

A School for Peace

Towards a global educational fraternity

*« We must rediscover, emphasise and cultivate our duty to train others
in critical thinking... because it is an essential foundation for building peace
and dialogue in the service of universal fraternity. »*

Pope Leo XIV



OIEC

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
OFICINA INTERNACIONAL DE LA EDUCACIÓN CATÓLICA
OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT CATHOLIQUE





Editorial

de Hervé Lecomte

Secretary General of the OIEC

Dear friends,

With so many conflicts still ravaging our world, we felt it was urgent, as **the International Office of Catholic Education**, to speak out through this book in order to **contribute, humbly but resolutely, to the construction of a culture of peace**. In countries scarred by war, we hope that members of educational communities will find, in these pages, **reasons to hope and believe that a peaceful future is possible**.

As our dear Saint Leo XIV so rightly said:

"War does not solve problems, it amplifies them and leaves deep wounds in the history of peoples, which take generations to heal. No military victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, or a stolen future."

Peace does not come about by decree. It **is built patiently**, by those who dare to walk the path of justice, who refuse indifference, and who are committed to a world where every human being can be fully recognised in their dignity.

What makes us human beings is **our ability to cooperate, to dialogue, to care for one another**. Where there is care, there is no more fear. Where there is fraternity, the word "enemy" loses its meaning. **Making others our brothers, sisters and neighbours: that is the true struggle for peace**.

When Jesus was asked, " *Who is my neighbour?* ", he did not give a definition. He told a story. The story of the Good Samaritan.

And through her, he showed us that **our neighbour is the person we choose to be close to**.



Pope Francis, for his part, left us this lucid and prophetic warning:

"We are all in the same boat: either we are all saved, or no one is."

Peace is not built in conference rooms, but in classrooms, in homes, in villages, in our schools, our families, our communities.

Peace springs forth when young people are offered hope, opportunities and prospects. That is when what seemed impossible becomes possible: **a bright, vibrant and shared reality.**

We owe this to the children of this world.
We owe them a future of peace.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to this work through **their testimonies, convictions and actions.**

A special thank **you to the young people of the OIEC**, involved in the *Planet Fraternity* and *Relais Méditerranéen pour la Paix* projects, who spread a message of hope and sing, against all odds, of the disarming power of peace.



Introduction

Educating, an act of peace

"There is no peace without justice, there is no justice without forgiveness."

— Saint John Paul II

A troubled era

May 2025. While some children are learning to read or play ball in the playground, others are hearing the sound of bombs or fleeing their homes. Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, Ethiopia, Afghanistan... So many names that have become synonymous with tears and exile. In addition to these armed conflicts, there is more widespread violence: hatred on social media, racism, the digital divide, environmental inequalities, cultural uprooting...

Faced with this reality, educators may feel powerless. Yet they may be in the best position to change the course of events.

For peace does not arise from international treaties. It takes root in the words we say to a shy pupil, in the way we establish common rules, in the space we give to listening to pain or anger. Peace is sown at school, in the heart of every child.

Education that transforms

This book is a call to action. A call to all those in schools, colleges, sixth form colleges and training centres who still believe that education can change the world.

Inspired by the Global Educational Pact promoted by Pope Francis and continued by his successor Pope Leo XIV, this book proposes to place peace back at the centre of the educational project. For education is not neutral: it can fuel hatred or encourage dialogue. It can perpetuate fear or cultivate fraternity. It can prepare for war or sow the seeds of a new world.

This short book is aimed at all those involved in education – teachers, school principals, educational staff, specialised educators, activity leaders, trainers and pastoral leaders – who are convinced that their profession is much more than just a job: it is a human and social mission, a daily work of peace.

Three steps to progress

The programme we offer consists of three stages:

STEP 1

Understanding why and how peace is an educational issue: with insights from major spiritual traditions, international recommendations (notably from UNESCO), and reference texts from Catholic teaching.

STEP 2

Discover the practices and approaches that make schools peaceful: by highlighting the irreplaceable role of teachers, educators and teams in the way they teach, welcome, manage conflicts and live together.

STEP 3

Be inspired by concrete projects, rooted in various contexts around the world: initiatives led by schools, networks, and students themselves, which show that peace is not a utopia, but a daily practice.

A universal appeal

To educators around the world

You hold precious keys in your hands.

What you sow today in your classrooms, what you convey through your actions, your silences, your looks, your educational choices, will build **the world of tomorrow.**

To political and institutional decision-makers

Do not relegate peace education to the background.

Investing in schools, supporting teachers, promoting comprehensive education—these are not diplomatic options.

This is the beginning of reconciliation.

To young people

You are **the builders of the world to come.**

What you learn to do today – listening, communicating, cooperating – will bear fruit tomorrow.

**Peace will not only be your legacy:
it can become your work.**



“

...

*"Peace
is our gift
to the world.*

*It begins with
a word, a gesture,
a listening ear. "*

Elie Wiesel

1986 Nobel Peace Prize

”

PART 1



**The foundations
for peace and education**

The call of the popes

an educational tradition alive

On 11 May 2025, during the Regina Caeli prayer, Pope Leo XIV made a solemn appeal for peace, as numerous conflicts — notably in Ukraine and Gaza — continued to bring grief to humanity. He reminded us that peace cannot be achieved through political negotiations or military strategies alone. It must be sown from an early age:

"Peace is not just a political or diplomatic goal, it is an educational duty. Every child, every young person must learn to become a peacemaker through listening, dialogue and solidarity." — Leo XIV, Regina Caeli, 11 May 2025

This simple and radical message continues the commitment of his predecessors in the history of the Church's social doctrine. Pope Leo XIV, in choosing his name, explicitly placed himself in the lineage of Leo XIII, author of the Church's first major social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (1891). This seminal text paved the way for successive popes to continue developing the Church's commitment to social issues and its message of peace, justice and solidarity.

Benedict XV

Pacem, Dei munus pulcherrimum (1920)

In the wake of the First World War, Pope Benedict XV was one of the first to raise a prophetic voice against the blind violence of nations. In his encyclical *Pacem, Dei munus pulcherrimum*, he pleaded for peace based on justice and Christian charity, denouncing the logic of revenge and domination:

"Peace is a precious commodity, God's greatest gift; it can only be established through a spirit of justice and love."

John XXIII

Pacem in Terris (1963)

Pope John XXIII, nicknamed "the Good Pope", had a profound impact on the Church's thinking on peace with the publication, in 1963, of his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* ("Peace on Earth"), written in the tense context of the Cold War, shortly after the Cuban missile crisis. For the first time in the history of the Church, an encyclical was addressed not only to the Catholic faithful, but also to "all people of good will".

In this important text, John XXIII sets out four pillars that are essential to any true peace: truth, justice, charity and freedom. He affirms that peace cannot be built without respect for the fundamental rights of every human person and without collective responsibility for the establishment of a just and fraternal social order. He also calls for progressive disarmament, international cooperation and the recognition of a universal public authority based on law.

"Peace on earth, the profound desire of all ages, can only be established in truth, justice, charity and freedom." — John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1



This encyclical, considered one of the founding texts of the Church's contemporary diplomacy, has been praised far beyond Catholic circles for its openness, lucidity and humanism. It profoundly inspired the work of the Second Vatican Council and continues to feed educational and political reflection on peace.

Second Vatican Council

Gaudium et Spes (1965)

The Second Vatican Council, speaking with the collective voice of the universal Church, set a major milestone with the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. In Chapter V, devoted to "The Promotion of Peace and the Building of the Community of Nations," it states:

"Peace is never a thing acquired once and for all, but must be built up constantly." (GS, 78)

The Council emphasises the educational responsibility of peoples to build peace on truth, justice, love and freedom — the four pillars later defined by John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris*.

Paul VI

Populorum Progressio (1967)

Paul VI continued this line of thought by inextricably linking peace and development. In *Populorum Progressio*, he introduced a decisive expression:

"Development is the new name for peace." (PP, 76)

He recalls that education, equal opportunities, solidarity between nations and economic justice are the conditions for a reconciled world.

John Paul II

Centesimus Annus (1991)

One hundred years after *Rerum Novarum*, John Paul II gave a lucid assessment of the 20th century in *Centesimus Annus*. In it, he reaffirmed that:

"A society in which fundamental human rights are not respected cannot be peaceful." (CA, 47)

The Pope emphasises the responsibility of social and economic structures to guarantee peace, and stresses the importance of education in freedom, truth and responsibility.

In the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004), published under John Paul II by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, it is stated that:

"Peace is a universal value and duty, based on a rational and moral order of society. It presupposes recognition of the dignity of the human person and respect for his rights." (Compendium, 494)

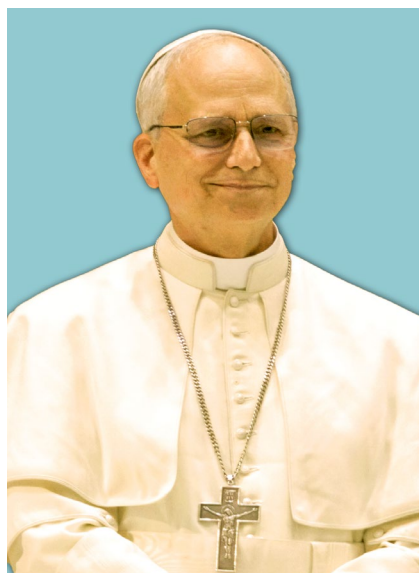
Francis

Fratelli Tutti (2020)

In this encyclical, deeply marked by contemporary conflicts, Pope Francis emphasises fraternity as the path to authentic peace:

"Social peace is laborious, artisanal. It requires integrating the weakest, valuing differences, and focusing on dialogue." (FT, 217)

He denounces exclusive nationalism and the walls that divide peoples, and calls for a culture of encounter to be promoted in schools.



Leo XIV

Thus, Pope Leo XIV's appeal is part of a living, faithful and evolving tradition of the Church's social teaching, through the voices of Benedict XV, Paul VI, John Paul II, Francis, and in the light of the Council, a shared conviction emerges: **peace cannot be decreed, it must be educated.**

It is this educational responsibility that educational institutions, and Catholic schools in particular, are called upon to fully assume.



2 UNESCO's vision educate in the spirit of the peoples

Pope Leo XIV's appeal and the Magisterium's constant teaching on peace find deep resonance in the work of UNESCO, the United Nations agency whose founding mission is to build peace in the minds of men and women.

Since its creation in 1945, UNESCO has held a strong conviction: lasting peace cannot be built without education deeply rooted in human consciousness. Its founding charter emphatically states that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." This vision makes education, culture and science not secondary areas, but essential levers for transforming the world.

In line with this mission, UNESCO adopted a new Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development in 2023, updating the 1974 version. This Recommendation comes at a time when the world is marked by persistent armed conflict, rising hate speech, social and digital divides, environmental crises and migration challenges. It reiterates

that peace is not a peripheral objective of education systems, but rather a central goal to be integrated at all levels of learning.

This Recommendation calls for profound and systemic change. It emphasises the urgent need to educate citizens to be free, responsible, critical and supportive, capable of dialogue, cooperation and working together to build fair, inclusive and sustainable societies. In this sense, it echoes and reinforces the calls of the Global Educational Pact promoted by the Catholic Church, in a strong convergence between major international organisations and spiritual traditions.

1. A comprehensive and transformative approach

The 2023 UNESCO Recommendation proposes an ambitious and profoundly transformative vision of peace education. It is no longer simply a matter of adding a few one-off activities to school curricula, but rather to integrate peace as a structuring framework for the entire education system, through its content, methods, objectives and learning environments.

