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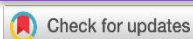


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Education for the Poor: A Synthetic Analysis of Pope Francis' Thought

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Abstract

This qualitative study examines the theological foundations of Pope Francis' vision of education oriented toward the poor and develops their implications for Catholic educational pastoral practice. The study responds to the tendency to discuss educational disadvantage primarily as a policy or charitable issue without sufficiently articulating its theological basis. An interpretive theological review and library-research approach was employed using purposively selected magisterial documents of Pope Francis from 2013-2020 and relevant scholarly literature through 2025. The sources were analyzed through thematic interpretation and theological synthesis, with attention to compassion, mercy, solidarity, human dignity, and the preferential option for the poor. The findings identify three interrelated theological foundations: God as compassionate, Jesus Christ as the center of compassion, and the Church as a house of mercy and solidarity. These foundations support a pastoral framework in which Catholic education is understood as holistic formation and the preferential option for the poor as a theological imperative rather than an optional charitable activity. The synthesis further highlights collaboration among schools, families, the Church, and society as part of this educational responsibility. The study contributes an integrated theological-pastoral framework that can guide Catholic educational institutions in designing inclusive formation that respects the poor as active subjects and partners in shared human development.

Keywords: Catholic Education; Compassion; Solidarity; the Poor; Theology of Education

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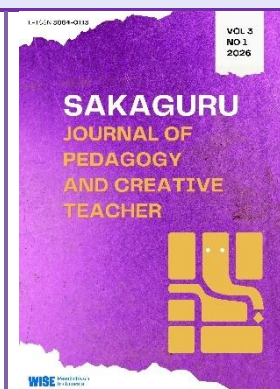
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INTRODUCTION

From the perspective of spiritual theology, the practice of education is animated by the spirit and vitality that flow from the teachings of faith—that is, the relationship between the human person and the God who lives and acts within history. From a pastoral perspective, education is one form of the shepherding task in developing the apostolate, or the ministry of proclaiming Gospel values in the world. Apostolate or mission has two mutually reinforcing aspects: the ad intra aspect, concerned with deepening the life of faith for the salvation of individual believers and the community, and the ad extra aspect, concerned with developing the life of society on the basis of Gospel values.

Spirituality and pastoral care are two inseparable aspects of Christian witness and mission. The exercise of mission is closely tied to shepherding, which is animated by the values of faith as the foundation of spiritual life. Educational pastoral care that sides with the poor forms part of an integral pastoral vision, as affirmed by Pope Francis in the encyclical *Laudato Si'* [1]. That encyclical stresses the urgency of a sustained movement to protect and preserve life together with the natural environment. Believers hold a moral and ethical obligation toward the whole of creation as an expression of a living and contextual faith.

As the supreme leader of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis offers a vision of Catholic education rooted in the values of faith. In the Christian tradition of faith, a shepherd exercises the vision of shepherding on the basis of spiritual authority, in order to provide spiritual nourishment for the life of the

community and the world. The missionary and pastoral task is to sanctify the People of God and the world, marked by the unity of humanity in fraternal love and by care for the preservation of the environment, both of which flow from a closer spiritual relationship with God. Pope Francis' pastoral vision of siding with the poor is reflected in his iconic image that the Church's shepherds must "take on the smell of the sheep"—an expression that affirms the nature of a pilgrim Church walking together with the faithful, especially those who are poor and suffering [2].

A number of studies have examined Pope Francis' thought on concern for the poor from social and pastoral perspectives. Kebinigin [3] examined the Church's social teaching under Pope Francis during the pandemic from the perspective of solidarity, while Daryanto [4] connected the work of Jesus with the Church's preferential concern for the poor. Tinambunan [5] emphasized the importance of human dignity from the perspective of fraternity, while Pyżlak [6] explored Pope Francis' thought on education in *Amoris Laetitia* and *Laudato Si'*. However, research that specifically explores the theological foundations of education that sides with the poor, based on Pope Francis' thought in an integrative manner, has not yet been available. On the other hand, education policy and practice concerning the poor also still tends to be viewed from the perspective of public policy and social analysis disconnected from religious foundations—despite the fact that Indonesian society is known as a religious nation. This is evident, for instance, in the article by Kaidah and Ruslan [7], which highlights the education of poor children primarily from the perspective of public policy, namely by examining the Smart Indonesia Program (Program Indonesia Pintar) and the limitations of educational access caused by socio-economic problems.

