

OUR CATHOLIC MISSION

TRUTH AND FIDELITY IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

SUMMER 2023

THE NEWMAN GUIDE: A POWERFUL TOOL FOR EDUCATORS



- The Core of a Catholic Curriculum
- Newman Guide Education Is So Much More
- Celebrating Every Kind of Catholic Education

“

We started to expose how much formation is necessary, and that was something I didn't fully anticipate.

I am grateful for what The Cardinal Newman Society's website looks like today, the amount of resources, videos, documents, etc., all these things that weren't there just a few years ago. This is a huge blessing!

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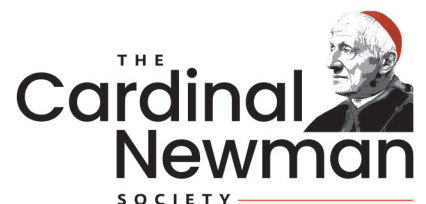
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1993 - 2023

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We Need Heroes

Catholics today don't have a lot of trust in each other.

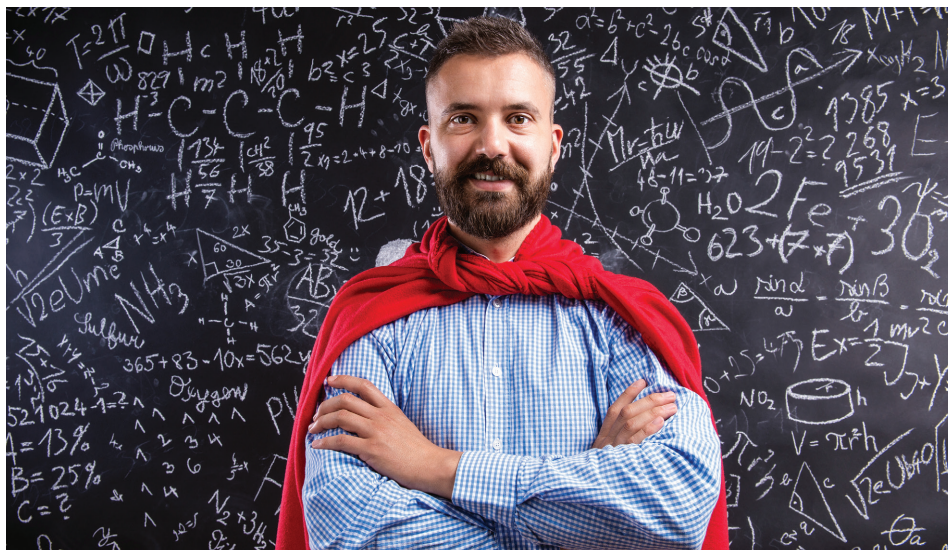
We've seen a lot of broken promises, broken parishes, broken marriages. Nuns abandoned Catholic schools, and priests gave up their vows. Society turned against moral truth and even human nature, and many in the Church followed along.

And Catholic education was allowed to decline for a long time, before today's great renewal took up the challenge to reverse the trend.

If ever the world was in need of heroes, it's today. We need saints and miracles to inspire us, and everyday saints in the home and workplace, glorifying God by their wisdom and witness.

And that's why Fr. Benedict Groeschel, back in 2007, urged The Cardinal Newman Society to publish The Newman Guide. Amid all the bad news on college campuses, Catholic families needed to know that there are faithful Catholic colleges eager to form young adults in faith and fidelity.

And it's why, today, we're expanding the Guide to identify and celebrate and encourage the very best Catholic schools, colleges, and graduate programs—Catholic education across all stages of life.



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Today's culture so greatly needs the example of education, not swayed by relativism nor captured by ideology, but devoted to the truth and the good of its students above all else. There will be no renewal of culture without education.

And the Church so greatly needs well-formed laypeople, religious, and clergy to stand firmly against the tides that are washing away Christian principles and reverence. Not only to defend against the threats, but to rebuild families and parishes and Catholic communities.

The renewal of Catholic education is renewal of the Church and society. The

renewed devotion of educators to the authentic mission of Catholic education and fidelity to the Catholic faith are essential to this project. And Newman Guide schools, colleges, and graduate programs are leading the way.

We invite Catholic educators to take up this mantle, to lead by making your institutions exemplary and then applying for Newman Guide recognition. If you do, we'll urge others to follow. **OCM**

PATRICK REILLY
president and founder of
The Cardinal Newman Society.