This approach is based on 14 guiding principles and is rooted in target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which promotes quality education aimed at developing global citizenship, human rights, gender equality and a culture of peace.

It affirms the need for holistic education, i.e. education that takes into account the cognitive, emotional, social, ethical and behavioural dimensions of the student. It thus encourages the emergence of cross-cutting skills that are essential for peace: empathy, cooperation, critical thinking, active listening, openness to cultural diversity and conflict resolution skills.

Far from abstraction, this vision invites schools to transform their school culture, train teachers in peaceful attitudes, integrate these principles into official curricula, and build inclusive, safe and stimulating learning environments. In short, it is about making peace education not just one subject among many, but a whole way of educating.



Education
2030

Recommendation concerning Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development: explanatory brochure – UNESCO (2024)

2. A new flagship programme for peace education (2025)

As a direct follow-up to the 2023 Recommendation on Education for Peace, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development, UNESCO launched an ambitious flagship programme in March 2025, aimed at embedding a culture of peace at the heart of education systems worldwide. UNESCO launched an ambitious flagship programme in March 2025, designed to embed a culture of peace at the heart of education systems around the world. The programme is structured around two fundamental pillars, combining a normative framework with operational support.

The development of international standards for peace education, designed as universal benchmarks that can be adapted to local contexts. These standards include measurable indicators, enabling States to diagnose, evaluate and transform their education systems. The objective is clear: to make peace education a cross-cutting theme, integrated into curricula, teaching practices, teacher training and school governance, rather than a subject dealt with in a piecemeal or peripheral manner.

The deployment of a global support network, composed of regional advisers, accredited partner institutes and civil society organisations. This network is responsible for providing practical support to States in implementing recommendations by supporting capacity building for education stakeholders, the co-construction of public education policies, continuing teacher training, and the creation of teaching resources that are sensitive to cultural, religious and linguistic contexts.

This programme addresses a structural shortcoming that has been highlighted for several years: the lack of reliable and comparable data on the effective implementation of peace education in national education policies. To remedy this, UNESCO has announced the creation of a triennial World Report on Peace Education, the first edition of which will be published in 2027. This report will become a reference tool for:

- monitor the progress made by States and educational stakeholders;
- identify and promote best practices;
- promote cooperation between countries and the sharing of successful experiences;
- guide international and national policies on education in the service of peace, social justice and fraternity.

By initiating this programme, UNESCO strongly affirms that peace education is not an option, but an ethical and political imperative, essential for addressing contemporary divisions, preventing violence, strengthening social cohesion and building more just, inclusive and resilient societies.



3 Strong convergence between UNESCO and Catholic EDUCATION

The UNESCO project is deeply in line with the principles of the Global Education Pact: placing the human person at the centre, promoting holistic education, and articulating justice, peace, ecology and spirituality. It also resonates with the social tradition of the Church, which sees schools as a lever for transforming the world.

through this alliance of visions, a clear message emerges: peace cannot be built without education. It requires fair, inclusive and demanding education systems capable of nurturing clear minds, open intelligence and hearts filled with fraternity.

2 A comprehensive and united vision

- Interdependence of peoples and cultures
- Social justice, combating inequality
- integral ecology: peace with creation

"Everything is connected, and no one can save themselves alone." — Pope Francis

"Lasting peace requires transforming education systems."

— UNESCO, 2023

1 The human person at the centre

- The inalienable dignity of every human being
- Uniqueness, value, vocation to fraternity
- holistic education: body, heart, mind, intelligence

"Place the individual at the centre of every educational process." — Global Education Pact

"Education aims at the full development of the human personality."
— UNESCO, SDG 4.7

3 Dialogue as a method

- Culture of encounter
- active listening, cooperation, non-violent conflict management
- Interfaith and intercultural openness

"The other is never a threat but a gift." — Fratelli tutti

"Educating for peace means educating for global citizenship." — UNESCO

4 The key role of the educator

- A model of peace in his posture
- Mediator, builder of a peaceful school environment
- Agent of social change

"The teacher is a sower of peace."
— Leo XIV

"Teachers are essential agents of peace."
— UNESCO Recommendation 2023

'SPILLARS OF PEACE EDUCATION



*"There can be no peace
without a genuine education for peace."*

— Pope Francis

6

School as a sacred place of living together

- Inclusive and supportive educational community
- Respect for diversity
- Experimenting with fraternity in everyday life

"School is a workshop for peace."

"Peace must be at the heart of the school environment." — UNESCO

**according to
, UNESCO and
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

5

Speech as a space for construction

- Respectful freedom of expression
- Spaces for debate and shared discussion
- Training in critical thinking and discernment

"Peace is woven through truthful words and humble dialogue."

"Developing social and emotional skills."
— UNESCO,

Fundamental texts from **UNESCO** for **peace education**

- **UNESCO Charter (1945 preamble)**

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

→ UNESCO's founding document and the basis for its commitment to peace through education, science and culture.

- **1974 Recommendation**

"Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation, peace and education in human rights and fundamental freedoms"

→ Founding text laying the foundations for education geared towards peace, mutual respect and solidarity among peoples.

- **Seville Declaration on Violence (1986, adopted by UNESCO in 1989)**

→ Affirms that war is not a biological inevitability and that peace is a human and educational construct.

- **Peace education: planning for curriculum reform (2015)**

→ Guide to integrating peace into educational programmes, particularly in post-conflict countries.

- **UNESCO Guidelines on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development (revision of the 1974 Recommendation, adopted in 2023)**

→ New global framework for transformative education for peaceful, just and sustainable societies.

- **New flagship programme on education for peace (UNESCO, 2025)**

→ A structuring programme presented to the Executive Board (221 EX/7 and 221 EX/7.INF), aimed at implementing the 2023 Recommendation. It provides for:

- UNESCO standards for peace education,
- an Implementation Guide,
- a quadrennial global Report on the state of education for peace,
- and a Network of regional advisers to strengthen local capacities.

PART 2



WHY
educate for Peace
today?

Emergency response to visible and invisible violence

"Education is the most powerful weapon for changing the world."

— Nelson Mandela

1. The world is rife with conflict

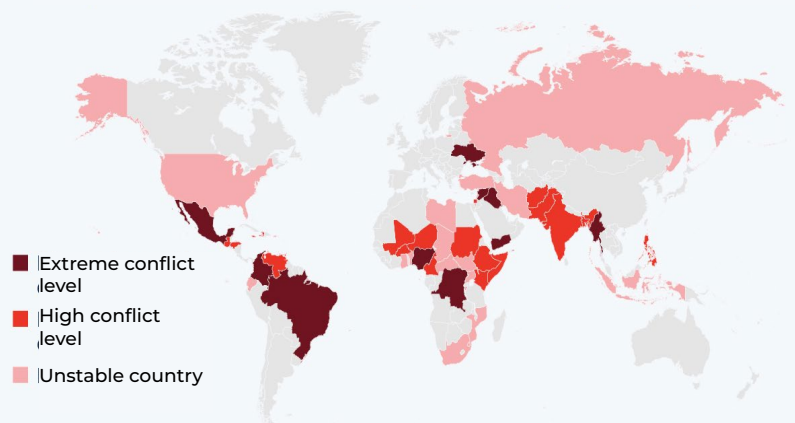
Bombs shake houses, shattering walls but above all lives. People flee, rushing along the roads to exile, uprooted by war, hunger or fear. Mothers' tears mix with the dust, children's cries are lost in the din of weapons. On the front pages of newspapers, the names Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and Afghanistan recur like a tragic litany, bearing witness to the pain of millions of human beings trapped in inhumanity.

These conflicts, visible, bloody, spectacular, captured by cameras and scrutinised by analysts, are only the tip of the iceberg of a deeply fractured world. They reveal the extent of geopolitical tensions, structural injustices, logics of domination, and repeated failures of dialogue and international solidarity. They remind us that without peace education, weapons will always speak louder than words.

But another type of violence is spreading, one that is more subtle and even more insidious.

Countries most exposed to armed conflict

Countries with the highest levels of gun violence in the world (as of July 2023)*



* Index based on mortality, danger to the civilian population, geographical distribution and number of non-state armed groups. The countries presented account for 97% of incidents recorded during the year.

Source: ACLED

2. Invisible but equally destructive violence

They creep into school corridors, behind screens, into heavy silences or judgemental glances. They leave no visible bruises or bloody traces, but they hurt deeply. They are the daily taunts, the stifled giggles that isolate, the exclusions disguised as games, the contemptuous nicknames that are repeated until they stick to the skin. It is the humiliation inflicted by a group or in the anonymity of a message, the inappropriate remarks about appearance, clothing, accent, beliefs, thoughts or affections. It is the insidious discrimination based on gender, religion, language, skin colour or social origin, which instils the idea that some people are worth less than others.

It is also the hate speech that proliferates on social media, disguised as freedom of expression, the degrading images that circulate unfiltered, the emotions manipulated by unethical algorithms, young people left alone to

face the violence of the digital world. It is the averted gaze, the ears that do not listen, the indifference of adults who are sometimes powerless, sometimes overwhelmed.

This invisible violence scars hearts, erodes self-esteem, weakens social bonds and creates divides between young people. It fuels unhappiness, exclusion and sometimes even self-hatred or hatred of others. Education cannot remain neutral or silent in the face of such violence. It must become a space for reconstruction, for regained dignity, for inner and collective peace.

3. School, the front line of peace

And yet... it is at school that everything can start again. School is not just a place of learning. It is a laboratory for society, a space for experimenting with living together, fertile ground for defusing tensions and sowing the seeds of trust.

Every day, in a classroom, we learn to listen, to cooperate, to respect. Or we allow mistrust, competition and loneliness to take hold. Every day, choices are made. Every day, peace is at stake – or lost.

4. A three fold educational emergency

Three major challenges make this peace education more urgent than ever:

- **The challenge of living together**

Our societies are multicultural, multi-faith, marked by different histories and heritages. This can be frightening... or enriching. Peace means learning to see difference as an opportunity, not a threat.

- **The challenge of collective resilience**

Health crises, natural disasters, social unrest... there are many challenges to face. To overcome them, we need more than just technology. We need connection, meaning and mutual care. Educating for peace also means educating people to stick together in times of hardship.

- **The challenge of global responsibility**

There will be no human peace without peace with creation. Young people must understand that their actions, their choices and their voices matter in the fight for ecological justice. Peace is also woven with trees, seas and future generations.

5. A call to reinvest in schools

In this context, educating for peace is neither an option nor a luxury. It is a vital necessity. A priority mission. A promise for tomorrow.

Making school a place of peace means educating young people to think differently, speak differently, and live differently. Young people who will not be afraid to reach out, even when everything seems broken.



2 Contemporary challenges

Living together, Resilience, Responsibility

Challenge 1: Learning to live together in a pluralistic world

Our pupils grow up in mosaic societies, woven together from different languages, cultures and beliefs. Faced with this diversity, two paths open up: fear or encounter.

educating for peace means taking a chance on encounter. It means enabling young people to learn to listen to others without judging them, to experience disagreements without running away from them, and to rejoice in what makes us different. It means teaching them that otherness is a source of richness, not a threat.

School then becomes a place of fraternity, where everyone has their place, their voice, their face. It is there that the first lasting alliances are formed between children of different religions, cultures and backgrounds.

Educating them at school means giving young people the keys to becoming bridge builders rather than wall builders.

Challenge 3: Taking responsibility for global and environmental

Peace is not limited to relations between peoples: it also concerns our relationship with the planet. Pollution, loss of biodiversity, global warming, unequal access to resources... These issues are sources of tension, migration and conflict.