This research aims to fill the gap in the theological grounding of education that sides with the poor. What frequently occurs is that siding with the poor tends to be reduced to a charitable movement or action, thereby risking the reduction of the poor to mere objects of compassion. This research provides a foundation so that education for the poor is grounded in a spirituality of equality and respect for every person as a creature of God. The poor are subjects of education who need to be positioned as partners in the collaborative and equal growth of shared life.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative, interpretive theological review through library research. It was not designed as a systematic review; source selection was purposive and thematic rather than exhaustive. This design was appropriate for examining and synthesizing Pope Francis' theological thought on education, particularly its orientation toward the poor. The study was guided by two research questions: (1) What theological foundations underlie Pope Francis' vision of education? and (2) How can these foundations be elaborated into an educational pastoral approach that sides with the poor?

Data Sources and Corpus

The study did not involve human participants; its unit of analysis was a purposively bounded documentary corpus. Primary sources comprised Pope Francis' major magisterial documents, including *Lumen Fidei* [8], *Evangelii Gaudium* [9], *Laudato Si'* [1], *Amoris Laetitia* [10], *Christus Vivit* [11], *Fratelli Tutti* [12], *Querida Amazonia* [13], and *Misericordiae Vultus* [14]. Secondary sources included theological books, scholarly journal articles, and previous studies relevant to theology, education, pastoral ministry, poverty, and social justice.

Source Scope and Temporal Boundaries

The documentary scope centered on officially published Church texts from 2013-2020 and supporting academic literature available through 2025. The corpus was limited to sources directly related to Pope Francis' theological vision of education and its implications for pastoral engagement with the poor.

Research Procedure and Instruments

Data collection involved four stages: identifying, selecting, reading, and categorizing relevant sources. The researcher examined the selected documents to identify theological concepts and statements concerning education, human dignity, solidarity, social responsibility, and concern for the poor. The researcher served as the primary interpretive instrument, supported by a thematic data-recording framework for organizing relevant textual findings. To make source selection more transparent, the documentary corpus was bounded to Pope Francis' magisterial texts published from 2013 to 2020 and supporting scholarly literature available through 2025. Relevance screening used the thematic concepts "Pope Francis," "education/Catholic education," "poor/poverty," "compassion/mercy," "solidarity," "human dignity," and "pastoral ministry/social justice." Sources were included when they directly addressed the research

questions and excluded when they discussed poverty or education without a substantive theological-pastoral connection to Pope Francis's thought. Primary texts were verified against official Holy See/Vatican publications. The original research notes did not preserve a database-by-database search log, exact Boolean strings, or the date of each search; these details are therefore not reconstructed retrospectively. Accordingly, the corpus should be interpreted as purposively selected for theological interpretation rather than as an exhaustive or systematic retrieval of all potentially relevant publications.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed through thematic analysis and theological synthesis. First, recurring theological themes underlying Pope Francis' vision of education were identified and interpreted. Second, these themes were synthesized to examine their relationship with the Church's pastoral mission and their potential to form an educational pastoral approach that sides with the poor. The analysis emphasizes the movement from theological identification, interpretation, and contextual elaboration to synthesis.

Analytical Rigor and Criteria for Theological Synthesis

Since this is a conceptual library study, analytical rigor was assessed through interpretive coherence rather than statistical or participant-based criteria. Credibility was strengthened by comparing recurring themes across multiple primary magisterial documents and relating them to relevant secondary theological and educational scholarship. Themes were retained when they were traceable to the selected corpus, recurrent across relevant texts, and directly responsive to the research questions. The final synthesis was examined for consistency between textual evidence, theological interpretation, and the pastoral-educational implications derived from that interpretation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

Two important findings emerged from this research: a theological foundation for education, and a conceptual framework for developing an educational pastoral approach that sides with the poor. Regarding the theological foundation, three key points were found: a Compassionate God, Jesus Christ as the Center of Compassion, and the Church as the House of Mercy and Solidarity. Regarding the pastoral framework for developing Christian education that sides with the poor, two principal points were found: Catholic Education within the Framework of a Theology of Compassion, and the Preferential Option for the Poor as a Theological Imperative.

