

LINEAMENTA

Presentation

Following Pope Benedict's call to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* (October 28, 1965) and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (August 15, 1990), the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education decided to begin preparing some events, with the twin aims of recalling those anniversaries and relaunching the Church's dedication to answering the educational emergency.

In the course of various meetings, certain reflections came to light, and were put together in an *Instrumentum Laboris* called "*Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*". This text was translated into various languages and distributed to all those who would be interested, to be a handbook that would start us thinking about the importance of Catholic education for evangelization and human development. Within a few months, our educational institutions and various groups within the Christian community responded to the Congregation's invitation, by organizing a great number of events. Moreover, almost everywhere and at all levels of Church responsibility, they carried out a rigorous analysis of their involvement in education, particularly by responding to what was asked in the questionnaire provided.

OIEC, then, re-arranged the questions contained in the questionnaire, turning them into closed questions by means of an online method, and distributing them even more widely to many Catholic schools, making it easier, then, to analyze the answers. Those results will be published in a separate volume. Everyone else instead used the questionnaire in its original form, as an incentive to organize gatherings, seminars, congresses, etc.

These meetings produced truly valuable documents, which were then sent to the Congregation. The texts offered not only answers, but also proposals and suggestions, grouped around the four themes that had been indicated: identity and mission of Catholic schools and universities; the protagonists of Catholic education; the formation of formators; the new challenges in education.

Such a high number of responses to the *Instrumentum Laboris*, as well as the related events that it encouraged, demonstrate the interesting and unprecedented dialogue that has opened up between the Dicastery and those working in Catholic educational institutions. This is a sign of the whole Christian community's notable attention to problems in education, as well as

its heightened expectation – fifty years after the Council – for further suggestions on how to re-motivate our educational mission.

A well-qualified group of experts took on the difficult task of analyzing scientifically the answers that had arrived, since these had not been formulated in accordance with any specific research project in mind. The experts' efforts mean that we now have a document that presents a comprehensive and coherent picture, which will guide the work of the World Congress and which can open up further vistas for research. All those participating at the Congress can count on this invaluable instrument, which synthesizes diverse situations, experiences, principles, hopes and suggestions. The document covers the whole period of education, from infant school to university, and includes the various categories of stakeholders.

We decided to publish this volume, which includes, alongside the *Instrumentum Laboris*, an initial synthesis of the responses to the questionnaire that bears the same title as the World Congress: “*Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*”. Thus, we have the results of the questionnaire for use during the work of the Congress, which has been arranged according to various sessions that correspond to this volume. A more complete publication, containing the responses to the questionnaire along with the relevant scientific and methodological apparatus, will be issued after the World Congress.

The proposals that will take shape as we conclude our work, together with the contents of this volume, will guide us as we map out choices for the future and guidelines for all the many institutions and people involved in Catholic education. In fact, as Pope Francis writes in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* and in his Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Catholic education can become ever more a determining factor for the New Evangelization and a means for humanizing the world.

Vatican City, October 28, 2015
50th Anniversary of the
Second Vatican Council's Declaration
Gravissimum educationis