On the occasion of the XXXVII WORLD YOUTH DAY - LISBON 2023, the Holy Father met with 6500 young university students at the Catholic University of Portugal on 3 August. After the welcoming and introductory speech by Rector Gil Capelo and the testimony of some young people, one of whom was inspired by the Global Compact on Education, Pope Francis addressed an important and profound speech to the university students, certainly one of the most beautiful given during those days of WYD.

With touching words, he invites young university students to be "pilgrims of knowledge" and to have the courage to take risks, and finally tells them: "I invite you to study the Global Compact on Education and become passionate about it".

MEETING WITH YOUNG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
ADDRESS BY THE HOLY FATHER
"Universidade Católica Portuguesa (Lisbon)
Thursday, 3 August 2023

Dear brothers and sisters, bom dia!
Thank you, Madam Rector, for your words. Obrigado! You said that we all feel like 'pilgrims'. It is a beautiful word, the meaning of which deserves to be meditated upon; it literally means leaving aside the usual routine and setting out with an intention, moving "across the fields" or "beyond one's borders", i.e. out of one's comfort zone towards a horizon of meaning. In the term 'pilgrim' we see the human condition reflected, because everyone is called to confront big questions.
that have no answer, no simplistic or immediate answer, but invite one to make a journey, to go beyond oneself, to go beyond. It is a process that a university student understands well, because this is how science is born. And this is how the spiritual quest grows. To be a pilgrim is to walk towards a goal or seeking a goal. There is always the danger of walking in a labyrinth, where there is no destination. And no exit either. Let us be wary of prefabricated formulas - they are labyrinthine -. let us be wary of answers that seem within reach, of those answers slipped out of the sleeve like rigged playing cards; let us be wary of those proposals that seem to give everything without asking for anything. Let us be wary! This mistrust is a weapon to be able to move forward and not keep going in circles. One of Jesus’ parables says that the pearl of great value he who seeks it with intelligence and resourcefulness, and gives everything, risks all he has to get it (cf. Mt 13:45-46). To seek and to risk: these are the two verbs of the pilgrim. To seek and to risk.

Pessoa said, tormentingly but correctly, that ‘to be dissatisfied is to be a man’ (Mensagem, O Quinto Império). We must not be afraid to feel restless, to think that what we do is not enough. Being dissatisfied, in this sense and in the right measure, is a good antidote against the presumption of self-sufficiency and against narcissism. Incompleteness characterises our condition as seekers and pilgrims; as Jesus says, “we are in the world, but we are not of the world” (cf. Jn 17:16). We are on the way to... We are called to something more, to a take-off without which there is no flight. Let us not be alarmed then if we find ourselves inwardly thirsty, restless, unfulfilled, longing for meaning and for the future, com saudade do futuro! And here, along with saudade do futuro, do not forget to keep the memory of the future alive. We are not sick, we are alive! Let us rather worry when we are willing to replace the road ahead with stopping at any rest stop, as long as it gives us the illusion of comfort; when we replace faces with screens, the real with the virtual; when, instead of questions that lacerate, we prefer easy answers that anaesthetise. And we can find them in any manual on social relations, on how to behave. Easy answers anaesthetise.

Friends, let me tell you: seek and risk, seek and risk. At this juncture in history, the challenges are enormous, painful groans. We are seeing a third world war in pieces. But let us embrace the risk of thinking that we are not in agony, but in childbirth; not at the end, but at the beginning of a great spectacle. It takes courage to think this. Therefore, be protagonists of a ‘new choreography’ that puts the human person at the centre, be choreographers of the dance of life. The words of the Rector were inspiring to me, particularly when she said that ‘the university does not exist to preserve itself as an institution, but to respond courageously to the challenges of the present and the future’. Self-preservation is a temptation, it is a conditioned reflex of fear, which makes one look at existence in a distorted way. If seeds preserved themselves, they would completely waste their generative power and condemn us to starvation; if winters preserved themselves, there would be no wonder of spring. Therefore, have the courage to replace fears with dreams. Replace fears with dreams: do not be stewards of fears, but entrepreneurs of dreams!