Theological Foundations of Catholic Education

A Compassionate God

The theological foundation of Pope Francis' understanding of compassion is deeply rooted in the biblical tradition, both in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, God's compassion is displayed through various divine actions and choices throughout the history of Israel's salvation. God hears the cry of his oppressed people in Egypt (Exodus 3:7–10) and reveals himself, above all, as a God who is patient and full of compassion. The Psalms bear rich witness to God's compassion, as in the words, "who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases" (Psalm 103:3).

Pope Francis, quoting Saint Thomas Aquinas in *Misericordiae Vultus*, article 6, affirms that God's mercy is not a sign of weakness but a sign of his omnipotence [14, art. 6]—a claim situated within a broader medieval theological tradition of reflecting on divine attributes and virtue [15]. This is a significant theological claim: the almighty God reveals his power precisely through mercy, not through domination or coercion. In the New Testament, God's compassion reaches its fullness in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaims God's compassion through the parables he taught: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32). The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12) likewise stand as a key teaching of Jesus on compassion: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Matthew 5:7).

This biblical dimension carries a direct implication for education. If God, throughout Scripture, consistently sides with the weak, the poor, and the marginalized, then education that claims to be rooted in biblical faith must reflect that same preference. Siding with the poor is not merely a social response but a theological imperative rooted in the very core of Christian faith.

Jesus Christ as the Center of Compassion

In Pope Francis' view, compassion is not merely an ethical principle or moral virtue; it is a way of being Christian—a way of entering into an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. The Pope states this explicitly

in the opening line of *Misericordiae Vultus*: "Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy" [14, para. 1]. This statement encapsulates the entire mystery of Christian faith, centered on the person of Jesus Christ as the revelation of the God of compassion.

The mystery of the Incarnation—the Word made flesh—is the supreme expression of God's compassion. God does not remain distant and unreachable; rather, in the person of Jesus Christ, God enters into the concrete reality of human existence—even into human weakness, fragility, and limitation. As Pope Francis affirmed during the Angelus in January 2014, God is with us, God has mercy on us, and God walks with us, for faith in the Incarnation reveals that God shares compassionately in human history [16].

Pope Francis emphasizes that the compassion found in Jesus was never a passive sentimentality but rather a movement of the heart that impels concrete action. He healed the sick, forgave sinners, fed the hungry, and welcomed the outcast. All of these actions flowed from a single source: the divine compassion that moved Jesus whenever he perceived the deepest needs of the human person (cf. Matthew 9:36; Luke 7:13). The calling of Matthew the tax collector was carried out through a compassionate gaze that Saint Bede the Venerable described with the phrase *miserando atque eligendo*—"by having mercy and by choosing"—an expression that later became Pope Francis' own episcopal motto.

The Church as the House of Mercy and Solidarity

Pope Francis regards the Church not as an institution enclosed within itself, but as a community of compassion that moves outward to serve the world. The Church is holy not because its members are perfect, but because Christ loves and sanctifies the Church (cf. Ephesians 5:25–26)—an ecclesiology consistent with the vision of the Church articulated in *Lumen Gentium* [17]. Yet that very holiness impels the Church to draw ever closer to those who suffer. In the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis calls the Church to encounter Christ in the person of the poor [9].

Solidarity is the concrete expression of the Church's compassion toward the poor. Pope Francis rejects what he terms the "globalization of indifference," which he identifies as a profound failure in responding to humanitarian crises. In his homily at Lampedusa, the Pope criticized a society that has lost the capacity to weep and to suffer with others, describing this loss as a consequence of the "globalization of indifference" [16]. This appeal is not merely social criticism but also a theological call to restore solidarity as a core dimension of Christian life.

Pope Francis affirms that siding with those who are weak and poor is the most fitting way for the Church to follow the example of Jesus in the concrete reality of this age. In article 198 of *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Pope calls the Church to acknowledge the saving power already at work in the lives of the poor and to place them at the very center of the Church's pilgrim journey [9, para. 198]. In the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis develops the theme of fraternity and social friendship as the foundation for a more just civilization; solidarity, peace, justice, and harmony represent the Pope's hope for the future of human civilization [12].