Educating for peace means educating global citizens who are aware of their impact and committed to the common good and ecological justice. It means integrating integral ecology into education: learning to care for oneself, others and the Earth.

Teachers can turn their classrooms into laboratories of sustainability and solidarity, where every action counts: sorting waste, discussing climate issues, supporting a cause, planting a tree, or falling silent to listen more closely to the world.



Challenge 2: Building collective resilience in the face of crises

Natural disasters, pandemics, wars, exile, social unrest... Crises shake the world, sometimes brutally. They weaken the most vulnerable, widen inequalities and destabilise reference points.

But crises can also become opportunities for growth, provided that we learn solidarity, adaptation and mutual care. educating for peace means helping young people to become builders of relationships, capable of resisting without closing themselves off, of acting without succumbing to fear or anger.

Through cooperative projects, opportunities for expression, and solidarity initiatives, schools can become places of shared resilience, where we learn together to pick ourselves up and rebuild.



These three challenges – living together, collective resilience, global responsibility – are at the heart of a living and embodied education for peace.



3 The school place of reconstruction and alliance

When everything around us is uncertain, schools can still hold firm. They can be stable, welcoming places, staffed by capable adults who can offer children much more than just knowledge: guidance, confidence and direction.

Because school is not just a place of learning. It is a space for personal, relational and collective reconstruction. It is that discreet melting pot where one can learn to believe in oneself again after humiliation, to trust others again after betrayal, to build relationships again after breakups.

It is there, in the seemingly ordinary setting of a classroom, that silent wounds can gradually heal. That inherited or internalised hatreds can be appeased. That differences – once a source of fear or rejection – can be recognised, tamed and celebrated.

In times of crisis, war, natural disaster or social upheaval, schools are often the first institutions to reopen. Before markets, before places of worship, even before public services, schools come back to life. They restore a sense of rhythm – the ringing of the bell, the opening of notebooks, the sight of familiar faces. They re-establish a form of normality. They offer meaning. Above all, they become a promise: a promise that it is possible to recover, together. But school is not just a refuge or a shelter: it is also a place of alliance. A place of encounter, dialogue and

connection. It is in school that the first lasting alliances are forged between generations – children and educators, young and old – between cultures – local and global – between disciplines – science, arts, languages, faith, reason. A living school is a school that connects. It connects students with each other, in all their diversity. It connects students to adults, in a pact of trust. It connects the school to its territory, its history, its dreams. It connects memory to purpose, tradition to innovation.

This power to connect is the very foundation of lasting peace. A peace that is not decreed, but built. A peace rooted in solid, fair and trusting bonds. A peace that is born in the simplicity of a collective workshop, a respectful debate, a project carried out hand in hand. A peace that is cultivated every day through gestures of kindness, words of encouragement and demanding educational choices. A peace that grows in the fertile ground of the school and spreads far beyond its walls.

School, a place of peace

- **A place where you can put down roots: Feel** safe. Be welcomed unconditionally. Be recognised in your dignity, for who you are, without having to hide or conform.
- **A place where people can meet :** Discovering others in all their richness, beyond pre-conceptions. Learning to cooperate, to dialogue, to work together. Building a culture of encounter, day after day.
- **A place where you can heal:** Lay down your wounds. Put your pain into words. Learn to forgive, to understand, to rebuild after the fractures.
- **A place where you can get involved:** Working for the common good. Setting up solidarity-based, civic-minded, responsible projects. Experiencing the power of "us" in the face of prevailing individualism.
- **A land where we can hope: Believe** in a better future, at a child's level. Project yourself, dream, invent tomorrow. Believe that the world can change because we are part of it.

Making school a place of peace means believing that every classroom, every playground, every workshop, every prayer or debate can become a workshop for humanity. A piece of a more fraternal, fairer, more vibrant world.

PART 3



Learning peace
a **holistic education**

The dimensions of peace

internal, relational, social, environmental

"We are not born peaceful, we become peaceful."

Educating for peace is not just about organising a day on non-violence or sticking a dove on a wall. It means embracing a holistic approach to education, i.e. one that takes into account the whole person and their relationships with the world.

Peace is a path. A learning process. A way of being, thinking and acting. It encompasses four major dimensions, all of which are interlinked. When these dimensions are neglected, peace begins to crumble. When they are cultivated together, peace becomes a living force.

The four dimensions of peace

Dimension	Definition	Educational objectives	Practical examples
Inner peace	being at peace with oneself: knowing oneself, accepting one's emotions, developing self-esteem.	- Learning to name and regulate one's emotions - Cultivating calmness and confidence	- Self-listening workshops - Time for silence or breathing space - Personal journal of emotions
Relational peace	being at peace with others: listening, communicating, cooperating, setting boundaries without violence.	- Learning compassionate communication - Developing empathy and mutual respect	- Cooperative games - Talking circles - Non-violent conflict management
Social peace	being at peace in society: acting for justice, human rights and inclusion.	- Understanding inequality and discrimination - Committing to greater justice	- Fraternity Week - Solidarity projects - Ethical or civic debates
Environmental peace	being at peace with the Earth: caring for living things, conserving resources, living modestly.	- Developing environmental awareness - Encouraging sustainable actions	- Integral Ecology Workshops - Shared gardens - Zero waste or recycling projects

A cross-functional, and complementary vision

The four dimensions of peace – inner, relational, social and environmental – are not mutually exclusive, nor are they hierarchical. They are intertwined, respond to each other and feed off each other. Far from operating in silos, they form a comprehensive vision of peace education, in which each component illuminates and reinforces the others.



A child who learns **to accept their emotions**, to name what they are feeling and to regulate their anger or fear (inner peace) is more likely **to interact with others in a calm manner**. They then develop listening, empathy and cooperation skills (relational peace), which enable them to better understand conflicts, prevent them or transform them.

By **experiencing relationships based on respect and justice**, these children become **more aware of inequalities, discrimination and mechanisms of exclusion at an earlier age**. They become capable of understanding the root causes and wanting to remedy them (social peace). They understand that peace can only be lasting if it is also equitable.

Finally, this journey **opens up a broader awareness: that of one's connection to living things, to the Earth, to the entire natural world**. A child educated to be kind to themselves and others will naturally be more sensitive to the beauty of the world, the fragility of ecosystems, and the urgency of preserving them (environmental peace).

This is why **true peace education** cannot be reduced to a one-off activity or a single subject. It **transforms educational approaches, permeates all learning, and is woven into classroom practices, projects, relationships, and the very organisation of the school**. **It engages the entire educational community in a continuous process.**

We can say that peace education is successful when it transforms the way we see ourselves (who am I?), others (how do we live together?), society (what kind of world do we want to live in?), and the world (what are we going to pass on?). It fosters the growth of global citizens who are aware, responsible, and committed to a more fraternal future.



2 Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes

The three pillars of peace in education

*"Education is a work of peace."
And the teacher is the daily architect of this.*

Peace cannot be learned simply by talking about it. It must be lived, experienced and felt. Like any learning process, peace is rooted in three complementary dimensions: knowledge (what I understand), interpersonal skills (what I develop internally) and practical skills (what I put into practice).

Knowledge: understanding the challenges of peace

Students need keys to understanding the mechanisms of conflict, the causes of violence, and the paths to reconciliation. This involves:

- the history of figures and movements for peace (Gandhi, Luther King, Mandela, etc.),
- the discovery of human rights, social justice,
- knowledge of ecological challenges and global interdependencies.

Objective: to help pupils think about peace and understand its historical, social and political underpinnings.



Skills: cultivating an inner attitude of peace

Peace begins within oneself. It requires:

- an awareness of one's emotions,
- the ability to listen, cooperate, and show empathy,
- a benevolent view of others and oneself.

These skills are developed in a climate of trust, through non-violent communication exercises, periods of introspection, and rituals of gratitude or regulation.

Objective: to educate young people to be grounded, calm, and capable of forming fair and respectful relationships.



Attitudes: putting peace into practice in everyday life

Peace is not an abstract idea. It is embodied in choices, actions and commitments. It is by practising cooperation, mediation and solidarity that pupils truly learn to become peacemakers.

Objective: to enable each pupil to experience peace as a daily commitment.



2. Toolkit for teachers who are peacemakers.

A teacher who is a peacemaker is not an expert in diplomacy or a specialist in psychology.

He is an educator who, in the simplicity of everyday life, builds a climate conducive to listening, cooperation, justice and trust with his pupils.

It is not a question of adding a new discipline, but of infusing every action, every session, every relationship with a culture of peace.

Here are some practical, simple and powerful tools which, when used correctly, can become levers for profound transformation.

Objective	Tool / Activity	Observed effects
Developing listening skills	• Talking circles, • weather of emotions, • silent debates, • personal logbook	• Strengthens group cohesion, • develops attention to oneself and others, • creates an atmosphere of trust and genuine expression
Encourage cooperation	• Cooperative games, • peer tutoring, • group work with common objectives, • “solidarity challenges”	• Promotes mutual assistance, reduces pointless competition, • values interpersonal skills, • encourages collective success
Working -regulation	• Student council, peer mediation, • conflict box, • jointly developed class life charter	• Reduces tension, empowers pupils, • develops negotiation and disagreement management skills
Promoting empathy	• Reading life stories, • forum theatre, • testimonials from students or people committed to peace, • interclass correspondence	• Enables openness to otherness, • strengthens moral sensitivity, • help to put oneself in another's shoes and understand their emotions
Taking concrete action	• Solidarity projects, • service activities, • integral ecology actions, • international twinning schemes, • associative partnerships	• Gives meaning to school, • engages pupils in the real world, making them agents of change, • develops a spirit of global citizenship

A teacher who is a peacemaker does not need extraordinary tools, but rather a profound consistency between who they are, what they teach, and how they live their life. Every word, every silence, every rule established, and every educational gesture becomes an opportunity to sow the seeds of peace.

Being a peacemaker means believing that every day in the classroom can be a laboratory for fraternity, a workshop for humanity, a space for transformation. This is not an extra burden: it is the very heart of the act of teaching.



“

...

*"When we are
at peace
within ourselves,
we are at peace
with the world."*

Thich Nhat Hanh

Buddhist monk
(1926 - 2022)

”

PART 4



THE TEACHER, a Bridge Builder

Being a relational reference point : the founding role of the teacher

"A teacher touches eternity, they never know where their influence ends."

— Henry Adams

In a school that aims to educate for peace, the teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge. They are a conduit for life, a builder of relationships, a guardian of meaning. Their mission goes far beyond the transmission of knowledge: they are a fundamental educational presence, shaping the atmosphere, structuring relationships and opening paths to humanity.

They are often one of the first adults outside the family circle to play a lasting role in a child's life. Their gaze, their welcome, their way of listening or setting boundaries leave a lasting impression. We remember a teacher throughout our lives not only for what they taught us, but above all for what they enabled us to become. Being a teacher in a pedagogy of peace therefore means accepting a profound human responsibility: becoming a reference point in a world that lacks one, a fixed point in a society that is changing rapidly and becoming increasingly fragile.

1. Posture as silent pedagogy

A teacher of peace does not need to talk about peace in order to teach it. Their attitude speaks for itself. It is in their everyday actions that the teaching of peace begins: a greeting that acknowledges, listening without rushing, a consistently calm environment, appropriate words, a refusal to use humour to disguise humiliation, justice that is lived and not just proclaimed.