Our Catholic Mission magazine is growing. This edition is 16 pages and mailed to more Catholic educators than ever! However, while we have always targeted bishops, superintendents, and principals, in 2023, we are making a concerted effort to reach K-12 teachers and Newman Guide college professors. Simply go to: www.cardinalnewmansociety.org/ocm-subscribe/
The subscription is FREE and will equip you with the latest information on issues impacting faithful Catholic education.

THE CORE OF A CATHOLIC CURRICULUM

BY DENISE DONOHUE, ED.D.

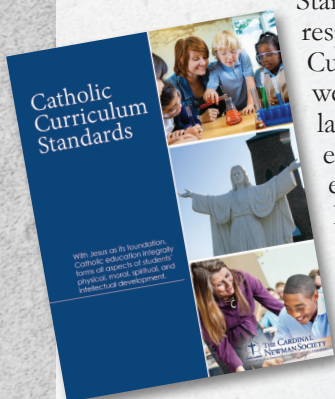
As the lead evaluator of institutions applying for Newman Guide recognition, I often get asked what makes a “Newman Guide” academic program. I want to highlight here some of the most important aspects, drawing from our resources on the K-12 school with principles relevant to all levels of education.

Traditionally, the curricula of Catholic schools and colleges were much more uniform, often guided by systems developed over centuries by the Jesuits, Benedictines, Dominicans, and other teaching orders and saints. With the rise of public secular education and emphasis on student choice, curricula in the United States have generally become disintegrated with a wider selection of courses, including core liberal arts and sciences but also a variety of electives. The Catholic faith is taught in catechesis and theology courses, but its relevance to other subjects is often tenuous.

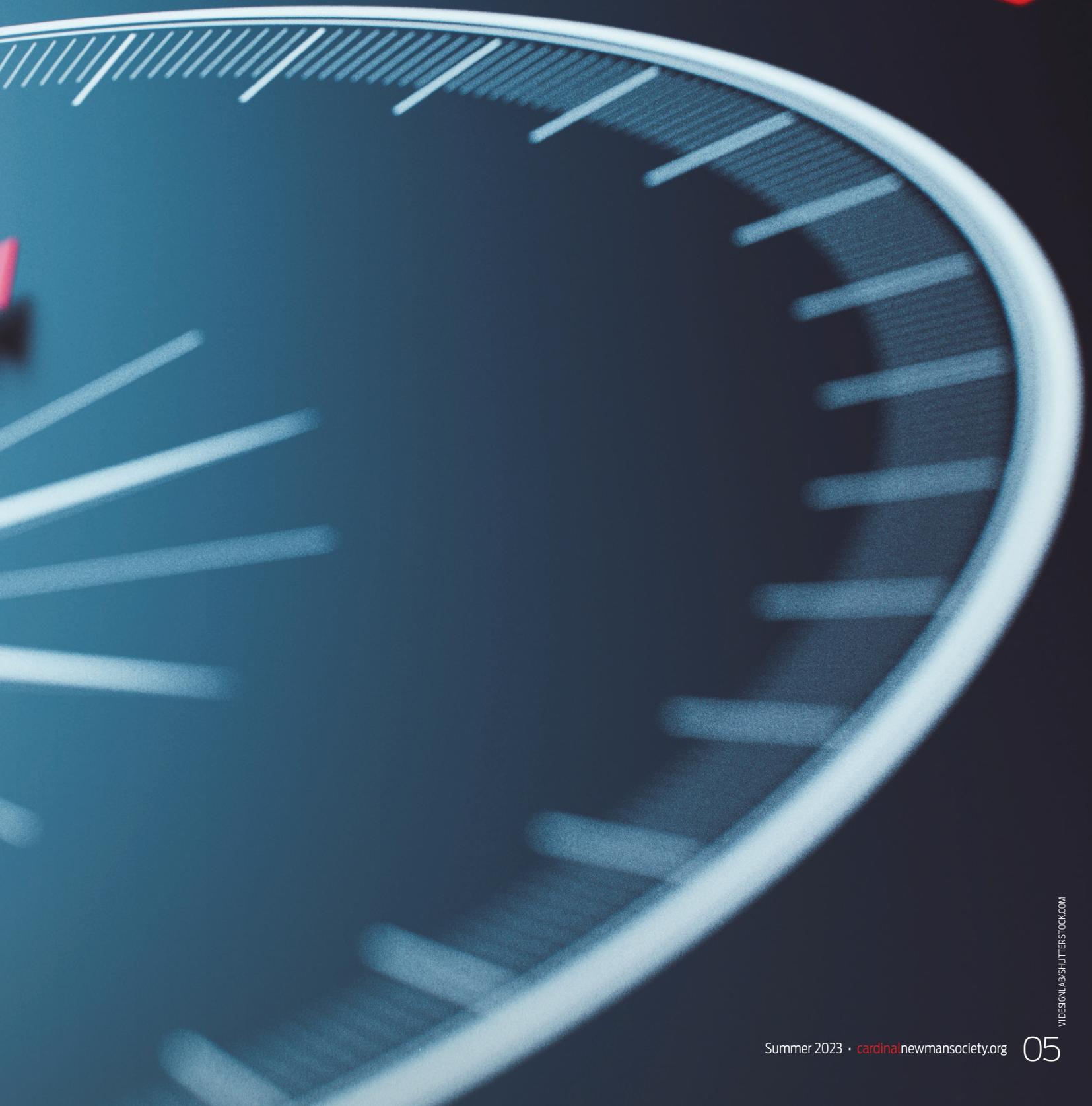
So what meaning does “Catholic education” still have today? Can we identify key elements for every faithful school or college?

