

Collaborate with families in the education of children and young people

Asunción Pérez. Superior General of the Piarist Sisters



As an Institute, what are the main objectives that you have set for yourselves to energize the pedagogical and pastoral project?

We Piarists want to live in an "attitude of go forward" to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. Our main objectives at the Institute level are:

- Continue to give life to the charism of Paula Montal, so that our works of formal and non-formal education have continuity and future as platforms of evangelization.
- Boost Our Educational Style with new language, methods, and presences.
- Be attentive to the needs of our environment to give a charismatic and creative response.
- Continue to promote in our works an integral education in Piety and Letters, faith, and culture, with academic quality.
- Educate to be critical, in the care with the "common home" and in the commitment to social transformation.
- Carry out a qualified permanent formation, at the personal and community level, in the human, spiritual and charismatic dimension.
- Work and develop the Piarist Identity with the people who make up the Educational Community and CERCA movement.
- To promote the Piarist Identity and innovation in the charismatic, pedagogical, and pastoral fields, elaborating action plans rooted in our Charism, with a vision of the future and flexibility.

We could say that our main objective is the integral education of children and youth, in collaboration with families, through a humanizing, evangelizing and innovative school.

What organization do you have to accompany the project: ¿teams, secretariats?

In the General Congregation we work by areas, and we are promoting several commissions that work in a network and at the international level. Although the reality of each Demarcation is very different, due to the different educational laws, language, and cultures, we accompany and monitor the teams and commissions, through online meetings, canonical and occasional visits, and other meetings of managers and coordinators.

How do you work on the issue of charismatic identity with your educators?

We are developing processes of growth in Piarist identity and sense of belonging, from a mutual appreciation, between religious and laity, sharing in the day to day, Charism and Mission.

We believe that the shared experience of the charism transforms, attracts, makes you dream, passionate and mobilizes so that dreams come true. What constitutes a community, both religious and educational, is not the work we do, but an invisible force that unites and strengthens us to walk together towards a common goal.

We promote a systematic and specific formation in the legacy received from Paula Montal, Joseph Calasanz, and our pedagogical tradition.

Among others, we have planned these formative actions:

- Systematic formation courses with newly incorporated educators
- Lifelong learning courses for educators.
- Annual formation meetings in educational communities with charismatic themes



- Formation in Continuous Prayer
- Dynamics of work and training on the features of Paula Montal's school
- Formation in Self-Character and Piarist Identity

What does the practice and reflection of St. Paula Montal contribute to the Piarist charism of specifics?

The wish of St. Paula Montal was that all her daughters be "true Piarists", our charism and spirituality are inspired by St. Joseph of Calasanz. Educating in "Piety and Letters" is the axis of our educational style at the pedagogical-pastoral level.

Paula Montal, centuries later and in the context of nineteenth-century Spain, gives a novel, innovative imprint to her schools, her motto "Saving families by teaching girls the Holy Fear and love of God" is complemented by the Calasanzian motto to which it incorporates women and the family.

Out of fidelity to the charismatic intuition of Mother Paula, we need to know the complex and diverse reality that is lived today around the family and its impact on the lives of our students. Guiding and accompanying these situations, as "Amoris laetitia" tells us, requires specific and quality training. That is why some Piarists and lay people must prepare in this area.

In reference to the situation of women, we recreate our charism by going out to meet other women who need integration, dignity, and promotion, to create projects and spaces for listening, dialogue and welcome where we can accompany them and offer compassion, comfort, and hope.

What pedagogical experiences are you promoting at the Institute and of which you are especially happy?

We must bear in mind that in the diversity of countries it is not easy to promote the same experiences. These are the most widespread and of the most satisfied we are

- Annual pedagogical-pastoral motto, which during the school year accompanies, guides all the activity of the center. It is especially satisfying because it is very participatory and creates a climate that favors coexistence between teachers and students.
- Work by projects, mainly in Early Childhood and Primary Education
- Participate in mobility programs with Erasmus
- Exchange with students from our schools in different countries
- Non-formal education experiences

The time of pandemic has put our pedagogical abilities to the test. Regarding our schools, we must recognize with satisfaction and admiration the human and pedagogical response of all our educators, as well as the capacity for innovation and creativity in dynamics and new technologies.