It would be a waste to think of a university committed to educating the next generation only to perpetuate the current elitist and unequal system of the world, in which higher education remains a privilege for the few. If knowledge is not embraced as a responsibility, it becomes sterile. If those who have received higher education (which today, in Portugal and in the world, remains a privilege) do not strive to give back what they have benefited from, they have not fully understood what they have been offered. I like to think of the Book of Genesis; the first questions God asks man are: “Where are you?” (Gen 3:9) and “Where is your brother?” (Gen 4:9). It will do us good to ask: Where am I? Do I stay locked in my bubble, or do I run the risk of stepping out of my security to become a practising Christian, a craftsman of justice, a craftsman of beauty? And again: Where is my brother? Experiences of fraternal service such as the Missão País and many others that arise in the academic sphere should be considered indispensable for those who pass through a university. Indeed, a degree should not only be seen as a licence to build personal wealth, but as a mandate to dedicate oneself to a more just society, a more inclusive society, that is, more advanced. I have been told that one of your great poets, Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, in an interview that is a sort of testament, to the question: “What would you like to see realised in Portugal in this new century?”, answered without hesitation: “I would like to see social justice realised, the reduction of the gap between rich and poor” (Entrevista de Joaci Oliveira, in Cidade Nova, n° 3/2001). I turn this question over to you. You, dear students, pilgrims of knowledge, what do you want to see achieved in Portugal and in the world? What changes, what transformations? And how can the university, especially the Catholic university, contribute to this?

Beatriz, Mahoor, Mariana, Tomás, thank you for your testimonies. They all had a tone of hope, a charge of realistic enthusiasm, without complaints but also without idealistic escapades. You want to be ‘protagonists, protagonists of change’, as Mariana said. Listening to you, I thought of a phrase that may be familiar to you, by the writer José de Almada Negreiros: ‘I dreamed of a country where everyone got to be a master’ (A Invenção do Dia Claro). This old man speaking to you - I am old now - also dreams of your generation becoming a generation of masters. Masters of humanity. Masters of compassion. Masters of new opportunities for the planet and its inhabitants. Teachers of hope. And masters who
defend the life of the planet, threatened at this time by severe ecological destruction. As some of you have pointed out, we must recognise the dramatic urgency of caring for our common home. However, this cannot be done without a conversion of heart and a change of the anthropological vision underpinning economics and politics. We cannot be satisfied with mere palliative measures or timid and ambiguous compromises. In this case ‘middle ways are only a small delay in the disaster’ (Encyclical Letter Laudato si’, 194). Do not forget: middle ways are only a small delay in the disaster. Instead, it is a matter of taking on what unfortunately continues to be postponed: the need to redefine what we call progress and evolution. Because, in the name of progress, there has been too much regression. Study well what I say to you: in the name of progress, too much regress has been made. You are the generation that can meet this challenge: you have the most advanced scientific and technological tools, but please do not fall into the trap of partial visions. Do not forget that we need an integral ecology, we need to listen to the suffering of the planet together with that of the poor; we need to put the drama of desertification alongside that of refugees; the issue of migration together with that of denatality; we need to deal with the material dimension of life within a spiritual dimension. Don’t create polarisations, but visions of the whole. Thank you, Tomás, for saying that ‘an authentic integral ecology is not possible without God, that there can be no future in a world without God’. I would like to say to you: make faith credible through choices. Because if faith does not generate convincing lifestyles, it does not leaven the dough of the world. It is not enough for a Christian to be convinced, he must be convincing; our actions are called to reflect the beauty, both joyful and radical, of the Gospel. Moreover, Christianity cannot be inhabited as a fortress surrounded by walls, raising ramparts against the world. That is why I found Beatriz’s testimony touching, when she said that it is precisely “from the field of culture” that she feels called to live the Beatitudes. In every age, one of the most important tasks for Christians is to recover the sense of incarnation. Without the incarnation, Christianity becomes an ideology - and the temptation of Christian ideologies, in inverted commas, is very current. It is the incarnation that allows us to be amazed by the beauty that Christ reveals through every brother and sister, every man and woman. 