This approach is neither distant, authoritarian, nor complacent. It is fair, stable, consistent, and grounded in reality. It finds its balance in the invigorating tension between high standards and kindness, between structure and acceptance, between firmness and

flexibility. Far from educational neutrality, it engages the whole person of the teacher: their convictions, their values, their way of inhabiting the world.

In a school context often marked by pressure to achieve results, social tensions, inequalities or symbolic violence, this stance becomes an act of educational resistance. Resistance against the brutality of hasty judgements. Resistance against institutional indifference. Resistance against the dehumanisation of school relationships. It says: "I am here, with you, to build something else."

2. A conveyor of meaning, connections and trust

The teacher of peace is a conduit, in the noblest sense of the term. He connects:

- children among themselves, promoting cooperation and solidarity;
- disciplines with human realities, giving meaning to knowledge;
- the past, collective memory, dreams for tomorrow;
- the individual to the community, helping everyone to find their place without fading into the background.

They are also a point of reference. In the storm that some young people are going through — family conflicts, emotional instability, social precariousness — teachers can become a source of support. Not by solving all their problems, but by being present, reliable and stable. A voice that does not shout. An authority that does not despise. A demand that does not condemn.

Finally, the teacher is a mediator:

- **between pupils, by** managing tensions and building bridges for dialogue;
- **between cultures, by promoting diversity,** welcoming stories from elsewhere, and deconstructing prejudices;
- **between institutional expectations and the needs of young people,** by humanising the rules, making requirements accessible, and translating constraints into educational opportunities.

In a society where bonds are fragile, where isolationism is a threat, where communication is becoming dehumanised, teachers become builders of lasting relationships, artisans of peace. They do not claim to have all the answers, but they show a way of being together that respects, uplifts and nurtures growth.

3. An educational figure who paves the way

being a teacher of peace does not mean avoiding conflict or sidestepping the storms of everyday school life. It does not mean trying to smooth over rough edges, avoiding confrontation or maintaining a façade of peace. On the contrary, it means daring to navigate tensions with courage and clarity alongside your pupils, showing them that it is possible to stand up for yourself without crushing others, to speak your mind without hurting others, and to set boundaries without excluding others.

This means viewing conflicts as learning opportunities, not failures. Disagreements then become opportunities for growth, mistakes become opportunities to get to know each other better, and faults become calls to responsibility and reparation. A teacher of peace does not seek to control everything: they accept the unexpected, vulnerability, and sometimes discomfort. They know that the educational relationship is alive, and therefore imperfect, but that it is fruitful when cultivated with authenticity.

In a world saturated with demands, immediacy and snap judgements, the teacher of peace shows another way of being an adult: firm but fair, committed but humble, capable of authority without authoritarianism: firm but fair, committed but humble, capable of authority without authoritarianism. They show that it is possible to take on the role of educator while remaining deeply human, that is to say, characterised by listening, doubt, truthful speech and forgiveness.

That is why the teacher of peace inspires. They do not simply deliver a curriculum: they chart a course, they open up new horizons. They do not merely provide guidance; they themselves become a guiding light, through who they are, how they live, and the quality of their presence.

By sowing, day after day, gestures of kindness, words of encouragement, and encouraging looks, he is betting that every student — even those who are fragile, broken, or wounded — has within them the capacity for recovery and transformation. He believes that no one is condemned to remain a prisoner of their wounds or their past. He believes that school can become a place of rebirth.

And so, silently, he passes on a legacy: that peace is possible. A peace that is built from childhood, that takes root in everyday relationships, and that radiates far beyond the classroom walls. For a pupil who has experienced a fair, dignified, demanding and loving educational relationship carries within them the memory of another possibility. And they, in turn, become bearers of this peace in their families, their neighbourhoods and their future commitments.



2 Building a school culture of peace on a daily basis

Peace education is not taught as a one-off lesson: it is lived. It manifests itself in everyday gestures, in the classroom atmosphere, in the way we speak, look at each other and welcome others.

Incorporate daily gestures of peace:

Peace education is not limited to special projects. It is expressed in simple, repeated actions that are integrated into classroom life:

- **Practise active listening:** observe, rephrase, validate the pupil's emotions without judging.
- **Use soothing words: encourage**, calm, suggest rather than punish outright.
- **Encourage cooperation rather than competition:** group work, tutoring, mutual assistance.
- **Promote non-violence as a relational skill:** learn to say no without hurting others, to express disagreement without damaging relationships.
- **Establish spaces for regulation:** student councils, discussion groups, gratitude rituals.

These small educational actions, repeated every day, create a school culture in which peace becomes natural, desirable and possible.



Creating a peaceful school environment: emotional security, shared rules, conflict prevention

The atmosphere in the classroom — and more broadly, in the school — is essential for a peaceful learning environment. To learn, students need to feel safe, trust adults, and perceive rules as fair and understandable.

Teachers, in collaboration with their colleagues and management, can take action in several areas:

- **Develop shared rules for living, co-created** with pupils and expressed in positive terms.
- **Ensure a consistent and reliable presence:** be punctual, stable, and predictable in your reactions.
- **Prevent situations of bullying or exclusion** through careful monitoring and teamwork.
- **Establish a culture of reparation: enable** pupils to acknowledge their mistakes, apologise and restore relationships.

Creating a peaceful environment does not mean avoiding conflict at all costs. It means anticipating conflict, supporting it, and transforming it into a learning experience. In this way, school becomes a place of human growth, where we learn to make peace with ourselves and with others.



PART 5



Peace education **IN ACTION**

Peace education IN ACTION

"Peace is not a word, it is a path."

— Pope Francis

Peace is not an abstract idea. It takes shape in projects, actions and dynamics on the ground. It is experienced in classrooms, playgrounds and in the links between schools, families and local communities.

All over the world, teachers and young people are inventing ways to make peace on a daily basis, drawing on their context, creativity and hope. These initiatives are not all alike, but they share the same conviction: schools can transform society from within.

Here are some concrete examples of educational projects that make peace visible and alive.



Planet Fraternity and Little Planet Fraternity

Educating for peace through active and global fraternity

In line with the Global Educational Pact promoted by Pope Francis, the OIEC has launched two complementary projects: Planet Fraternity (for 9-18 year olds) and Little Planet Fraternity (for 8-12 year olds). These initiatives enable children and young people to become protagonists of global change, starting from their local reality, in dialogue with schools in other countries.

Educational objectives:

- To create bonds of friendship between pupils at Catholic schools around the world.
- Educating for solidarity, integral ecology, peace and social justice.
- Encourage education through action, using the Design for Change method ("I feel, I imagine, I act, I share").
- Responding to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the major social encyclicals of the Church (Fratelli tutti, Laudato Si').

Who is it for?

- Little Planet Fraternity: pupils aged 8 to 12 (level A1-A2 in English).
- Planet Fraternity: pupils aged 9 to 18 (level B1-B2 in English).

How does it work?

- International pairing between schools in different countries.
- Working in multicultural teams on social or environmental challenges.
- Recognition of each action during international meetings or symbolic award ceremonies.
- Tools available to pupils and teachers: pupil passport, world map, action plan, kindness charter, theme guide, etc.



Educational impacts:

- Pupils develop their empathy, their ability to cooperate, their critical thinking and their sense of responsibility.
- Teachers are experimenting with active, cross-disciplinary and cooperative teaching methods.
- Schools forge lasting bonds of educational fellowship across borders.

A school for peace:

These projects give substance to the vision of a school as a global village, open, inclusive and focused on the common good. They enable peace education not through theory but through the lived experience of fraternity.

For more information: <https://planetfraternity.org/>

THE Mediterranean Relay for Peace

in Hope and Fraternity

Educational objectives

- Promoting peace, fraternity and solidarity among young people in Mediterranean countries.
- Developing intercultural and interreligious awareness through exchanges.
- Train peace actors in each participating country.
- Encourage concrete actions for social justice, dialogue and solidarity.
- Engage young people in a process of global responsibility and building the common good.



Target audience

- Young people aged 15 to 25 from countries bordering the Mediterranean (including members of the OIEC World Youth Council).
- A project open to all, regardless of religious or philosophical beliefs.

Duration

- Six months from February to October 2025, with successive country relays, educational intersessions and a closing ceremony in Rome as part of the 2025 Jubilee.

Procedure

1. Creation of a relay team (3 to 4 young people + 1 adult supervisor).
2. Video presentation of each relay: country, culture, traditions, actions for peace.
3. Transmission of a symbolic message of peace in a baton (letter, commitment, hope).
4. Participation in educational intersessions (active listening, living together, migration, etc.).
5. Co-creation of a Manifesto for Peace presented in Rome.
6. Creation of a collective artistic mosaic, a visual symbol of Mediterranean unity.



Skills developed

- Leadership and intercultural cooperation
- Oral and digital expression (videos, presentations)
- listening, mediation, conflict management
- Artistic creation and ethical commitment
- education for peace, spirituality and international solidarity

Teaching tips

- Combine this project with courses in EMC, History, Religions and Civilisations, and Arts.
- Promote productions in exhibitions or local web documentaries.
- Organise an interfaith or intercultural event in connection with the relay.
- Suggest a reflective review in class on the experience of the relay (logbook, letter to a friend, etc.).

Why integrate this project into peace education?

Because it embodies a pedagogy of encounter and dialogue, directly linked to Pope Francis' calls to make the Mediterranean "a laboratory of peace". This project is inspiring and transformative: it brings students into a dynamic of concrete fraternity that transcends borders, beliefs and prejudices.

My Peace Notebook

in Hope and Fraternity

Educational objectives

- Promoting peace education in schools through a fun, accessible medium that is rooted in children's everyday experiences.
- Help pupils define and understand the concept of peace in its various dimensions (inner, relational, social).
- Provide moral and civic guidance based on inspiring historical figures (Mandela, Malala, Gandhi, Schuman, etc.).
- Develop written, oral, artistic and emotional expression.
- Encourage peaceful behaviour on a daily basis: respect, listening, cooperation, conflict management.



Target audience

- Target age group: children aged 6 to 10
- Contexts: primary school, pastoral activities, school mediation, extracurricular activities

Terms of use in class:

1. Group reading and discussions

- Read a passage together (e.g. fact sheet on Mandela, poem, definition of peace)
- Ask open-ended questions: What do you think? Have you experienced something similar?

2. Individual or small group activities

- Fill in the forms: the peace tree, the word "peace" in your language, the solution bubbles
- Draw a symbol of peace (dove, rainbow, outstretched hand, etc.)
- Create a "peace actions notebook" in class

3. Thematic workshops

- **Sheet 1:** Defining peace → Brainstorming + word tree
- **Sheet 2:** Understanding violence → Role-playing games or comics to complete
- **Sheet 3:** Discovering symbols → Creating posters
- **Sheet 4:** Inner peace → Emotions workshop: "How do I feel?"
- **Sheet 5:** Living in peace → Conflict simulations, guided mediation

Teaching tips:

- Use life stories for presentations or readings aloud.
- Create a peace mural with contributions from pupils (drawings, quotations, words).
- Involve families by suggesting that children explain one page of the notebook at home.

Key features of the notebook:

- Accessible, richly illustrated, culturally open.
- Combines serious content with an emotional approach.
- is part of a process of educational continuity between school and family.
- Compatible with the objectives of Moral and Civic Education (EMC), school pastoral care and active citizenship.

Key points to remember:

My Peace Notebook is not a one-off tool but a companion for life, enabling children to grow in humanity, awareness and responsibility. It is a path to inner and social peace, to be travelled together, slowly, with respect and confidence.

