

ISSUE 12 · FEBRUARY 2023

# NEWSLETTER

European Committee for Catholic Education

## EDITORIAL

LOUIS-MARIE PIRON, SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear friends,

A new year is a blank page. It is up to us to write the tale that we will live together. In this story, the place of each of us is essential and the quality of the relationships between us is decisive. This year will certainly be marked by anxiety and uncertainty. In this context, let us remain welcoming to each other and keep a positive and benevolent outlook on our pupils and on all the people who work in our schools.

During the course of this year, the CEEC will be pursuing several projects. We will be pleased to meet again at our General Assemblies and to build relationships with each other. We will continue to apply for an Erasmus grant. We will also strengthen our relationships with our partners both in the church and in institutional and political spheres.

In this newsletter, you will discover initiatives from different countries in Europe and the world as well as news from our different partners. Let us remain particularly attentive to what our friends in Ukraine and in the suffering countries are experiencing.

Finally, I would like to welcome the election of Hervé Lecomte as Secretary General of the OIEC. He succeeds Philippe Richard, whom we thank for his absolute dedication to the service of Catholic education worldwide. Together, and at our own level, we will continue to work together to promote a Christian anthropology of education.

Louis-Marie Piron

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## CEEC ACTIVITIES

### OUR MEETINGS

The Executive Board meeting was held on 5 October 2022. The members met in Paris, in the offices of the General Secretariat of French Catholic Education (SGEC) where Louis-Marie Piron has been working as the Secretary General of the CEEC since 1st July. He is accompanied in his task by Géraldine Vallée, employed full time by the CEEC as office manager since the beginning of the school year. Thanks to the support of the Secrétariat Général pour l'Enseignement Catholique (SeGEC), she works from Brussels in a dedicated office.

In December 2022, the members of the General Assembly met in Marseille for the GA meeting which followed the Congress of the International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC) - more information in the section "News from Catholic Education in the World". The GA meeting was marked by the intervention of Father Petro Maiba, the representative of the Catholic schools of Ukraine, who described the situation and the needs of the schools in his country. On this occasion, the CEEC decided to relaunch its call for solidarity (see the section "Our Actions") which will allow raising additional donations for the Ukrainian schools in need.

Alongside these issues, the CEEC meeting was an opportunity for its members to exchange on current events in each country, as well as on the work and projects undertaken by the association (school population statistics, training of teachers and principals, international projects, etc.).

At the same time, the members dealt with legal and administrative issues, in particular the revision of its statutes. Finally, the floor was given to several key partners of the association: representatives of the UNAEC and the OIEC (in particular in the framework of the permanent representation to the Council of Europe) as well as the OIDEL.



@M-T Igréc



## OUR ACTIONS

### SOLIDARITY: €2 TO REBUILD UKRAINIAN SCHOOLS

20 February 2022. The Russian invasion begins in Ukraine. After almost a year of war, the CEEC relaunches a solidarity campaign with its Ukrainian member: "2€ to rebuild Ukrainian schools".

As early as May 2022, a call for solidarity was launched following a webinar co-organised by the CEEC, the OIEC, and the Commission for Education of Catholic Schools in Ukraine. This campaign raised almost €10,000 which was donated to representatives of Catholic schools in Ukraine.



Even today, a few weeks before the beginning of Lent, the call for donations remains a priority for our association.

Ukrainian schools are now transformed into bomb shelters.

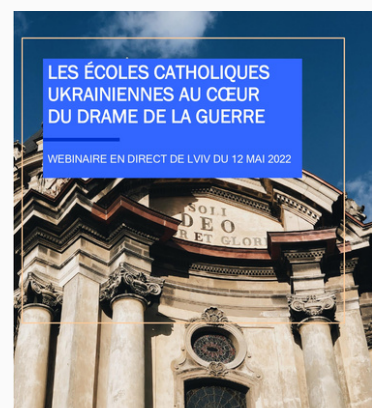
The schools in the western part of the country are welcoming many children who have fled the regions close to the front line. The aim of this new campaign, "€2 to rebuild Ukrainian schools", is to offer psychological support to teachers suffering from anxiety and stress. It is essential to take care of adults and give them the keys to accompany children in these critical situations. In addition, the money raised will help rebuild and secure school buildings.

Informing, exchanging, and connecting schools in Europe and around the world with representatives of Catholic schools in Ukraine is also an objective of this second campaign. To this end, the Commission for Education of Catholic Schools of Ukraine offers information and awareness-raising materials for pupils in schools in Europe and around the world (currently only available in English).

Teacher, student, headmaster, national or regional representative, do you want to participate in this campaign? Please send your donations to the account BE68 2100 4717 9034 (BIC/SWIFT: GEBABEBB), with the communication "SOLIDARITY UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 2023". All funds raised will be transferred to the secretariat of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Schools.

