

## **The Society of Jesus in Latin America and the Caribbean signs the Global Compact on Education**

On October 15, Pope Francis made an unprecedented call to all people of good will to sign a commitment that he calls: *reconstructing the Global Compact on Education*. That initiative had already been announced in the message of September 12, 2019, and corresponds to the concern, also expressed five years ago in the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, about the future of the planet.

Today's world is experiencing a true cultural and anthropological metamorphosis. The technological and digital *rapidity* in incessant mutation, although it has brought multiple advantages and facilities for some people, has also led to loss of identity, psychological and social disintegration, and discrimination of massive crowds. There is an "educational catastrophe" with more than 250 million children who do not enjoy any educational service, and approximately 10 million who have dropped out of school due to the pandemic.

Considering the spectrum, the seriousness, the interrelation and the globality of contemporary problems, the Pope urges us not to be content with sanitary measures, simplistic recipes or vain optimism. *The Covid has made possible to recognize globally that what is in crisis is our way of understanding reality and our relationships*. Therefore, it is urgent to implement a new cultural model: *to make real changes in our development model*.

In Education, the Pope recognizes the itinerary to reverse the current crisis and promote change. Education has transformative power and brings us hope; it invites co-participation and transformation. It is *one of the most effective ways to humanize the world and history*, he affirms. *It is proposed as the natural antidote to individualistic culture*. It is *a question of love and responsibility passed down between generations*.

*What becomes necessary now, continues, is a new educational commitment, involving all components of society. An alliance based on a network of human and open relationships, which must guarantee for all human beings access to a quality education, at the height of human dignity and their vocation to fraternity*. The focus of this purpose is to *train mature people, capable of overcoming fragmentations and oppositions*.

In order for these to be realized, the Pope proposes seven keys to implementation:

- 1) Have the courage to place the person at the center of the formal and informal educational process
- 2) Listen to children, adolescents and young people
- 3) Encourage the educational participation of girls and young women
- 4) Consider the family as the first and indispensable educator
- 5) Educate ourselves to welcome the vulnerable and marginalized
- 6) Study forms of economy, politics, growth and progress that serve humankind and take care of the integral ecology
- 7) Safeguard and cultivate our common home

It will be necessary to invest our talents and the best energies with creativity and responsibility. The invitation is broad and goes beyond the

borders of the catholic or christian world, addressing all of humanity: *families, communities, schools and universities, institutions, religions, political leaders, public figures who care about the future of the new generations. It is addressed in a particular way to men and women of culture, in science and sport, to artists, to media operators in all parts of the world. I invite - says the Pope - each one to be a protagonist of this alliance, assuming a personal and community commitment to cultivate together the dream of a solidarity and humanism, which responds to the hopes of humankind and the desire of God.*

The Pope affirms his confidence in a different world and *in our ability to build it, without the childishness of expecting everything from those who govern us. We are before the great opportunity to manifest our fraternal essence, to be other good Samaritans at the service of those who suffer. It is time to look forward with courage, boldness and hope to recreate relationships in humanity. Let's look for solutions together starting transformation processes without fear and looking to the future full of hope.*

The Society of Jesus listens carefully to the call of the latest General Congregations to network, in the Church and in synergy with civil society and governments for the implementation of faith, justice and reconciliation.

For this reason, our communities, works and apostolic presences sign the Global Compact on Education, committing ourselves to collaborate with our talents and energies in the construction and promotion of *a new cultural and development model.*

Sign on December 12, 2020, on the liturgical feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of Latin America, so that her example of caring for the vulnerable may be an inspiration and strength for this commitment.

Lima, November 05, 2020