The train of history

in Hope and Fraternity

"To walk towards peace, you must know where you come from and who paved the way."

The educational project "The History Train" offers a living timeline made up of train carriages. Each carriage represents a notable figure who worked for peace, justice or fraternity. This visual and narrative aid introduces pupils to personalities who have played an active role in world history, while encouraging them to reflect on the universal values that these figures have promoted.

Educational objectives

- Discover historical and contemporary figures of peace.
- Understanding the social, political and spiritual contexts of their commitments.
- Develop the ability to connect history, human values and personal responsibility.
- Encourage creativity, oral and written expression, and cooperative work.

Possible classroom activities

1. Create a wall or digital frieze entitled "The train of history".
2. Assign each pupil (or group) a carriage, i.e. a personality to explore.
3. Conduct documentary research (texts, videos, encyclopaedias).
4. Write a brief biographical summary with a quote or a significant event.
5. Illustrate the carriage with a portrait, symbol or key scene.
6. Organise an oral presentation (character portrayal, skit, exhibition, debate).

Examples of wagons to include

- Leo XIII – For the launch of the social doctrine of the Church (Rerum Novarum, 1891)
- Benedict XV – For his opposition to the war (1917–1920)
- Mahatma Gandhi – For non-violence and civil resistance in India
- Martin Luther King Jr. – For racial justice and equality in the United States
- John Paul II – For his role in East-West reconciliation
- Malala Yousafzai – For girls' right to education
- Wangari Maathai – For ecological peace and women's rights in Africa
- Leo XIV – For his call for peace as an educational duty (Regina Caeli, 2025)

Teaching tip

Each pupil can illustrate their carriage, write a biographical note, and then portray the character in an oral presentation, an exhibition or a group performance (e.g. peace builders' debate).

The project can be interdisciplinary: history, EMC, art, French, modern languages, and even theology or philosophy in upper classes.

PART 6



VOICES of the Stakeholders

Peace at school: a daily learning experience

School is a place where we learn to read, write and count, but also to live together. In a world marked by division and violence, some educational communities choose to place peace at the heart of their mission. Whether in the Middle East or Europe, they show that peace can become a daily learning experience: in prayer, in the classroom, during breaks and in intercultural projects.

1. College of the Brothers – Bethlehem (Palestine)

Bethlehem, the city of the Nativity, is also marked by walls, checkpoints and tensions that affect the lives of its inhabitants. In this fragile context, the Brothers' College, inspired by the Lasallian charism, strives to educate students who are capable of building bridges. Peace is experienced there from the morning onwards, with times of prayer and reflection centred on love, forgiveness and respect. It continues in the classrooms, where justice, human rights and fraternity are integrated into the curriculum, well beyond the traditional subjects.

Educational and cultural initiatives play a central role: theatre workshops, collective murals, artistic activities on the theme of tolerance. Pupils celebrate Christian and Muslim festivals together, share symbolic meals and learn about the practices of Lent and Ramadan.

These simple but powerful experiences teach them that despite the visible walls dividing the city, it is

always possible to break down the invisible walls that stand between people.

Charitable projects reinforce this learning process: donation campaigns, solidarity initiatives to help poor families, and concrete commitments where Christians and Muslims work side by side. In this way, pupils discover that faith, far from being a divisive factor, can be a driving force for unity when expressed through mutual aid.

The impact extends beyond the school: families report a change in their children's outlook, with the children becoming agents of dialogue and reconciliation. In an environment where violence is often considered inevitable, the Collège des Frères is a prophetic school: a place where one learns that peace is not a utopia, but an educational mission to be lived out on a daily basis.



For further information:



2. Barnabé Network – Christian Schools of the Holy Land

In the Holy Land, around a hundred Christian schools of various traditions (Latin, Orthodox, Melkite, Evangelical) welcome Christian and Muslim children every day, and sometimes even Jewish pupils. They are true oases of peace in a context of division. The Barnabé Network aims to connect around forty of these French-speaking schools with establishments in France and other countries in order to create educational partnerships.

These links take the form of joint projects: language exchanges, interdisciplinary work, correspondence and shared remote activities. They enable pupils to learn from each other, discover other cultures and develop a broader view of the world. In Jaffa-Tel Aviv, for example, a Lasallian secondary school brings together Jewish, Muslim and Christian teachers and pupils in the same establishment, offering a concrete experience of peaceful coexistence.

In these schools, peace is taught through non-violent conflict management in the playground, encouraging debate in the classroom and focusing on the inner peace of pupils. Headteachers emphasise the importance of anchoring education 'here and now' in a peaceful daily life, as the future remains uncertain.

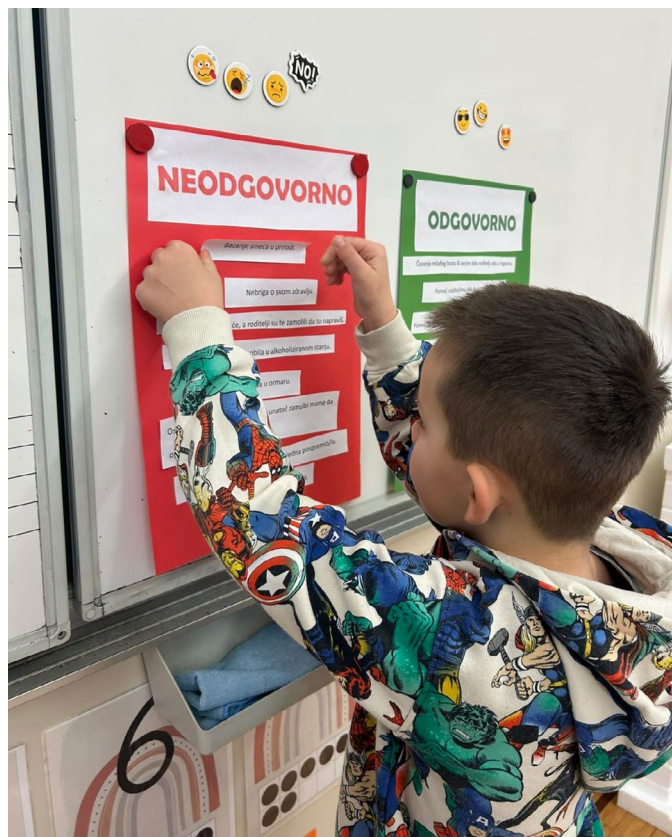


Thanks to the Barnabé Network, this peace education extends beyond borders: through joint projects, students from France and the Holy Land learn to take an objective view, to value differences and to develop mutual respect. In a context marked by violence, this openness becomes a powerful educational act, restoring confidence to the younger generations.

3. Catholic schools – Croatia

In Croatia, Catholic schools have rallied around a project entitled Through virtues to healthy student development. Recognising that children and young people are exposed to numerous risk factors (social pressure, harmful lifestyles, violent behaviour), they have chosen to focus their teaching on the formation of virtues. Their conviction is clear: inner and social peace is built by cultivating patience, generosity, loyalty, justice and other fundamental values.

The project is based on a calendar of twelve virtues, which are explored throughout the school year through interactive workshops and practical projects. For example, in February, pupils explore the virtue of patience through cooperative activities; in March, they work on generosity through acts of solidarity. These virtues are integrated into all subjects, from literature to science, and accompanied by creative initiatives (posters, exhibitions, events linked to world days).



Teachers and parents are fully involved: they participate in workshops, share experiences and ensure that the virtues taught in class are echoed at home. This unity between school and family gives the project particular strength, ensuring that it is not just a school activity but becomes a way of life.

At the end of this process, students discover that peace does not depend solely on the absence of conflict, but also on how they live their daily lives: knowing how to listen, controlling their reactions, acting with justice and respect. This programme thus offers young Croatians a solid human and spiritual foundation, capable of withstanding social tensions and paving the way for a more fraternal society.

For further information:

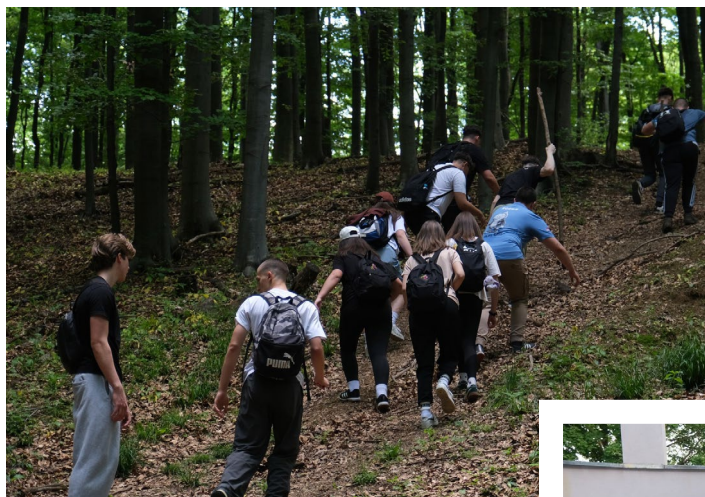


4. Kokamp Belli – Požega (Croatia)

In Croatia, where the scars of the war in the former Yugoslavia remain visible in people's memories, some schools have committed to showing younger generations that differences are not barriers but assets. The Ekokamp Belli project, run by the Catholic High School of Požega since 2017, is part of this mission: to provide a meeting place for students from Catholic and Orthodox schools in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia. Its objective is clear: to educate young people to overcome the prejudices inherited from the past and learn to see cultural and religious diversity as an opportunity to build peaceful coexistence.

Every year in May, around thirty participants – four students and one teacher per school – gather for four days for an educational and spiritual camp. The activities combine cultural discoveries, scientific workshops and artistic experiences. The students visit the religious heritage sites of Požega, explore the Papuk Nature Park, take part in Slavic language and Bible workshops, learn about film-making and enjoy fun chemistry experiments. Each of these stages aims to develop the young people's knowledge, creativity and critical thinking, while providing them with an intercultural learning environment.

The heart of the project lies in moments of encounter: cross-presentations of schools, sharing of faith experiences, discussions on cultural traditions. The pupils discover that, beyond their denominational differences, they share the same desire to learn, understand and build a common future. Workshops on Slavic languages and the Bible, in particular, become spaces where young people become aware of their common roots, while valuing their unique characteristics.



Ekokamp Belli is much more than just a school camp: it is becoming a laboratory for peace. By combining ecology, culture, science and interfaith dialogue, it teaches teenagers to see themselves as agents of reconciliation in a region still marked by divisions. This project shows that by opening its doors to other traditions and promoting shared heritage, a school can prepare a generation to move beyond confrontation and embrace a culture of encounter and social friendship.



2 Peace and mental health: socio-emotional education and prevention

Peace is not just a matter of diplomacy or society: it begins in the heart of each person. A school that wants to train peacemakers must also take care of the mental and emotional health of its students. In the wake of the integral ecology promoted by Pope Francis, educational institutions have chosen to integrate socio-emotional support and the promotion of life into their mission. Two Latin American experiences provide powerful testimony to this: the Liceo María Auxiliadora in Iquique, Chile, and the Colégio de Santa Inês in São Paulo, Brazil.

1. Liceo María Auxiliadora – Iquique (Chile)

The COVID-19 pandemic has left deep scars on Chilean society, particularly among children and adolescents. Lockdown, isolation, uncertainty: young people have seen their mental health weakened, marked by anxiety, demotivation and sadness. Aware of this challenge, the Liceo María Auxiliadora in Iquique has implemented a Socio-Emotional Support Plan, in line with its educational mission and the Salesian tradition of accompaniment.

