete commitments

## inspired by his message

For the OIEC, the magisterium of Pope Francis is not only a source of inspiration: it is a living compass for educational action throughout the world. His words enlighten, guide and encourage educational communities to make every school a place of human, spiritual, ecological and social transformation.

Faithful to the Pope's call to 'dream together' a world that is fairer, more fraternal and more habitable, the OIEC proposes concrete initiatives to bring the encyclicals and prophetic calls of this pontificate to life in your schools and networks:

- **Forming groups of young people 'on the move'**, committed to the most vulnerable, in the spirit of *Evangelii gaudium*.
- **Organising Integral Ecology Weeks**, inspired by *Laudato si'* and *Laudate deum*, to foster a community-based ecological conversion.
- **Creating spaces for dialogue between generations**, in the light of *Fratelli tutti*, to rebuild the bonds of humanity.
- **Offering annual educational programmes** based on the major themes of the pontificate: joy, mercy, vocation, responsibility.
- **Integrating prayer, silence and liturgy into school life** as sources of meaning and depth.
- **Forging links between schools of different cultures and religions**, to make the school a place of peace.
- **Adopting a teaching approach** based on tenderness, attentive to the fragility, uniqueness and dignity of each pupil.

**Through these commitments, the OIEC seeks to spread the spirit of the Global Compact on Education to every corner of the world where Catholic education is present: an education that transforms, connects, uplifts and opens up the future.**

# Conclusion

## A pontificate that opens up the future

Pope Francis will have been a pastor with a prophetic spirit, a watchman on the frontiers, a sower of hope in the gaps of the world. He has taught us to look differently: from the poor, from the peripheries, from the heart. He invited us to go out, to listen, to build together, without fear, without withdrawal, with daring and humility.

His pontificate leaves a deep mark on the history of the Church and on the memory of peoples. But more than that, he opens up a path: that of a Church that is fraternal, joyful, inclusive, close to others, committed to justice, peace, creation and the future of young people.

We give thanks for his faithful service, for his free speech, for his tenderness as a man inhabited by the Gospel. And we pray that his call will continue to resonate in our lives, our schools and our communities.





# Prayer

## to continue your journey

Lord Jesus,  
You who loved to the end,  
Give us your eyes to see the forgotten,  
Give us your heart to welcome everyone,  
Give us your breath to build peace.  
Make us life-giving educators,  
Witnesses to your joy on the periphery,  
artisans of fraternity, justice and compassion.  
Teach us to walk together, to listen, to serve.  
May your Church, inspired by the impetus  
of Pope Francis,  
Be an open home, an extended tent,  
a house for all.  
Amen.





*Thank you, Francis  
Thank you for your words  
that disturb and console.  
Thank you for your way of loving,  
close and simple.  
Thank you for your fidelity  
to Christ and his Gospel.  
Thank you for putting the Church back  
on the path of humanity.*



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