In this regard, it is interesting that in your new chair dedicated to the ‘Economy of Francis’ you have added the figure of Clare. The female contribution is indispensable. In the collective unconscious, how often is it thought that women are second class, they are reserves, they do not play as starters. This exists in the collective unconscious. The female contribution is indispensable. After all, in the Bible we see how the economy of the family is largely in the hands of the woman. She, with her wisdom, is the true ‘regent’ of the home, whose aim is not exclusively profit, but care, cohabitation, the physical and spiritual well-being of all, and even sharing with the poor and strangers. It is exciting to undertake economic studies with this perspective: with the aim of restoring the economy to its rightful dignity, so that it does not fall prey to the wild market and speculation.

Thank you.
The Cardinal Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education reflects on the Pope's journey among the young people gathered in the Portuguese capital: these days Lisbon is a "dream city" that speaks of fraternity. A stand and some appointments designed to deepen the theme of education with girls and boys.

Celebrating faith in the sign of unity, living the joy of the Gospel, listening to the Pope's voice. These are the key points of the 42nd apostolic journey to Portugal on the occasion of World Youth Day that Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, prefect of the dicastery for culture and education, outlines in an interview with Telepace, dwelling on the significance of the world event. A long-awaited event for many young people around the world that comes at a time marked by war after two years of pandemic that imposed a halt to all activities.

"The expectation for the Holy Father's presence," explained the cardinal, "wants to say how much we are in need of a word capable of sowing hope in our hearts". A virtue that occupies a prominent place in Francis' magisterium and is also reflected in the principles of the Global Compact on Education he launched in 2019.

A stand to meet young people

The Dicastery for Culture and Education intends to support the topic through its stand set up in Lisbon, some special events and a social campaign. "A way," emphasises Cardinal de Mendonça, "to create dialogue and open arms to everyone by saying that today it is possible to relaunch hope. For the Church,' he adds, 'education is not a technicality, but an art of being and an opportunity, because it means putting the person at the centre and looking at them with trust'.

The duty to dream

That is why the imperative for the new generations gathered in Portugal is to 'listen', believing strongly in what Francis often repeats urging them not to be afraid and not to remain spectators of history. "You have the duty to dream," the Portuguese cardinal strongly affirms. "This is what we must tell young people in a period marked by great nihilism and uncertainty: to dream of other possibilities of think about economics, politics, human relations and major world issues, but also to carry the breath of God that illuminates these questions'.

Francis, 'grandfather' and young among the young

The Pope, once again, will reiterate all these messages. And he will not just be the grandfather among the grandchildren. "We will see a young man among the young," according to de Mendonça. "Because the novelty, freshness and joy with which Francis witnesses to the Gospel, is a symptom of a youth of spirit and a youth of the heart that is truly irresistible."

Eugenio Bonanata - Vatican City

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The commitment of the Dicastery for Culture and Education at World Youth Day in Lisbon, with two meetings at the Portuguese Catholic University and at the Faculty of Pharmacy, and a busy information point in the Vasco de Gama garden. Undersecretary Antonella Sciarrone: "Here too the Pope wanted to listen to young people and put them at the centre of every educational process".

To the young university students he met on the morning of 3 August at the Portuguese Catholic University, Pope Francis reminded them of the Global Compact on Education initiative, proposed in September 2019, and its seven principles, which include many themes dear to the "Economy of Francis", from caring for the common home "to the full participation of women, to the need to find new ways of understanding the economy, politics, growth and progress". He invited them to study it and to get passionate about it," recalling that "one of the points it deals with is education for welcome and inclusion".

The Pope's words on education at the WYD in Lisbon

The day before, at the Centro Cultural de Belém, in his address to the authorities, civil society and the diplomatic corps, Francis had emphasised the importance of education, 'which cannot only impart technical notions to progress economically, but is destined to enter into a history, to deliver a tradition, to enhance man's religious need and to foster social friendship'.
Sciarrone: young people are the real protagonists of education

These are words that testify to the attention that the Pontiff reserves for the theme of education, entrusting the commitment to relaunch the Global Compact on Education to the Dicastery for Culture and Education. At the WYD in Lisbon the Dicastery is present with some initiatives and with a stand in the City of Joy dedicated to the Global Compact on Education. We talked about it with the undersecretary Antonella Sciarrone Allbrandi, former pro-rector of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan and professor of Economic Law in the Faculty of Banking, Finance and Insurance Sciences.

