What is OIEC?

OIEC (International Association of Catholic Education) is a federation bringing together national organizations in charge of Catholic schools at the country level and religious congregations engaged in educational services. OIEC was created in 1952. With its headquarters in Rome, it works closely with the Congregation for Catholic Education. OIEC represents Catholic schools to international organizations and promotes exchanges between its members and regional organizations. It has consultative status with the ECOSOC at the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe.

What is the OIEC Congress?

Every 4 years, OIEC organizes a World Congress, bringing together representatives of Catholic schools from around the world. The 20th Congress is being held on June 5-8, 2019 at Fordham University with more than 500 participants from over 80 countries. The Vatican is represented by Archbishop Vincenzo Zani, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education. The Opening Mass at Saint Patrick’s Cathedral is chaired by Bishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the USA. The closing ceremony is held at the United Nations at the invitation of the Holy See Observer Mission to the United Nations.

What Is the Theme of the Congress and Its Aims?

The theme of this year’s Congress is to educate towards fraternal humanism to build a civilization of love. The Congress takes place within the framework of Agenda 2030 and SDG4 (quality education for all) and the vision articulated by in Laudato Si to develop a new paradigm of Catholic education that is inclusive, open to dialogue, aware of climate change, and committed to integral human development as a source of hope for the world today. The issue of preventing abuse of minors is also considered. Other topics such as the Christian identity of Catholic schools, the ability to serve the poor, the safeguarding of the “Common House”, the constructive presence within international organizations, the definition of new pedagogical resources, and the synergy between formal and non-formal education will also be discussed through Labs. Commitments for Catholic schools will be suggested and discussed with input from 70 keynotes speakers and experts sharing innovating experiences. The closing ceremony takes place at the United Nations, during which participants will hear a message from Pope Francis and proclaim the main commitments mad at the Congress.