The Cardinal Newman Society’s answer to these questions begins with our Catholic Curriculum Standards. First developed in response to the Common Core Curriculum Standards—which were intended for public secular education but were adopted by many Catholic dioceses—our Catholic standards help shape school curricula for English, history, math, and science and are part of the criteria for school recognition in The Newman Guide.

But there are also broader principles for Catholic education. These are found in the Church’s many documents on education and in the experience of exemplary institutions.



MISSION



Rooted in mission

When evaluating an institution's application for *The Newman Guide*, the first thing I look at is its mission statement and philosophy of education. What is the purpose or goal of education and what does the school believe about the human person? Do its foundational documents describe what education is for and how a student learns best? These are important, because all curricular offerings should flow from the school's mission and what it hopes to achieve.

Key aspects of the mission of Catholic education are articulated in Church documents: "To make disciples of all nations"; to assist the Church in her salvific mission and to evangelize and proclaim the good news; to provide a "critical, systematic transmission of culture in the light of faith"; integral formation of each student's physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual faculties; teaching responsibility and the right use of freedom; and preparing students to fulfill God's calling in this world, so as to attain the eternal kingdom for which they were created.

More than preparing students for college and career, Catholic education aims for a deeper incorporation into the heart of the Church and the even higher calling of an eternal destiny with God in Heaven. Man was made to worship God in this world to live with Him in the next, and that is what Catholic education is called to help do.

This point should be evident in an institution's documents and programming. School leaders should hold firmly to an eternal telos when deciding courses, activities, and events for the institution. Bringing this into programs and courses brings students closer to their full human flourishing and helps them be leaven in this world and joyful apostles for the Lord.

Human education

Schools and colleges included in *The Newman Guide* hold an educational philosophy based on a clearly articulated Christian anthropology. If they don't understand the human person, they won't get their educational programming right. It's important first to articulate what beliefs the school holds about the human person and how students learn best, and to see how these beliefs align with

Church teaching and proven educational practice.

Is each student valued as a person for their inherent worth, made in the image and likeness of God and invited into communion with Him? How is this lived out daily in the school or college? A fallible nature, elevated by God's grace and personal fortitude, should be the starting point for student formation. Each student should be viewed as a unified body, mind, and spirit with an intellect and a will capable of improvement and growth. Other questions to consider:

- Are there activities and programming that address all the faculties of the human person: the emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, as well as the intellectual?
- Does the school or college employ habituation of rules for both behavior and academics to aid student learning and the development of virtue?
- Does the school or college reject learning theories that disregard the complexities of the human person's abilities?
- Does the school embrace theories with underlying metaphysical premises that deny objective reality?

Catholic education should embrace learning theories that attend to the abilities of students as creative, imaginative, logical, emotional, adaptable, and spiritual human beings capable of finding and entering into the truths about reality. Students should also be taught that faith is a valid way of knowing.