VN. What contribution has the Dicastery for Culture and Education tried to make to this WYD?

- The Dicastery for Culture and Education wanted to be present here at WYD, where there are thousands of young people, to bring forward a number of themes. Firstly, the theme of education itself. Young people are the protagonists of education, not passive subjects, and we have tried to organise some activities precisely to involve them around education and around some issues, in particular, that are the subject of education, namely the economy, politics, integral ecology. We are present at the City of Joy with a stand of the Dicastery focused on the Global Compact on Education, that we are relaunching and with the very objective of strengthening an alliance between all the people, students, professors, teachers, schools, politicians, international institutions, who care about the issue of education and who believe that education is the main driver of any transformative process. The stand was much visited, already on the first day of the City of Joy, and also interactive, trying to collect ideas, suggestions, impressions from our young visitors. And then we organised some meetings. One took place on Tuesday at the Portuguese Catholic University, focusing on Global Educational Pact in its relationship with the Economy of Francis, precisely because it is through education that we can also identify new ways of building the economy and politics. On Wednesday afternoon, there was another meeting at the Faculty of Pharmacy, also part of the Youth Festival, on the value of teaching, namely on how important it is, for the future, to regain the dignity of the role of the teacher, of the professor, and to attract young people as much as possible, even with respect to these careers in education, which are sometimes considered not exactly the first choice.

VN. In deciding his programme, and the side meetings at this WYD, the Pope has given much importance to education. On Thursday morning he was at the Catholic University of Portugal and then also at the meeting with Scholas Occurrentes. It can be said that Francis has this theme at heart....

- Certainly the topic of education is one of the topics, I would say, that is closest to the Holy Father’s heart. The two meetings on Thursday morning are a very intense opportunity for young people to meet the Pope and also to be heard by him. In particular at the Catholic University, which is one of the more than 1,500 Catholic universities in the world, there will be four young people who will speak and bring their testimony to the Holy Father precisely with a personal experience, but linked to issues such as sustainability, the Francis Economy, and the Global Compact, and I believe they will be a sign of the Holy Father’s strong desire to listen to young people and put them at the centre of every educational process.

VN. What attracts, from what you have seen, young people to your stand? This interactivity? What is the secret that has attracted so many of them?

- Of course, that is how it is! You have to work for young people and with young people above all, motivating them and giving them hope. Because it is wonderful to be here in Lisbon, it is energising to see so many young people, so many, who are convinced to roll up their sleeves, to work for the future. But let’s not forget that at a general level, youth today also experiences many problems. Never before have there been psychological problems, depression, anxiety, pressure anxiety, and so I think it is really important for us, as the Catholic Church, to bear witness and work alongside young people for all the young people of the world.

VN. What contributes to the Dicastery for Culture and the diplomatic corps, the Pope emphasised the importance of working for young people and stimulating their search for a future, and thus working for their education, which then becomes work

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It may have been because Lisbon is a wonderful city; it may have been that after the years of the pandemic there was an immense desire to meet; it may have been that the Pope gave several wonderful speeches; it may have been that those days took place in an atmosphere of joy and friendship and without any incidents; it may have been that the young people joined in en masse (one and a half million young people) and participated with great enthusiasm; or it may have been because of all these things together that World Youth Day in Lisbon 2023 was an extraordinary event that profoundly marked the heart of the Church and the world.

The first speech to the authorities and civil society by Pope Francis is a hymn to the beauty of Lisbon ‘a city of encounter that embraces various peoples and cultures and becomes even more universal in these days; it becomes in a certain sense the capital of the world, the capital of the future, because young people are the future. This is well suited to its multiethnic and multicultural character’. And he goes on to say that ‘Lisbon, city of the ocean, recalls the importance of the whole, to think of borders as areas of contact, not as frontiers that separate’. In this speech, the Pope addresses dramatic questions to Europe: ‘towards where do you sail, Europe and the West, with the discarding of old people, walls with barbed wire, massacres at sea and empty cradles? Towards where do you sail? Where do you go if, faced with the evil of living, you offer hasty and mistaken remedies, such as easy access to death, a solution of convenience that appears sweet, but in reality is more bitter than the waters of the sea?” The Pope invites everyone to set sail together with the ocean of young people who are pouring into the city, to “create newness, take to the sea and sail together towards the future”.