More information:

- Discover the video presentation of the campaign? [Follow this link.](#)
- Read the webinar transcripts of May 2022? [Follow this link.](#)
- Download the pedagogical material to work on this theme with your students? [Follow this link.](#)





## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN FRENCH- AND GERMAN-SPEAKING BELGIUM: MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Last August, the General Secretariat of Catholic Education (SeGEC) published the new version of its educational project "Mission of the Christian School". This document had not evolved for 25 years. It was therefore essential for the SeGEC to reappropriate its educational project by bringing it closer to the current challenges that Catholic schools in French and German-speaking Belgium are facing. The document is available on the [SeGEC website](#) (in French only). A video has also been published on the [YouTube channel](#) to promote the project (English subtitles available).

It also found that there is overwhelming support among parents (also 78 per cent) for the Catholic Church to have a role in continuing to shape and influence the ethos of the school.

The research shows that 'Catholic' for Irish people is now more about the development of a moral compass, having an awareness of social justice, social inclusion, and having care for self and for others rather than the old reliance on religious practice, sacraments and tradition. It is also clear that the advantages a Catholic ethos can bring to a school are 'foundational' and 'developmental' in terms of morality and ethics – building a 'whole' person of empathetic and charitable conscience, something that may not be achieved if left wholly in the hands of the state.

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### ENSEIGNEMENT CATHOLIQUE EN IRLANDE : RÉCENTE ÉTUDE « GENESIS » SUR LA PERCEPTION DES ÉCOLES CATHOLIQUES IRLANDAISES

Summary by Paul Meany

A national representative survey of 500 parents of school-going children, both primary and secondary, was conducted in April 2019 by Genesis, an independent survey company, to measure public attitudes towards schools of a Catholic ethos. A summary of the research is available [online](#).

At a time when over 90% of primary schools are Catholic, the survey shows a high level of satisfaction among parents of primary school-going children with the quality of education being delivered. The data found that 78 per cent of parents were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the school their child was attending.

While parents have the ultimate responsibility for helping their children address challenges, they also give schools a very clear mandate for social and moral development, and for navigating the complexity of childhood. They are doing this in the understanding that their school holds a Catholic ethos. Here, teachers are a key touchpoint as they navigate the area between faith formation and moral and social conscience development.

In conclusion, the Church, and Catholicism, on its 'best day' represents a focus point of hope, community, care, charity, respect, and ultimately a sense of greater purpose that builds resilience and leads to a more fulfilling life. Parents recognise the importance of instilling this purpose, and a greater sense of 'why' for their children.



## CALLS AND INFORMATION

### COMECE : CONTRIBUTION ON INTEGRAL EDUCATION

On 1 September, the Working Group on Culture and Education of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) unveiled its latest contribution to the European Education Area (EEA). The publication focuses on the notion of integral education, echoing the Global Compact on Education promoted by Pope Francis, and develops specific recommendations for the six dimensions of the EEA in the context of the current educational challenges faced by the EU. To read the full text, follow the link.

### THEO VAN DER ZEE APPOINTED PROFESSOR AT RADBOD UNIVERSITY

Since the 1st of January, Theo van der Zee, Verus representative in the CEEC and researcher at the Titus Brandsma Institute has been appointed professor at Radboud University in Nijmegen. He will teach "Education in a religious and ethical perspective". Initiated by VERUS, the chair is housed in the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies of the Radboud University. The CEEC wishes him every success in his new position.

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN FRANCE: THE PROSPECTIVE APPROACH

The "Prospective approach" is a national initiative launched by the General Secretariat of Catholic Education in France (SGEC) in September 2020. The aim of this initiative is to propose a prospective vision of Catholic education in France following a diagnostic survey sent to diocesan administrations. The results of this survey made it possible to identify several issues for today and tomorrow - presented in the form of 4 directions and 12 pedagogical, organisational or educational programmes during a one-day meeting on 11 January. During this event, the diocesan administrations were invited to take up some of these programmes in order to develop them more widely at local level by working, for example, on new approaches and tools related to these fundamental questions. The programmes that are of interest to all will be implemented and supported at a national level.

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS IN THE WORLD

### 21ST CONGRESS OF THE OIEC

The OIEC Congress was held last December. This international event was a great success as it brought together no less than 450 stakeholders in Catholic education from all over the world. The Congress was marked by rich contributions made available online on the [OIEC YouTube channel](#). The event also provided an opportunity for exchange and sharing between the participants and for building international contacts. This 21st OIEC Congress was also marked by the end of Philippe Richard's mandate as OIEC Secretary General. He has been succeeded by Hervé Lecomte, diocesan director of Le Havre (Normandy) and manager of the "[Planet Fraternity](#)" project. The CEEC reiterates its warmest congratulations to him.



@G.Vallée



## CALENDAR

8 March 2023 : Executive Board meeting in Brussels

21 and 22 April 2023 (expected arrival on Thursday 20 April): 100th meeting of the CEEC General Assembly in Vilnius (Lithuania).

20 and 21 October 2023 (expected arrival on Thursday 19 October): 101st meeting of the General Assembly in Madrid (Spain).

The CEEC Secretariat wishes you lots of projects  
and encounters in 2023



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