The first step was to listen. A socio-emotional survey was conducted to gather accurate data on the situation of the pupils and their families. On this basis, an interdisciplinary team – comprising pastoral staff, guidance counsellors and school coexistence officers – was set up. It met weekly to analyse situations, plan interventions and monitor the most vulnerable cases.

The actions were varied: social-emotional workshops integrated into guidance classes, individual support for students in distress, interviews with families, personalised follow-up and networking with specialists if necessary. Through this patient work, the school has been able to become a place of trust and care, where each pupil feels recognised in their vulnerability.

Gradually, this plan has gone beyond the health emergency to become a real focus of the institutional educational project. Inspired by *Laudato Si'*, it links care for oneself, others and creation: cultivating 'buen trato' as a way of living respectful, attentive and balanced relationships. The Liceo María Auxiliadora thus shows that a school of peace is first and foremost a school that cares for the whole person.



For further information:

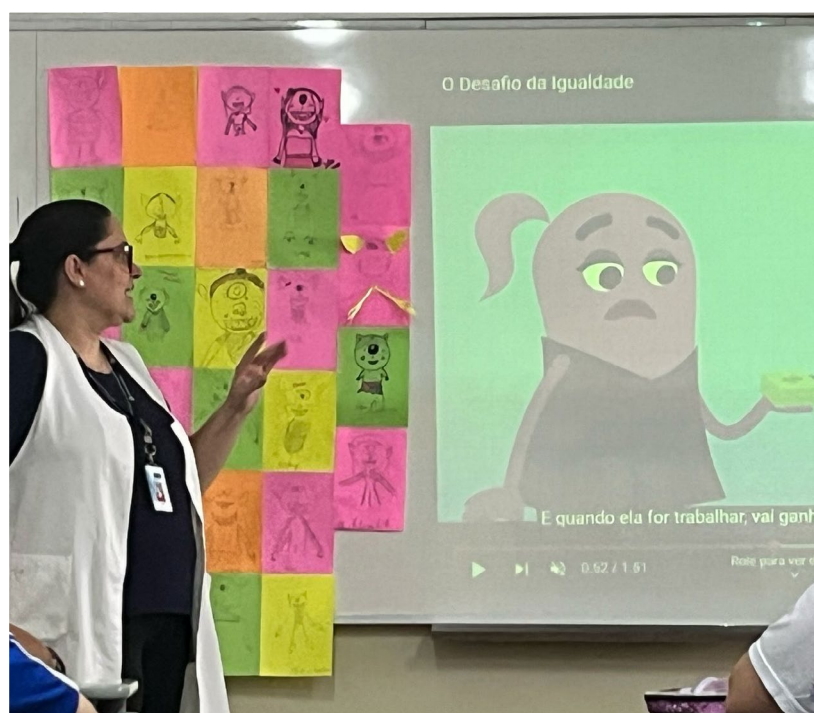


2. Colégio de Santa Inês – São Paulo (Brazil)

In the heart of São Paulo, Colégio de Santa Inês, founded by the Salesian Sisters, has made emotional health and the value of life an educational priority. Two flagship projects mark this orientation: Como um Girassol: de Frente pra Luz (September 2024) and the Projeto Anual Jubileu da Esperança 2025.

The Como um Girassol (Like a Sunflower) project, inspired by a popular Brazilian song, was carried out as part of Setembro Amarelo, Suicide Prevention Month. Students participated in workshops on mental health, empathy and the challenges of the digital world (the culture of "likes" and cyberbullying). Each class created a large sunflower with petals bearing messages of encouragement, while interactive spaces allowed students to share words of support. Teachers and administrative staff took part in peace circles and wore yellow ribbons as a visible sign of their willingness to listen.

In 2025, the Projeto Jubileu da Esperança extended this approach with a monthly themed programme: inclusion, non-violent communication, gratitude, solidarity. One emblematic activity, Desenhando o respeito ("Drawing Respect"), invited pupils to create an imaginary character based on the same instructions: no two drawings were alike. The reflection highlighted the richness of diversity and the need for empathetic listening.



These projects show how schools, faithful to the Salesian charism, can make prevention and holistic health a privileged path to peace. At Santa Inês, peace is not just the absence of conflict: it is the ability to recognise one's uniqueness, to listen to others, and to make life a value to be protected and celebrated.

This focus on pupils' emotional health is echoed in other educational contexts. In Spain, Catholic schools have chosen to establish a clear and shared framework for preventing and dealing with bullying, a major obstacle to building peaceful schools. With the *Guía para actuar en caso de acoso escolar* (Guide to dealing with bullying), they emphasise that creating a safe and caring environment is essential for young people to grow up with confidence.

3. Catholic Schools. (2017). Guide to acting in cases of bullying. DIN Impresores.© FERE-CECA. Sponsored by SM.

escuelas



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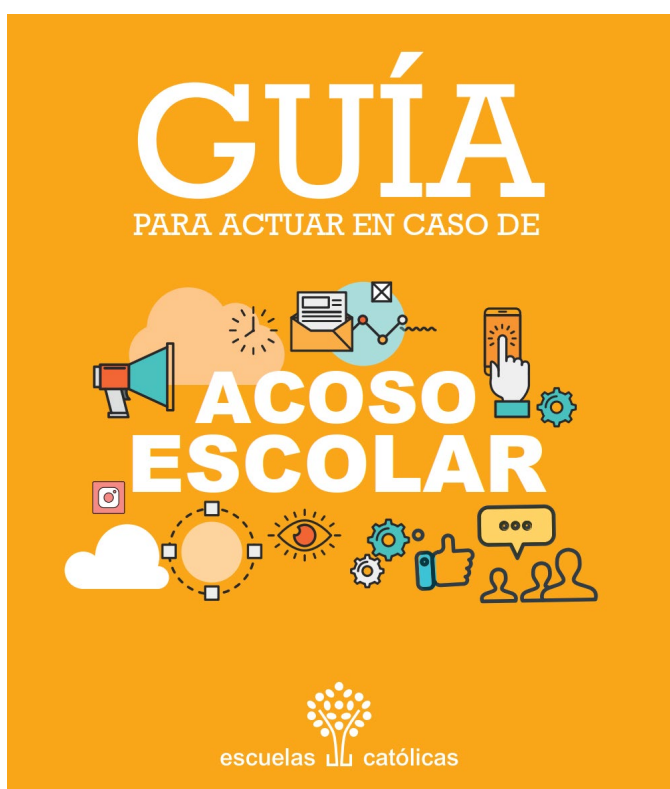
Talking about peace education means facing up to the realities that threaten it. Among these, bullying at school is one of the most serious obstacles to building safe and supportive educational environments. Catholic schools in Spain have sought to respond to this challenge with a practical tool: the Guide to Action in Cases of Bullying. This document does not merely set out procedures, but invites schools to incorporate a genuine culture of peace into their educational project, based on dialogue, acceptance and living together. It reminds us that preventing and dealing with bullying not only protects pupils, but also transmits values that shape responsible citizens and builders of fraternity.

The "Guide to dealing with bullying at school" is a document that addresses violence in schools, emphasising the importance of teaching values such as dialogue, acceptance and living together in harmony in order to resolve conflicts. This guide is inspired by the words of Pope Francis, who emphasises the need to teach young people to manage conflicts through dialogue and negotiation, while promoting a culture of life and integration.

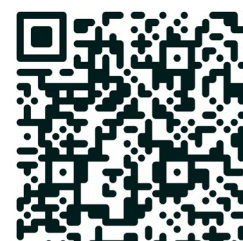
The guide acknowledges that, although school violence is a serious problem, it does not occur in all schools. However, it stresses that it is essential to be prepared to prevent and eradicate bullying.

It highlights the importance of integrating a culture of dialogue and acceptance into school curricula. This is not limited to teaching values, but also involves implementing effective prevention, detection and intervention plans against bullying. The guide suggests that these plans should be developed proactively by schools, taking into account their specific context, and that they should be widely disseminated and discussed within the educational community.

It is crucial to create a caring and attentive environment in schools. This involves promoting a culture of peace, mutual respect and vigilance against all forms of abuse. The guide recommends that schools be prepared to respond quickly to bullying, providing support to victims and seeking to resolve conflicts constructively.



Download the guide:



The guide also provides guidelines on how institutions should respond to bullying. This includes complying with regulations issued by regional public authorities and other bodies, as well as ensuring that applicable laws are enforced. It is also suggested that schools collaborate with authorities and other organisations to deal with cases of bullying.

**Frente al acoso escolar,
no mirar para otro lado**



**When faced with bullying,
don't look away**



Open and transparent communication with all members of the educational community is essential. This involves informing parents and guardians about measures to prevent and deal with bullying, and ensuring that everyone is familiar with the school's policies and procedures. The guide also advises schools to be prepared to manage media relations in the event of a bullying incident.

Finally, the guide provides clear definitions of school bullying, cyberbullying and other forms of violence. It describes the characteristics and signs of each type of bullying, as well as advice on how to identify and deal with these situations. The importance of being alert to the signs of bullying and acting quickly to protect victims and resolve conflicts is particularly emphasised.

It is essential to instil in pupils the values of dialogue, acceptance and living together, and to be prepared to respond effectively to any cases of bullying at school. By following the recommendations in this guide, schools can create a safe and welcoming environment for all pupils, promoting a culture of peace and mutual respect.

With the same perspective, but placing greater emphasis on the socio-emotional and spiritual dimensions, Salesian schools in Brazil have launched two complementary projects: Caminhos para a Paz (Paths to Peace) and the I Encontro Formativo S.E.R. (1st S.E.R. Training Meeting).

4. Paths to Peace – Salesian Sisters Educational Association of São Paulo (Brazil)

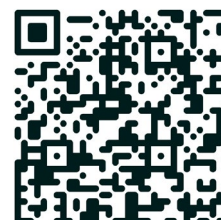
The Caminhos para a Paz project was created in Salesian schools in São Paulo as a response to the socio-emotional challenges faced by young people. The aim is to offer pupils a concrete path to peace through emotional education, creativity and the building of healthy relationships. Inspired by the Salesian charism and the Global Education Pact, the educators have designed a programme focused on non-violent communication and positive emotion management.

The activities are varied and adapted to different ages: transformative storytelling, art workshops, theatre, music and participatory debates. Each pupil is invited to share their experiences and express their emotions in a climate of trust. Peace Week is a highlight of the project, with themed days devoted to gratitude, listening, forgiveness and solidarity. Pupils also create posters, videos and literary works that are shared within the school community. The initiative is not limited to pupils: families and teachers are also involved. Meetings are organised to raise parents' awareness of the importance of compassionate

communication and to provide them with appropriate educational tools. Teachers, for their part, participate in training courses on conflict mediation and emotional support for young people.

Caminhos para a Paz is thus more than an educational project: it has become a way of life at school. Pupils discover that peace is built first and foremost through the way we speak, respect each other and help each other. This project demonstrates that peace education, when it combines emotional intelligence, creativity and spirituality, is a force for transformation not only for young people, but for the entire educational community.

For further information:



5. First S.E.R. Training Meeting – Nossa Senhora Aparecida Province, São Paulo (Brazil)

In 2024, the Inspetoria Nossa Senhora Aparecida of the Salesian Sisters organised the I Encontro Formativo S.E.R. (Ser, Escutar, Reconciliar). This meeting brought together 35 educational counsellors from various Salesian schools in São Paulo to reflect together on the educational mission of building peace in schools. It stems from the conviction that educators themselves must be trained and supported in order to be able to accompany students in their fragilities, particularly in the face of the challenges of bullying, symbolic violence and relational tensions that exist within school communities.