The Pope also addressed words of hope to the religious men and women gathered in the “Mosteiro dos Jerónimos” urging them not to be discouraged because “we trust that Jesus continues to stretch out his hand, to support his beloved Bride” and inviting them to experience “together some new ways to follow” and not to “retire”, but to let “Jesus get back into the boat, with the hope of the early days, that hope that must be revived, reconquered and re-edited”. It is therefore necessary to cast the nets again: “Do not be afraid of this second call of Jesus” because “it is not time to stop, it is not time to give up, it is not time to moor the boat to the shore or to look back; we must not flee this time because it frightens us and take refuge in forms and styles of the past”. And so he exhorts us to “put out to sea” to cast the nets again, without fear because in the midst of the storm the Lord comes to meet us.

With equal passion Pope Francis addressed the young university students with these touching words: ‘At this historical juncture the challenges are enormous, painful groans. ... But let us embrace the risk of thinking that we are not in agony, but in childbirth; not at the end, but at the beginning of a great show’. That is why he urges them not to be afraid: “Replace fears with dreams: do not be administrators of fears, but entrepreneurs of dreams!” The Pope takes up the theme dear to him of inclusiveness in education as opposed to the exclusive and exclusionary systems of elite schools: “It would be a waste to think of a university committed to forming new generations only to perpetuate the current elitist and unequal system of the world, in which higher education remains a privilege for the few”. This theme, and others discussed in the speech, are contained in the Global Compact on Education, which the Pope says he invites you to study and become passionate about.

In the welcoming ceremony, the Pope took up the theme of inclusion, telling the young people that ‘in the Church there is room for everyone, for everyone! No one is useless, no one is superfluous, there is room for everyone. As we are, everyone’. In the speech at the youth vigil the Pope invited them to be missionaries of joy, to “be roots of joy for others”. In the homily of the concluding Mass he invites them, starting from the episode of the Transfiguration of Jesus, to “shine, listen and do not fear”.

When the Pope finally said: ‘the mass is over, go in peace’, no one moved. The Pope had already withdrawn but all the young people stayed for a while longer, as if they did not want to end the
The publication in Portuguese of the guidelines of the Global Compact on Education launched two years ago in Italian and later translated into English and Spanish, is an opportunity to re-launch in the Portuguese-speaking area Pope Francis' invitation to build a Global Education Village.

In addition to reaffirming the topicality of the reflections concerning the five thematic areas of the Global Compact on Education proposed in these guidelines addressed above all to university research, we would like to invite the various research centres to take up these themes in a new perspective, the one suggested by the Holy Father through the creation of the new Dicastery for Culture and Education. With the Apostolic Constitution ‘Praedicate Evangelium’ (of 19-03-2022) the Pope created the new Dicastery for Culture and Education from the fusion of the two previous entities, the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Pontifical Council for Culture. In this way he wanted to reaffirm the very close link between these two entities, that of Education and Culture, which will have to reorient the previous work by opening it up to this new vision. This also directly concerns the Global Compact on Education Project, which, if it was initially addressed above all to Schools and Universities, will now also have to address the world of culture, art, entertainment, sport, and all those realities that directly or indirectly play an educational role towards the new generations, and not only.

We are aware that the work is much broader, but that it is also more enriching, which is why we hope that all those who have already travelled a good path in this project with the wise guidance of my predecessors, can fall in love again with this great ideal of Pope Francis who wants to change the world through Education and Culture.

We therefore also invite researchers in other areas to undertake studies and in-depth studies on the Educational and Cultural Pact, also proposing new lines and new thematic areas so that the educational village, whose foundations have already been firmly established, can expand more and more, to make the world a place where all can live as brothers, or as 'Brothers all'.

