



To the Reverend
Brother Ernesto Sánchez Barba, fms
Superior General of the
Marist Brothers of the Schools

I was very pleased to learn that your Institute is planning to launch the “Global Education Pact”, with the aim of promoting a humanity that speaks the language of fraternity. I warmly greet you, the brothers, the educators and all those involved in this pleasing initiative, and I invite you all to look to Jesus, the patient and merciful Teacher.

May faith in Him be a source of ever new energy for you and may you continue your mission with joy, without ever tiring. To all who benefit from your educational and pastoral ardour, may you bear witness to the love you experience in your encounter with Jesus.

For more than two hundred years, through your schools, your activities and your commitment to solidarity, you have dedicated yourselves particularly to the new generations. You have followed the intuition of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, the young French priest who, at the beginning of the 19th century, took care of the many young people, abandoned and without future prospects, that the revolution had bequeathed to history. Following in the footsteps of the founder and remaining dynamically faithful to his charism, you are called to respond to the challenges that today’s society poses to the Lord’s disciples.

The “Global Education Pact” that you are about to launch is an opportunity to boldly tackle the educational problems of today’s young people, with a focus on the most disadvantaged situations and on those living in the most precarious conditions. Do not tire of being an educative and

consoling presence, especially where hardship is greatest, through schools, associations and youth centres. Involve families and let them collaborate with teachers in your educational projects.

May your educational projects be teachers of Christian life, occasions of fraternal communion, schools of service to one's neighbour, especially those in need who hope for concrete gestures of solidarity. Do not allow yourselves to be paralysed by difficulties, continue faithfully the journey, remain always open to others and always available. Our times are marked by individualism and indifference, which lead to loneliness and the dismissal of many realities. The Christian response does not lie in a resigned acknowledgement of the present poverty of values nor in a nostalgic longing for the past. Rather it lies in charity, animated by hope, which knows how to look tenderly at 'today' and, with humility, make all things new.

A sincere thanks to your Institute. I hope that you will be able to offer a continuing formative pathway to young people. I ask you to pray for me and I send you my heartfelt apostolic blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 12 August 2021

Francisco