

## Humanism or Christianity? Which educational project for the future?

The Committee of Evangelical Teachers in Italy (CIEI) wishes to thank the representatives of the world religions for their [Greeting](#) on the occasion of World Teachers' Day, which was signed in the Vatican during the meeting "[Religions and Education: towards a Global Compact on Education](#)". We would like to answer by expressing our own position regarding this project that we are following with great interest and which concerns us personally.

Indeed, we think that education is a theme of absolute importance that must be put at the centre of the international agenda, starting with Italy. We totally agree that the nations need to assign greater value to the social task that teachers and educators perform for the good and the growth of our communities. We therefore pray constantly for our authorities, with declarations and invitations we call upon them to act on the themes of education in general and more specifically school education, and we are committed personally to doing our jobs with dedication, love and responsibility as teachers delegated by the families and entrusted with the education of the young generation.

However, we also wish to express our reservations about this project.

The Global Compact on Education asks us to:

- support the construction of a single education, whose goal is a New Humanism for the planet, that puts man at the centre as the source and primary agent of change of the heart and of actions and which consequently aims at the salvation of humankind and our world;
- place God and idols on the same level, and recognise every religion as a possible way to reach God;
- disregard our specific vision of the world, in the name of a universal brotherhood, to embrace a single unifying one: that of the magisterium of the Catholic Church, clearly expressed in the apostolic exhortations, papal encyclicals and Councils, constantly and specifically referred to in the messages and invitations of the Pope and in the [Vademecum](#) for the Compact with the *Instrumentum Laboris* (see the quotations from *Vangeli Gaudium*, *Laudato Si*, *All brothers*);
- abandon the vision of Christian education that Biblical faith in its entirety offers us and which has been passed down to us from the early church, to support the new "sound anthropology" brought to us by the Pope;
- consider our educational institutions "works in progress" for "constructing a humanism of fraternity", and state that "**Together**, is the word that saves and achieves everything";
- state that a true and complete education of the heart and of the hands, that brings brotherhood, peace and justice, is possible with human effort independently of the work of grace that only Christ can accomplish.

We therefore state that:

- we question the motivation, vision and objectives of this educational Compact. We cannot in good conscience, before God, subscribe to it because we consider that it demeans the vision of Biblical education we are committed to, it corrupts and empties it of all its meaning, effectively making it something different and incommunicable.
- we question the statement according to which "on the quality of teachers and educators depends the future of humanity". While being perfectly aware that our work requires from us great responsibility, professionalism, training and above all vision, we are also aware that while we play our part, our commitment is complementary to that of others (first of all of parents) and in the final analysis it is always secondary and subordinate to the work that God, in Christ, sovereignly

fulfills to prepare the future of humanity. This conviction is also our hope that enables us to carry out our duty even in the most difficult situations and when faced with the hardest challenges.

We therefore desire to reaffirm the fundamental role God Himself has given to the education of man, not leaving us without His revelation and knowledge: God is the first to educate and He invites us to educate others so that they recognise His Lordship and see His glory.

We remind ourselves that:

- the primary task in the education of children has been entrusted by God to parents, and their responsibility and educational freedom must always be guaranteed, promoted and supported, without discrimination and respectful of their specific worldview;
- the educational task is global, in that it concerns the whole of man (body, mind, spirit) and in this task many parties are involved with different but complementary responsibilities;
- the educational task of the church is that of making disciples of Christ who know everything He has taught so that they might put it into practice;
- the duty of public educational institutions is to be places where pluralism is valued, where views are exchanged and ideas come into conflict in a free and civil way, without violence, discrimination, interference or favouritism;
- academic freedom for those who teach at every level must be guaranteed, with due regard for the dignity of all and for the educational choices of families;
- the duty of governments is to work to guarantee equal spaces, time, places, resources and possibilities for all so that every party involved has the freedom necessary to educate in the ways and with the means they consider most useful in accordance with their own worldview.

We reaffirm our strong commitment, as Evangelical teachers, to educate the present and future generations in a way that is both coherent and holistic, and which:

- recognises the responsibilities of every party involved in the educational relationship;
- has the courage to lay its pedagogical foundations starting from God and the truth of Scripture;
- invites all men to know God's world in order to develop and take care of it according to the mandate He Himself entrusted to us at creation;
- invites us to know the only true God, One and Triune, Creator and Redeemer of man and woman and of the whole world.

Finally, we invite all Evangelicals, above all parents, teachers and scholars:

- to exercise a healthy moral, intellectual and spiritual discernment in the face of human attempts to weaken and dilute the Biblical worldview;
- to exercise a role of vigilance and responsibility in the workplace and educational institutions, and when representing Evangelicals in any context, so as to promote real debate and a healthy pluralism in which all pedagogical views, including the Biblical one, are expressed and considered on the basis of their fundamental distinctive principles;
- to be promoters of services, activities, debates, training and research, in which the Biblical view of education is expressed, explored and experienced for the good of all.

We urge our European colleagues and those around the world to join with us in responding to the invitation to support the Global Compact on Education in a way that is consistent with the Gospel, for the honour and glory of Christ.

Il Comitato Insegnanti Evangelici in Italia

Ferrara, 9 October 2021