May the Bishop and Doctor Saint Robert Bellarmine, whose memory we celebrate today, defined by Saint Francis of Sales as an "inexhaustible fountain of doctrine", enlighten and guide us all on this new path.

Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça
Prefect
Vatican City, 17 April 2023

The book can be accessed online at this link: http://static.pucpr.br/puc-pr/2023/08/educaaca-entre-a-crise-a-espereanca.pdf?ga=1&ga-x=0&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIyYy6aYAh5AhYHhWNA4jNnwkAVAAEAIw_gieg2M5c44PBYMTMY5MqY0M2qOY41LJ8EMITY5MYSYINTA09N-42M04wILA&ga=2_68436689.1366297471.1692629055-1606681906.169205785
On 26-6-2023, a Round Table was held in the Paul VI Hall of the Lateran University (PUL) under the theme: “Peace and Citizenship: a possible dialogue in the Global Compact on Education”. The session was opened by an online intervention by the Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Prof. Antonella Sciarrone, who underlined how Pope Francis’ GCE project becomes even more visionary with the fusion of Education with Culture in a single Dicastery. This allows a dialogue also with those realities that do not usually dialogue with us. Touching precisely on the theme of the meeting, Prof. Sciarrone states that the topic ‘Peace and Citizenship’ is very topical and reminds us that Pacem in Terris, on the 60th anniversary of its publication, urges us to root peace not on a balance between men but on a higher level. Educating young people in peace is one of the first objectives. This was followed by the greetings of the Magnificent Rector of PUL Prof. Vincenzo Bonomo and of the LUMSA University Prof. Francesco Bonini; reports by Prof. Umberto Triulzi and Prof. Giulio Alfano and numerous other speeches.

THANKS TO THE GCE COLLABORATORS

The Global Compact on Education Committee would like to sincerely thank a number of officials of the Dicastery who have retired due to reaching retirement age or expiry of contract and who have greatly collaborated in the realisation of the Global Compact on Education. Among them: Prof. MONS. GUY-REAL THIVIERGE, Secretary General of the Pontifical Foundation Gravissimum Educationis, who with his great experience in the university world was always able to give brilliant ideas at every Committee meeting, opening up new perspectives and original paths. MONS. RINALDO DONGHI, Head of the Office of the Schools Sector of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, for his fundamental contribution in the preparation of important texts of the GCE and in the correction of the Newsletters. Dr. AURORA FILIPPONI, of the Pontifical Foundation Gravissimum Educationis, for her fundamental contribution in the implementation of the GCE and for her decisive collaboration in the organisation of the major events of the Global Compact on Education. We would also like to thank all the other colleagues who have ended their service at the Dicastery for Culture and Education and who have collaborated directly or indirectly with the Global Compact on Education over the years.

On the occasion of their General Chapter, the Marcelline Sisters invited H.E. Msgr. Vincenzo Zani, Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church, to give a talk on the Global Compact on Education.

Mgr. Zani is a great expert on this subject since, as Secretary of the former Congregation for Catholic Education (CEC) together with the then Prefect Card. Giuseppe Versaldi, he was a key player in the implementation of the GCE project entrusted by the Pope to the CEC. In this long and in-depth speech, Archbishop Zani retraces the stages of education starting with the Old Testament, Moses and Egyptian culture, and then reviews the educational challenges that pervade today's culture: communication between generations, the digital revolution, loss of the sense of history, the relationship between culture and religion, nature and the environment. He then retraces the development of the Global Compact on Education by analysing the speeches that Pope Francis has dedicated to this theme, takes up the five themes entrusted to university research, and concludes with a look at the various protagonists of the Educational Pact: the family, school, teachers, students, young people, etc. The speech ends with these words: ‘The global compact on education - aimed at building the "village of education", that is, a cohesive and collaborative humanity - is an important tool, open to further integrations that acknowledge the specific instances of the different territorial contexts. The global compact on education must become a local educative pact; and in this the ecclesial community, in the spirit of the synodal style, can transform it into a concrete and dynamic laboratory of experiences for an evangelising mission aimed at promoting the personal and community responsibility of each one, in view of the common good”.

To access the full text and video
https://www.marcelline.org/capitolo-giorno-11-luglio-2023/