For several days, participants shared their experiences in the field and attended workshops on non-violent communication, preventing bullying in schools and conflict mediation. Specialist speakers presented practical methods for detecting signs of distress in pupils, encouraging active listening and establishing a climate of trust in the classroom. Time was also devoted to analysing new forms of violence linked to the digital world, in order to better understand the impact of social media on young people and develop appropriate educational strategies.

The spiritual dimension was also emphasised: the counsellors experienced times of prayer and reflection in the light of the Gospel, rediscovering that education for peace is inseparable from a culture of peace. They also worked on case studies in order to immediately put into practice what they had learned. They also worked on case studies in order to immediately put what they had learned into practice. The exchange of practices between schools from different social contexts made it possible to share concrete solutions and encourage greater solidarity between institutions.

at the end of the meeting, the participants left with a joint action plan based on three areas: strengthening support for vulnerable pupils, promoting a caring school environment, and developing cross-curricular projects for a culture of peace in each school. The I Encontro Formativo S.E.R. is therefore an important step towards spreading, within the Salesian network, an integral pedagogy that places dignity, listening and reconciliation at the centre of education. By training those who accompany young people on a daily basis, this project multiplies its impact and contributes to building schools that are truly laboratories of fraternity.



3 Peace and reconciliation: breaking the cycle of violence

Peace does not mean forgetting the wounds or pretending they do not exist. In countries such as Colombia, where war and violence have marked generations, reconciliation is a demanding path that involves remembering, seeking the truth, forgiving and rebuilding together. Schools and faith communities can play a central role in this process by supporting victims and training educators to promote a culture of non-repetition.

1. Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace – Vulnerable Communities in Colombia

The Peregrinaje de Justicia y Paz (Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace) arose in contexts of great vulnerability: families of victims of the Trujillo massacre, women's associations in the Caribbean, Zenú indigenous communities, and popular Bible study groups in Bogotá. Each of these communities carried painful memories of loss, injustice and imposed silence. The initiative sought to provide a spiritual and educational space to re-examine these stories in the light of the Word of God.

The meetings were organised around biblical texts chosen for their connection with reconciliation: Jacob and Esau meeting again after their conflict, the forgiveness offered to Paul after his conversion, the parable of the prodigal son. These stories became mirrors in which participants could see their own pain and discover the possibility of forgiveness. Community prayer, sharing life experiences and symbols (such as

lighting a candle for a loved one who has passed away) gave spiritual depth to this journey.

Gradually, these communities began to express their memories differently: no longer as a weapon to reignite conflicts, but as a seed for reconstruction. Women found new leadership roles, young people became involved, and concrete gestures of reconciliation were made in the villages. This pilgrimage provided an opportunity to experience restorative justice, which does not deny the truth but directs it towards a peaceful future.

The Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace has shown that reconciliation is not only a political process, but also a spiritual and communal endeavour. Biblical education and pastoral care can offer keys to transforming pain into hope, and to making memory not a burden, but a source of healing and fraternity.



For further information:



2. OIEC Diploma – ENS Nuestra Señora de Fátima (Sabanagrande, Colombia)

Training artisans of reconciliation is not just about victims: it also requires preparing teachers who are capable of guiding new generations. It is with this in mind that the École Normale Supérieure Nuestra Señora de Fátima, in Sabanagrande, in partnership with Educapaz and the OIEC, launched the Diplomado Pedagogías y didácticas para las paces, la verdad y la no repetición.



This 160-hour programme is aimed at future teachers. It is based on four modules: Questioning Contexts, Paths to Peace, Building Peace from School and Our Own Paths to Peace. Students analyse the causes of violence, explore examples of reconciliation around the world and in Colombia, and design educational projects tailored to their local reality. The approach combines synchronous activities (classes, debates, lectures) and asynchronous activities (readings, creative productions, collaborative projects).

The unique feature of the diplomado is that it works on both a personal and professional level. Students are invited to reflect on their own relationship with truth, memory and forgiveness, and to cultivate an attitude of listening and hope. At the same time, they learn to develop concrete teaching tools to foster a climate of trust, dialogue and restorative justice in their classrooms.



This experience has already enabled hundreds of young teachers to be trained, many of whom now work in rural schools affected by poverty and violence. The projects developed – peace narratives, mediation activities, memory mapping – are becoming valuable resources for communities. By focusing on teacher training, the diplomado affirms that education can be the driving force behind a reconciled Colombia, where the non-repetition of violence is a shared responsibility.

4 Peace and youth: training tomorrow's artisans

Young people carry within them a force of hope: their creativity, their sense of justice and their capacity for commitment make them essential actors for peace. Several experiences show how schools and universities support this vocation by giving children, teenagers and students the means to become peacemakers in their daily lives.

1. Instituto São José – São José dos Campos (Brazil)

The Instituto São José, faithful to the Salesian charism, launched the Coração Oratoriano na Prática project to embody the commitments of the Global Educational Pact in school life. The objective is clear: to develop concrete solidarity between children, young people and local communities, particularly between a well-resourced urban school and a disadvantaged rural school.

Each school level was involved in a tailored project: the youngest children made recycled toys, primary school pupils organised a book collection and wrote illustrated stories, secondary school pupils created vegetable gardens and shared communal meals, while the older pupils lobbied the authorities to improve the infrastructure of the partner school, partner school, in particular by building an ecological septic tank.

These activities enabled the children to discover the importance of collaboration, empathy and service. By experiencing solidarity through simple but concrete actions, they realised that peace is not just about grand speeches, but is lived out in human relationships and civic engagement.

The project also strengthened the bond between families, teachers and the local community. Parents involved in the activities saw their children become more attentive, open and engaged. By teaching service and social responsibility, the school is turning young people into true protagonists of peace, capable of transforming their immediate environment.



For further
information:



2. Changwon Saint Mary's Kindergarten – South Korea

in Changwon, South Korea, peace education begins at the age of five with the Little Peacemakers programme. Designed for very young children, it consists of seven fun and interactive sessions. Children discover what peace is through games, drawings, stories and discussions tailored to their age group.

The programme also draws on historical and contemporary figures of peace: Gandhi, Malala, Martin Luther King and Kim Gu. By learning about these figures, children understand that peace is not an abstract idea but a story lived by real people who had the courage to change things.

Concrete activities reinforce this learning: releasing fish to protect nature, writing messages of peace on paper doves, or offering a small symbolic gift to a classmate to express kindness. These simple gestures become a language of peace for them.

through this programme, children grow up believing that they can be "angels of peace" in their families and schools. They discover at an early age that peace begins with small everyday gestures: sharing, listening, respecting and protecting creation.



3. Jeju Isidore Youth Centre – South Korea

Also in Korea, the Isidore Youth Centre, run by the Salesian Sisters, organised an international camp entitled The Path to Peace. For four days, eighteen Korean youths, ten migrant children and sixteen international volunteers came together to explore the mechanisms of hatred and violence.

through the "pyramid of hatred", they studied how prejudice and discrimination can turn into hate speech, physical violence and, in extreme cases, genocide. This awareness was fostered through simulation workshops, analyses of real-life cases, and artistic creations such as theatre, videos and webtoons.

The camp was marked by a highlight: a public performance in Jeju Market, where the young people presented their artistic creations to raise awareness among the local population about human dignity and the rejection of hatred. This moment allowed the teenagers to transition from learners to visible and committed social actors.

The intercultural experience was also decisive. Exchanges between young Koreans and refugee children from Yemen showed that peace is built through encounters and respect for differences. When they left the camp, the participants shared a common conviction: everyone can become an agent of peace in their society.

For further information:



4. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana – Bogotá (Colombia)

in Bogotá, the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana has created a unique academic space, Pontipaz, where students are invited to connect theological, sociological and educational reflection with practical experience in peacebuilding.

The course offers theoretical training on reconciliation, non-violence and human rights, as well as dialogue workshops and creative activities. Each year, students organise a large public day on campus, with stands, games and workshops where they invite other students, families and children to reflect together on peace.



This project has a dual effect: it transforms university life into a space of fraternity and sends students out into the field. Participants extend their learning in local communities by leading youth groups, parish catechism classes or social projects. In this way, the peace studied in the classroom becomes praxis: a concrete commitment to society.

Pontipaz illustrates that universities can be much more than places of academic learning: it can be a laboratory for peace, where young people learn to be committed leaders, aware of their responsibility in transforming the world.

5. Guardians of the Pact – Spain

Since Pope Francis' inspiring call to build a Global Educational Pact, Catholic schools have felt both the responsibility and the impetus to seek concrete ways to implement it. This call is not simply a topic for reflection, but a bold proposal that urges us to make education a real lever for transformation towards a more just, united and peaceful world.

The Global Education Compact is neither a simple text nor an educational theory. It sets out a clear roadmap with essential criteria for achieving lasting and genuine peace. Such peace cannot exist without genuine, deep and active mutual commitment. The words 'pact' and 'peace' share a common origin, reminding us that one cannot exist without the other.

We are convinced that this peace can only be built by addressing all dimensions of the Covenant in a coherent and interconnected manner: human dignity and fundamental rights, fraternity and cooperation, technology and integral ecology, education for and citizenship, culture and religions. To omit any of these areas would be to weaken the global vision of the person and the world that we seek to convey.

It was in this context that the Guardians of the Covenant initiative was born, an educational programme aimed at pupils in their final year of primary school. It aims to offer a memorable experience that touches children's minds, hearts and hands. Through five symbolic characters, each associated with a dimension of the Pact, pupils become guardians of fundamental values for living together and building the common good. *Derhu* embodies human dignity and fundamental rights; *Frater*, fraternity and cooperation; *Ecotec*, technology and ecology; *No-Vi*, peace and citizenship; *Cultu*, dialogue between cultures and religions.

Each character is accompanied by numerous educational tools: videos, songs, group activities, biblical quotations and concrete actions. The aim is not only to understand the values of the Covenant, but to live them, to make them one's own and to implement them in daily life. The Guardians of the Covenant do not simply impart knowledge; they engage students in simple but meaningful actions that can make the world a more humane place.

SÚMATE  AL
Pacto Educativo
Global

PORQUE JUNTOS $\Rightarrow$ SOMOS LUZ $\Leftarrow$



GLOBAL COMPACT
ON EDUCATION

The project is also part of the highlights of the liturgical year. An Easter Mission was created for the period of Lent and Advent, and a Mission of Hope is underway to involve children in the Jubilee of Hope planned for 2025. Hope planned for the year 2025.

The Guardians of the Covenant are not just an educational programme. They are deeply committed to providing an education that touches the soul and shapes young people to be responsible and aware of their mission in building a better future. For it is from the pact that peace is born, and from education that true hope springs.



Regarder sur YouTube



For further information:

<https://www.escuelascaticas.es/sumate-al-pacto-educativo/>



5 Networks and movements for peace: giving it a global dimension

While peace is experienced in classrooms and local communities, it takes on a new dimension when it is promoted by networks and movements capable of connecting experiences across borders. These platforms enable the sharing of methods, give visibility to local initiatives and create a sense of belonging to a universal mission.

1. Pax Christi – A charism of reconciliation

The Pax Christi peace movement was founded in France in the winter of 1944 by a female teacher, Marthe Dortel-Claudot, who, during a silent prayer, received a strong call to pray for Germany. During silent prayer, she received a strong call to pray for Germany. She found support within the Church of France in the person of Monsignor Théas to develop this intuition, which very quickly became a chain of prayers, then an international movement.