This ecclesial dimension is also evident in Pope Francis' support for Scholas Occurrentes, an international organization focused on education and community development in underserved regions, and in his historic 2019 meeting with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar in Egypt, which produced the Document on Human Fraternity [18]. Both events affirm that compassion, as Pope Francis understands it, transcends the boundaries of religion and culture, and stands as both a gift of God and a human achievement entrusted to all who are called to build a more compassionate Church.

Catholic Education within the Framework of a Theology of Compassion

Building on the christological and biblical foundations outlined above, Pope Francis develops a holistic and integral vision of Catholic education. Catholic education is not merely the transmission of knowledge or the training of skills; it is a process that forms the whole human person—intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and morally. Siding with the poor is the most fitting way for the Church to follow the example of Jesus in the concrete reality of this age [9]. The chief aim of Catholic education is to foster the growth of good human beings who love God and neighbor and who journey toward holiness [28].

Pope Francis affirms that human dignity as *imago Dei* is the foundation of the whole of the Church's work, including its work in Catholic education. Catholic education directs learners toward their supernatural end as the image of God in all its dimensions. The cooperation of faith and works is evident in two complementary aspects: the supernatural and the natural. In the encyclical *Lumen Fidei*, Pope Francis stresses the importance of faith formation as a process that helps individuals understand their faith and experience a personal relationship with God [8]. Faith is not merely a set of doctrines to be memorized, but a light that guides human life.

Catholic education aims to form the character of learners into whole human beings—physically, intellectually, and emotionally—three dimensions that mutually complement one another. Pope Francis

further rejects any model of education that merely transmits knowledge without touching the personal and relational dimensions of the learner. He criticizes the legacy of Enlightenment rationalism, which reduces education to the mere transfer of information while neglecting the dimensions of the heart, the emotions, and spirituality. Genuine education must integrate three languages: the language of the mind, the language of the heart, and the language of hands—a triad closely tied to the formation of virtue in the learner [19].

Pope Francis' vision of education is developed against a keen awareness of the challenges facing the contemporary world. He identifies several phenomena that threaten the quality and mission of education: materialism, individualism, hedonism, a technological globalization lacking any shared roadmap, and a broader crisis of values afflicting contemporary society. In the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the Pope raises the ecological dimension as an integral part of the challenge facing education today [1].

Over the past five decades, humanity has extracted material resources beyond the earth's natural capacity for regeneration. This mounting ecological debt demands that humanity no longer focus solely on economic growth but on the equitable distribution of resources. Awareness of the dangers posed by rampant materialism, pragmatism, and transactional relationships needs to be emphasized for every person in this age. Individualism estranges people from their communities and inclines them toward self-interested decision-making, thereby weakening the social solidarity that undergirds shared life [20].

Across *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si'*, *Christus Vivit*, and the 2019 message launching the Global Compact on Education, this study synthesizes five recurring pressures on education: exclusion and unequal access affecting the poor; fragmented responsibility among public institutions, families, and society; individualism and indifference; the ambiguities of technological acceleration and digital culture; and weakened relational bonds across educational communities [9, paras. 53-60], [1, paras. 101-136, 209-215], [11, paras. 86-90], [27]. These factors are presented as an analytical synthesis of the magisterial corpus rather than as a verbatim five-item list formulated by Pope Francis.

The Preferential Option for the Poor as a Theological Imperative

Siding with the poor, in Pope Francis' thought, is not merely an optional pastoral choice but a theological imperative rooted in the very core of Christian faith. The Pope affirms in *Evangelii Gaudium* that siding with the weak and the poor is the most adequate way for the Church to follow the attitude of Jesus in the concrete reality of this age [9]. This is a very strong statement: siding with the poor is not simply one pastoral option among many, but rather the most adequate way of following Jesus—a formulation that echoes the option for the poor articulated by the Latin American episcopate at Aparecida, in which then-Cardinal Bergoglio himself played a formative role [21].

For Pope Francis, God's compassion cannot be separated from the reality of the poor. The relevance of religious education in this context is likewise affirmed by the observation that authentic spirituality always bears fruit in concrete social concern [22]. God, who became flesh in Jesus, entered into the human condition not at the point of power and privilege but into weakness and limitation. He became a person close to the poor and the needy, showing solidarity above all with those who are most powerless.

