

Inspiring encounters

Catholic Schools Congress. Granada 24-26 November

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Participants from the Provincial Secretariat of Escolapios Emmaus schools, we attended the sixteenth congress of Catholic Schools of Spain entitled: Encounters that inspire, a spoiler of what really happened. Around 1,800 teachers, management teams... gathered for two and a half days in the beautiful city of Granada to meet and reflect together on the identity (why) and purpose (what for) of our schools. With speakers of the stature of Josep Maria Esquirol, Catherine L'Ecuyer, Teresa Forcades, Álvaro Lobo, Tiscar Espigares and many more!!! we delved into different types of meetings through presentations that invited us to reflect from different angles with the aim of making our schools more and more transformative.

They gave us the opportunity to take the time to ask ourselves about the profound encounter of the human being with who we really are. It could be said that where the why meets the what for, we always discover an openness to something else: to God. And this is what the congress has been about: opening ourselves to think about the why and the what for, about new technologies, about care, about school segregation, about humour, about our most vulnerable students.... All well coordinated by an impeccable organisation and aesthetics. Presentations with a lot of dialogue, concerts, humorous monologues, dances, reunions with colleagues from many other charisms and schools, interactions via an app and even a drone flying over the auditorium from time to time. A thousand ways to encourage us to do the same thing: to keep our attention on the most important thing: to continue seeking the encounter with God.



And in the midst of the intense work, we also enjoyed a joyful sharing and deep harmony with the people sent to the congress and the presence of Granada who welcomed us to celebrate with them the end of the Piarist Month. The meeting is a celebration and the work becomes thanksgiving when we can feel that God is calling us through the good people with whom we are fortunate to share our mission. Especially exciting for us was the presentation at the congress by Ion Aranguren, Piarist of the presence of Escolapios Granada, a presentation that showed the work of the Escolapios-Cartuja school where the Piarist spirit of finding God

in the little ones through the poorest is clearly expressed; a full time Piarist school in a neighbourhood with high rates of vulnerability that seeks the transformation of its environment.

To conclude (it is an evidence and not an occurrence, paraphrasing Catherine L'Ecuyer), the Congress has served to reencounter us with that soft murmur that whispers to us so that we follow more faithfully the intuition of Calasanz. We are on the right track in spite of the great challenges that we have and that surely await us. May we be able to bring to our beloved schools the reflections and the openness that it means to be transformative schools in our environment.

In the religious information magazine VIDA NUEVA you can find a chronicle of the Congress where the experience presented by Jon Aranguren of the educational work in the Cartuja neighbourhood of Granada is recounted.

<https://www.vidanuevadigital.com/2022/12/02/escuelas-catolicas-se-buscan-colegios-para-cambiar-el-mundo/>