Today, Pax Christi has 10 sections in Europe and draws on a network of more than 120 member organisations around the world, working for peace and reconciliation in more than 50 countries.

Missions (charism of reconciliation, and areas of commitment)

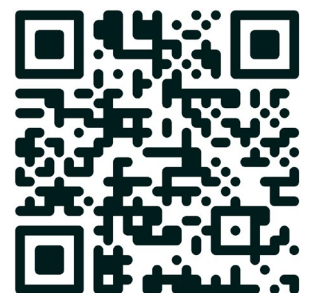
True to its charisma for reconciliation, Pax Christi's main mission is to transmit and bring to life the values of Christ, Prince of Peace, at the heart of societies. Historically, the Movement has built its commitment to peace around five complementary areas: disarmament, the fight for human rights, the defence of Creation, solidarity-based development and the peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue and peace education.

Commitment to education for peace and active non-violence

Internationally, the Pax Christi Movement is committed to supporting peacebuilders in danger and promoting reconciliation between communities in war and conflict zones. Drawing on its network of member organisations and partners (dioceses, teaching teams, civil society), Pax Christi carries out training and peace education activities for children, youth groups and, more broadly, communities to strengthen their capacity to build peace education for children, youth groups and, more broadly, communities to strengthen their capacity to resolve conflicts peacefully and reduce violence in interpersonal relationships (in schools, neighbourhoods and families).

For further information:

paxchristi.net



2. Living Peace International – A global pedagogy of peace



Born from the charisma of the Focolare Movement and the intuition of Chiara Lubich, Living Peace International is now a global educational platform that connects thousands of schools, associations and youth groups in more than 100 countries. Its mission is simple and universal: to live peace every day and share it with others.

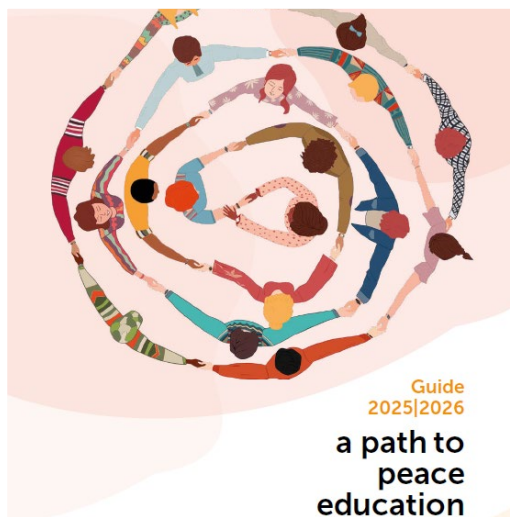
The project is based on a concrete pedagogy: inviting children and young people to make a small gesture of peace every day and to share it with others. The famous "Challenge for Peace" is the best-known expression of this: writing an intention or a gesture of peace on a coloured card, exchanging it with a friend, and thus creating a visible chain of fraternity. These simple gestures, replicated around the world, remind young people that peace is within reach.

Living Peace also offers international virtual meetings, joint campaigns and training for teachers and educators. Pupils understand that they are not alone: at the same time, in other countries, other children are making the same commitment. This sense of global belonging is a powerful educational force that nourishes their hope and commitment.

By linking local initiatives to a global perspective, Living Peace helps children and young people discover the universal dimension of peace. They grow up with the conviction that their actions, however modest, are part of a global movement capable of transforming societies.

For further information:

livingpeaceinternational.org



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...

*“Let us invoke the Spirit
of love and peace,
so that it may open borders,
break down walls, dissolve hatred,
and help us to live as children
of the one Father in heaven.”*

Pape Léon XIV

Pentecost Homily – June 8, 2025

”

CONCLUSION



**Sowing peace,
nurturing humanity**

Sowing peace, nurturing humanity

*"Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope.
Hope breeds peace."*

— Confucius

Education will not change everything.

But nothing will really change without her.

Faced with the upheavals of our time — ecological crisis, geopolitical tensions, democratic fragility, visible or silent violence — education appears not only as a fundamental right, but as a global emergency. It is an essential lever for transforming mindsets, breaking down walls and building bridges where borders arise. The school, in its most profound mission, does not merely transmit knowledge: it shapes individuals capable of discernment, responsibility and otherness.

In a world riddled with divisions, uncertainties, and new or persistent violence, school remains one of the last refuges where lasting hope can be found. A place of healing and inspiration. It can be much more than a place of learning: a place of inner transformation, fruitful dialogue, social connection and fraternity. A place where we learn to know ourselves, to listen to others, to debate without destroying, to build a common meaning together.

at a time when tensions over identity are rising, communities are becoming more insular, and attitudes of domination or exclusion are becoming more prevalent, we need places that shape free, open and responsible minds. An education centred on the individual, which not only teaches skills but also prepares people for a fully human life, rooted in justice, solidarity, respect for life and peace.

It is not a question of adding an extra subject to the curriculum. It is a question of rethinking the very nature of education. It is about creating environments where every pupil feels safe to learn, to dare, to become.

Places where vulnerability is not a weakness, but an opportunity for connection.

Places where we teach about conflict so as not to teach violence.

Places where we understand that peace is not the absence of noise, but the active presence of dialogue, respect and cooperation.

Each classroom can thus become a discreet haven of peace, a micro-laboratory of humanity.

Every school day is an opportunity to learn to cooperate, listen and respect others.

A kind glance, a conflict transformed into dialogue, a project carried out as a team, a voice finally heard... These are the first steps towards reconciliation, often silent, but heralding a new world to come. They don't make the headlines. But they change lives.

A global highlight: the call of 2026

In 2026, **the International Catholic Education Office will launch** a strong appeal to the global education community at an international meeting at UNESCO dedicated to peace education. This event will bring together educators, students, decision-makers and partners from all continents.

It will carry a clear, universal message:

- **Peace is built in the classroom.**
- **It cannot be described: it must be taught, learned and experienced.**
- **It does not depend solely on governments, but on every educational community.**

This appeal will not be merely symbolic. It will mark a turning point: a global commitment to making schools fertile ground in which the values of living together, justice, mutual respect and fraternity can flourish.



A shared commitment: education for peace

But this commitment cannot wait until 2026. It starts today.

across the world, educators are already striving to build spaces of peace in everyday life. To support and inform this approach, here is a manifesto of ten commitments, offered as a compass for all schools – Catholic or otherwise – that believe education can transform the world:

- 1.** Placing the human being at the heart of any educational approach.
- 2.** Create a school environment based on trust, fairness and kindness.
- 3.** Promoting cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity as a source of wealth.
- 4.** Learning to manage conflicts through mediation and dialogue.
- 5.** Encourage cooperation rather than competition among pupils.
- 6.** Providing spaces for expression, listening, and truthful speech.
- 7.** Committing to social justice and inclusion for all.
- 8.** Developing environmental awareness and respect for living things.
- 9.** Educating for responsibility, critical thinking, and solidarity.
- 10.** Demonstrating through our daily actions that peace is possible, tangible and contagious.



Every school can become a workshop for peace.

Every educator is a builder of fellowship.

Every pupil is a builder of the future.

The road is long, but it starts here.

Now. Together.

Conclusion:

AT the call of peacemakers

"The path to peace requires hearts and minds trained and educated to be attentive to others, capable of recognising the common good in today's context."

— Speech at the Arena of Peace, Verona, 30 May 2025.

Throughout these pages, we have travelled across continents and cultures. We have seen peace emerge in the simple gestures of a Korean child offering a drawing to his classmate, in the tears of a Colombian community rereading its memory in the light of the Word, in the laughter of Brazilian teenagers discovering that solidarity transforms their school, in the determination of Croatian teachers to make virtues a way of life. These stories, so different and yet so similar, tell us a profound truth: peace is not an abstraction, it is a learning process.

But they also tell us something else: **peace is fragile**. It requires a constant choice. It demands courage, intelligence and patience. It means facing up to fear, overcoming wounds and rejecting the easy option of violence. It is not achieved once and for all: it is woven, day after day, into the complexity of human relationships. That is why Pope Leo XIV can assert with force: "Peace is built in the heart and from the heart, by eliminating pride and the spirit of revenge, and by choosing our words carefully. peace is first and foremost a matter of the heart, but it becomes a matter of civilisation.

This book is a call to action. Not some distant action reserved for large institutions, but everyday action that is within everyone's reach. Teachers, parents, young people, leaders: we have the power to transform the way we speak, judge and educate. We have the ability to make every classroom, every school playground, every home a small cell of peace. If we fail at this level, then grand declarations will remain empty words. But if we succeed here, then the world will truly change.

Leo XIV reminded us of this in his first words to the world: *"Peace to you all!"* – not as a pious wish, but as a mandate. This peace, he said, is "defenceless, disarming, humble and persevering." It does not seek to dominate, but to connect. It does not impose, it transforms. It is not content with merely stating ideals; it forges a concrete path.

So what can we do? This book shows us: learn to dialogue, to listen, to forgive, to protect life, to value each person. But we must go further: make peace a culture, a logic that permeates all our institutions, our relationships, our collective choices. It is not just a matter of dreaming of a better world, it is a matter of building it — with patience, with determination, with faith.

The great temptation of our time is discouragement: believing that nothing will change, that violence is inevitable, that injustice is too strong. But, as Leo XIV proclaims: *"God loves us, God loves you all, and evil will not triumph"*. Yes, God loves us, and evil will not triumph. This certainty is not an escape, it is a strength. It drives us to act, to believe that every effort counts, that every step towards reconciliation opens a breach in the thickest walls.

Each of us is therefore challenged. **What will remain of this book if we merely admire it?** Nothing. But if it becomes an inner provocation for us, then it will have achieved its goal. If, tomorrow, a teacher chooses to respond to violence with patience; if a young person dares to defend those who are excluded; if a community opens itself up to dialogue; if a family learns to forgive... then this book will be alive.



So this is where our call to action lies:

- **Take action where you are:** educators, pupils, parents — everyone has a role to play. In the classroom and at home, in the silence of listening and in demanding dialogue, in practical solidarity and in school projects. These small gestures, when multiplied, transform lives.
- **Choosing words, purifying language:** words can be weapons or seeds. Beginning with humble speech, genuine listening, and forgiveness is a solid foundation for peace.
- **Create spaces for encounter:** schools as places of openness, movements as connecting links, cultural or interfaith initiatives as bridges. Where walls stand — whether physical, cultural or psychological — let us dare to tear them down.
- **Committing to non-repetition and reconciliation:** in traumatised contexts, education must be a place of truth, restorative justice and forgiveness. Not to forget, but to heal.
- **Living peace as a spiritual and communal responsibility:** peace does not come easily. It requires humility, simplicity and perseverance from each and every one of us. It is fraternity incarnate, welcoming others, prayer and conversion of the heart.

For **history is not written in advance. It depends on us.** It depends on our choice to be peacemakers. It depends on our courage to build bridges rather than walls, to choose brotherhood rather than hatred, to believe in hope rather than fatalism.

Let this book end with an invitation. An invitation not to remain spectators. An invitation to respond to Leo XIV's call: "Peace be with you all" — not as a wish, but as a mission. An invitation to become, each in our own place, a sign of hope. Then, step by step, together, we will be able to write another story: that of a reconciled, fraternal, confident humanity. Yes, peace is possible. Yes, it begins with us.

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

*"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.
Where there is discord, let me bring union.
Where there is error, let me bring truth.
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.*

*O Lord, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love,
for it is in giving that one receives,
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,
it is in forgiving that one is forgiven,
it is in dying that one awakens
to eternal life."*







OIEC

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