# Drawing New Maps of Hope: Renewing the Future of Catholic Education

Catholic education stands at a pivotal moment of renewal and hope. Inspired by Pope Leo XIV's *Drawing New Maps of Hope* and the enduring vision of *Gravissimum Educationis*, educators from parishes, PreK-12 schools, universities, digital ministries, and service-learning programs gathered on October 28, 2026, to explore the future of the Church's educational mission.

Hosted by Saint Mary's University of Minnesota's Graduate School of Education and co-sponsored by the Christian Brothers Conference, the conference provided a forum for examining emerging challenges, innovative practices, and new pathways for serving learners in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

Through keynote presentations, panel discussions, and collaborative dialogue, participants explored how Catholic education can renew its mission, culture, and stewardship while placing the human person at the center of learning. Discussions focused on cultivating Catholic identity, listening to younger generations, empowering families, and strengthening sustainable models for the future.

Presenters also highlighted significant trends shaping Catholic education, including shifting enrollment patterns, student achievement outcomes, and the ongoing challenge of sustaining mission-driven institutions. Throughout the day, speakers encouraged educators to look to the margins for emerging opportunities, discern which structures and practices may need to evolve, and draw upon the Church's rich educational tradition to create new maps of hope for future generations.

The day concluded with Tom Southard, Executive Director of Christian Brothers Conference, receiving the 2026 Catholic Educator Award from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota.

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