In the apostolic exhortation *Querida Amazonia*, Pope Francis explicitly connects siding with the poor to education: poor children must be given education so that they may develop their own knowledge and initiative [13]. Education that sides with the poor does not mean an education of lower quality that merely satisfies minimal standards; on the contrary, it means an education that genuinely develops the full human potential of poor children, supporting them to become active subjects in their own educational process.

The family is the starting point of education that sides with the poor. In *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis stresses that the family is the first community in which the values of solidarity and concern for others are instilled [10]. A family attentive to social realities and to what is happening in the wider community gives rise to a generation sensitive to the suffering of others. Education that sides with the poor begins not in the school but in the home—in the family community that lives and experiences the values of the Gospel in daily life. In *Amoris Laetitia*, the Pope insists that families should not regard themselves as sheltered enclaves protecting themselves from society, but should instead go forth and build a spirit of solidarity together with others.

Discussions

In response to the challenges outlined above, and building on the theological foundations already discussed, Pope Francis proposes a multidimensional model of education as a relevant and contextual vision of Catholic education. Multidimensional education integrates the dimensions of the human person as a whole: the mind, the heart (feeling), and action. This model is not merely a pedagogical innovation; it is also an expression of a Christian anthropology that regards the human person as a whole and undivided being.

Compared with previous scholarship, the present synthesis both confirms and extends existing interpretations. Kebinigin [3] foregrounded solidarity in Pope Francis's social teaching, Daryanto [4] emphasized continuity between Jesus's ministry and the Church's concern for the poor, and Tinambunan [5] interpreted such concern through human dignity and fraternity. Pyżlak [6] identified educational themes in *Amoris Laetitia* and *Laudato Si'*, while Stevanus and Yulianto [23] stressed the Church's broader social mission. The present study confirms these emphases but differs by integrating compassion, ecclesial solidarity, the preferential option for the poor, and holistic formation into a single theological-pastoral framework for Catholic education. It further extends this framework by linking school-family-Church collaboration and ecological formation to the same theological logic, a connection consistent with Jehaut's [24] discussion of synodal responsibility and Widyawati et al.'s [25] account of *Laudato Si'*-inspired ecopastoral practice.

Pope Francis identifies four principal themes that need to be developed within a Catholic education that sides with the poor: education in faith, education in sexuality, education in values, and education in ecology. Education in faith helps learners understand and live out the Christian faith as a living, personal relationship with God. Education in values instills mature moral habits—honesty, humility, compassion, and dedication to others—which form the basis of behavior acceptable within society.

In the apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis describes schools and universities as cultural spaces of encounter and solidarity with the poor, capable of fostering the transformation of shared life [11]. Catholic education is called to foster broad inclusion, to cultivate fraternity, and to root out the contempt that breeds a culture of waste, selfishness, and hatred. Education carries a moral task: to create fraternity as a constitutive identity of our common humanity.

Ecological education, as articulated in *Laudato Si'*, demonstrates how urgently humanity must change its mentality and its manner of acting toward the environment [1]. Awareness of today's cultural and ecological crisis must be met with new habits and new methods. What is needed is an education capable of caring for life, showing solidarity with the poor, cultivating cooperation for building fraternity, and caring comprehensively for the preservation of the environment—an ecopastoral commitment that has increasingly found expression among young Catholics inspired by *Laudato Si'* [25]. This dimension of ecological spirituality helps individuals develop a sense of connectedness with nature and with all of God's creatures.

Within the framework of multidimensional education, critical thinking receives particular attention. Pope Francis encourages an education that enables learners to question, analyze, and critically evaluate information. The capacity to question is not merely an intellectual capacity for analyzing data; it also encompasses the search for meaning in life and the purpose of human existence. The Pope teaches that education must help individuals reflect on philosophical and existential questions concerning the purpose of life, morality, and meaning amid human suffering.

The theological foundations outlined above carry very concrete pastoral implications for the practice of Catholic education. First, Catholic schools need to reflect anew on their identity and mission in light of siding with the poor. The challenges faced by Catholic schools—particularly in rural areas experiencing declining enrollment, sometimes to the point of closure—must be met with a profound spiritual renewal concerning the meaning and purpose of Catholic education.

Second, curricula and pedagogical methods in Catholic education need to explicitly integrate the values of compassion, solidarity, and siding with the poor. This does not mean abandoning academic standards; rather, high academic standards are to be pursued within the context of holistic character formation. Third, the Catholic school community itself needs to become a genuine community of compassion. This means cultivating a school culture in which every person is accepted, valued, and loved regardless of their socio-economic background. Pope Francis envisions a human civilization that prioritizes the values of solidarity, unity, justice, and fraternity in building hope and harmony throughout the world.

