



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO MEMBERS OF THE
GLOBAL RESEARCHERS ADVANCING CATHOLIC EDUCATION PROJECT**

20 April 2022

[[Multimedia](#)]

Pope's improvised address

Holy Father's prepared address, which was consigned to Members of the Global Researchers Advancing Catholic Education Project

Pope's improvised address

Thank you very much for visiting. I lived in Ireland, in Dublin, in Milltown Park, to study English, but I forgot, excuse me! I will speak in Italian. Thank you for your visit. I am pleased, especially after listening to you [referring to the group leader]. I understood almost everything, but you were going 100 an hour and at times I couldn't understand! But I liked that vision of education — I'll say it with my own words — in tension between risk and security. What you do is a beautiful thing. We must break that idea of education which holds that educating means filling one's head with ideas. That's the way we educate automatons, cerebral minds, not people. Educating is taking a risk in the tension between the mind, the heart and the hands: in harmony, to the point of thinking what I feel and do; feeling what I think and do; of doing what I feel and think. It's a balance.

But we must possess Ariadne's thread to get out of labyrinths... I think also about the labyrinth of life: the boy or girl who is growing, they don't understand many things; what is Ariadne's thread, which helps young people not get lost in the labyrinth? Walking together. One cannot educate

without walking alongside the people being educated. It is beautiful when we come across educators who walk alongside boys and girls. And you [in the subtitle of the book you gave me] say something very beautiful: “When Rhetoric Meets Reality”. Educating is not saying purely rhetorical things; educating is making what is said meet reality. Girls, boys, they have a right to make mistakes, but the educator accompanies them along the journey to direct these mistakes, so that they don’t become dangerous. The true educator is not frightened by mistakes, no: he or she accompanies, takes one by the hand, listens, dialogues. [An educator] doesn’t get scared, and waits. This is the *human* education. As you can see, there is an abyss between the legacy of the ‘macrocephalous’ education and education itself, which is this carrying forward and growing, this helping to grow. I thank you for this *human* approach to education. And onward, courage!

The last thing to which you [speaking again to the group leader] referred: dialogue between young people and the elderly is important. This is very important. Even going over parents: not to rebel, but to search for the source. The roots, the roots. Because the tree, in order to grow, needs to have a tight relationship with the roots. Do not stay fixed at the roots, no, but in a relationship with the roots. There is a poet from my homeland who says something beautiful: “Everything the tree has produced comes from what it has underground”. Without roots, there is no moving forward. It is only through roots that we become people: not statues in a museum, like certain traditionalists, who are cold, stiff, rigid, who think that being prepared for life means living stuck to the roots. This relationship with one’s roots is necessary, but we also need to move forward. And this is the true tradition: taking from the past to move forward. Tradition is not static: it is dynamic, aimed at moving forward. There was a French theologian from the fifth century, a monk, who wondered, talking about this, how dogma could progress without ruining the inspiration of one’s own tradition, how it could grow without hiding from the past. And he said in Latin: “*Ut anni scilicet consolidetur, dilatetur tempore, sublimetur aetate*”: it progresses by being consolidated with the years, developing over time, sublimating with age. *Consolidetur, dilatetur tempore, sublimetur aetate*, this is tradition: we need to educate in tradition, but in order to grow.

Thank you, thank you very much for your work. Thank you, thank you. And now I will give you my blessing, you who come from the Green Ireland. [Blessing]

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Holy Father’s prepared address, which was consigned to Members of the Global Researchers Advancing Catholic Education Project

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to greet you, the members of the Global Researchers Advancing Catholic Education Project, during your pilgrimage to Rome. May the joy of these days of Easter fill your hearts, and may your meeting here in the Eternal City strengthen you in fidelity to the Lord and his Church, and enrich your efforts to highlight the distinctiveness of our Catholic vision of education.

In an age awash in information, often transmitted without wisdom or critical sense, the task of forming present and future generations of Catholic teachers and students remains as important as ever. As educators, you are called to nurture the desire for truth, goodness and beauty that lies in the heart of each individual, so that all may learn how to love life and be open to the fullness of life. This involves discerning innovative ways of uniting research with best practices so that teachers can serve the whole person in a process of integral human development. In short, this means forming the head, hands and heart together: preserving and enhancing the link between learning, doing and feeling in the noblest sense. In this way, you will be able to offer not only an excellent academic curriculum, but also a coherent vision of life inspired by the teachings of Christ.

In this sense, the Church's work of education aims not only "at developing the maturity of the human person... but is especially directed towards ensuring that those who have been baptized become daily more appreciative of the gift of faith which they have received" (Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, 2). Our faith is a great grace that each of us must daily nurture and help others to nurture as well. In the light of faith, educators and students alike come to see each other as beloved children of the God who created us to be brothers and sisters in the one human family. On this basis, Catholic education commits us, among other things, to the building of a better world by teaching mutual coexistence, fraternal solidarity and peace. It is my hope that your discussions in these days will assist you in developing effective means of fostering these values at all levels of your academic institutions and in the minds and hearts of your students.

At the same time, Catholic education is also evangelization: bearing witness to the joy of the Gospel and its power to renew our communities and provide hope and strength in facing wisely the challenges of the present time. I trust that this study visit will inspire each of you to rededicate himself or herself with generous zeal to your vocation as educators, to your efforts to solidify the foundations of a more humane and solidary society, and thus the advancement Christ's kingdom of truth, holiness, justice and peace.

I thank you and encourage you to continue in your important work, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. Entrusting all of you to the loving intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, I cordially impart my Blessing as a pledge of joy and peace in Christ the Risen Saviour. And please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!