Fourth, cooperation among schools, families, the Church, and society needs to be strengthened systematically [23]. Pope Francis affirms that education is a shared responsibility and must move beyond institutional exclusivity—a vision consonant with the synodal spirit of shared responsibility that Pope Francis has sought to cultivate across the life of the Church [24]. Fifth, Catholic educators are called to become living witnesses of compassion. Like a shepherd who takes on the smell of the sheep, educators are called to remain close to their learners—especially the most vulnerable—in order to listen to, understand, and respond to their deepest needs. Pope Francis has said that he prefers a Church that is bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has gone out onto the streets, rather than a Church that is unhealthy from being confined within its own self-enclosure [9, para. 49].

In addition, Pope Francis proposes the necessity of accompanying communities as a shared movement to overcome poverty. He likewise emphasized the message of universal fraternity in his Message for the World Day of Peace, affirming that a living awareness of our interdependence helps us to regard and treat every child as a true brother or sister, for without fraternity it is impossible to build a just society or

a solid and lasting peace [26]. This principle serves as the ethical foundation for the entire movement of education that sides with the poor.

Pope Francis' commitment to an inclusive vision of education that sides with the poor finds its institutional expression in the Global Compact on Education, launched in 2019. This initiative invites all people—across boundaries of religion, culture, and nation—to rebuild education and the future of the world [27]. The Global Compact on Education renews the commitment of the younger generation to refresh the spirit of education toward greater openness, inclusion, and preference for those most in need.

Through the Global Compact on Education, Pope Francis desires that education take place not only in the classroom but also within the family and society—a vision of education that is communitarian and holistic in character. This outlook is consonant with the principle of subsidiarity in Catholic social teaching: every level of community holds its own role and responsibility within the educational process. This initiative also reflects the Pope's conviction that education is itself an act of hope—a hope that is dynamic and active, not passive or fatalistic.

The Church's commitment to the poor through education demands a holistic approach. Those who experience poverty require attention not only in the spiritual realm but also materially. A Church ministry conducted through education that attends only to spiritual dimensions offers little genuine benefit to the poor. The Church's attention to material poverty expressed through education can therefore be understood as a form of nonverbal ministry that, in principle, complements ministry expressed in words.

The original contribution of this article is an interpretive theological-pastoral synthesis that integrates divine compassion, ecclesial solidarity, the preferential option for the poor, holistic formation, and school-family-Church collaboration within a single framework for Catholic education, thereby extending scholarship that has largely examined these dimensions separately.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Pope Francis' educational vision for the poor is grounded in a coherent theological trajectory: divine compassion revealed in Jesus Christ, ecclesial solidarity, and the preferential option for the poor. Within this trajectory, Catholic education is not reduced to charitable provision for disadvantaged learners but is understood as holistic formation that recognizes the poor as subjects and partners in shared human development. The study's scholarly contribution lies in integrating compassion, solidarity, human dignity, holistic formation, and collaborative educational responsibility into a single theological-pastoral framework. Practically, the framework suggests that Catholic schools should align curriculum, school culture, educator formation, and partnerships with families, Church communities, and wider society toward inclusion and dignity. Because the study is an interpretive theological review based on a purposively bounded corpus rather than an exhaustive systematic review, its conclusions should be understood as an analytically grounded synthesis rather than a comprehensive account of all writings by Pope Francis. Future research should test the framework comparatively across Catholic educational contexts and examine how its principles are translated into institutional practice.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited by its interpretive, purposively bounded corpus and by the absence of a database-level systematic search log; consequently, it does not claim exhaustive coverage of Pope Francis' educational thought. Future studies may compare this framework with other theological or educational thinkers and examine its practical enactment across diverse Catholic educational settings, including challenges emerging in the digital era.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

This research was conducted independently. The researcher independently determined the topic, objectives, scope of the discussion, methodology, and stages of the research process. The research findings were then analyzed and formulated into this scientific article.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest in this research.

DECLARATION OF USE OF AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

The researcher used Claude and ChatGPT to identify synonyms, check translations, and verify the formatting of references.

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