Thinking with faith

St. John Paul II taught that:

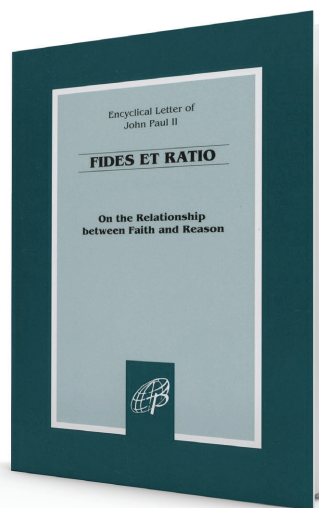
"Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and wom-

en may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves."

Catholic education looks to both faith and reason to attain understanding beyond simple knowledge. "What does our faith have to teach us about this or that?" should be an instructional methodology included in all academic disciplines, which still retain their own particular methods of inquiry. The pursuit of truth is a hallmark of Catholic education, and contemporary educational methodologies designed to confine students to only thinking about an author's position and not how that position relates to Church social and moral teaching, or how it makes us feel, or contrary positions, or personal experience are to be avoided.

As students in Catholic education are taught to think with the certainty of faith, they are also being formed in the acquisition of moral and intellectual virtue, even at the college level. Some Catholic schools choose to incorporate virtue programs as separate curricular offerings, while others incorporate virtue through content-rich literature including the Good and Great Books—texts that have stood the test of time, because of their consideration of the perennial triumphs and foibles of man. Catholic colleges include virtue formation in student life programming, such as holding Theology of the Body seminars or promoting households that exemplify saints and their qualities.

In whatever way, the moral virtues taught to students stem from the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance as elevated by God's grace and the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. These are distinctively different from the qualities and characteristics of the learner taught in public education. For instance, the International Baccalaureate program's learner profile is designed to make students "inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective." There's nothing wrong with any of that,



but it's insufficient for Catholic education's purpose of training students in virtue so as to attain the eternal kingdom and not just maintain amiable relationships in the here and now.

Catholic education also cultivates the intellectual virtues, including art, prudence, understanding, science, and *wisdom*. This is what makes a Catholic education unique—it reaches toward the transcendent, especially in teaching wisdom and asking life's deepest questions. All courses can employ philosophical questioning, such as, "Why is man the only rational creature? What is man's place in the universe? Why is this or that the way it is?" These help students grasp the relationship between humanity and existential realities. Methodologies should provide opportunities for students to wonder about higher things, and philosophical questioning helps with this. It fosters student engagement and, to paraphrase St. Thomas Aquinas, the water of philosophy brings out the wine in theology. Philosophical questioning leads us to the truth of a thing, and that ultimately leads us to Truth Himself, Jesus Christ.

Integrated curriculum

All courses should be taught, as much as possible, in an interdisciplinary fashion. This means that when a subject or concept under discussion moves beyond the confines of the discipline, it is not tossed aside as inconsequential but explored for the understanding it can bring to the subject at hand. St. John Henry Cardinal Newman stated in *Idea of a University*, "All branches of knowledge are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as being the acts and the work of the Creator." Being open to transcendent truth and objective reality allows each discipline to bear on others for comparison, correction, completeness, and adjustment. Catholic education should include the humanities such as drama, music, and the arts to lift artificial silos of learning and satisfy the aesthetic

sense of the human soul.

Academic disciplines within Newman Guide-recognized schools include specific content standards unique to Catholic education and laid out in The Cardinal Newman Society's Catholic Curriculum Standards, such as "Describe the importance of thinking with images informed by classic Christian and Western symbols and archetypes" and "Explain the history of the Catholic Church and its impact in human events." These curricular standards are derived from Church teaching and the expectations of exemplary Catholic colleges. When examining Church documents for aspects of curricular design, we noted that many docu-

ments looked to the formation of the student more than specific Catholic content.

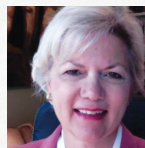
For example, mathematics should help a student develop the acuity of precision, determination, inquiry, reasoning, and an appreciation of beauty and God's orderly design. Science stan-

dards include, "To exhibit a primacy of care and concern about all stages of life" and to "display a deep sense of wonder and delight about the natural universe."

Of course, a curriculum cannot be delivered without a prepared and spiritually formed teacher, who is faithful to the teachings of the Church and practices those teachings daily. Many teachers in the exceptional Newman Guide institutions see teaching as a personal means of sanctification and an answer to a call, not just a profession. They are willing to build a relationship with students and to journey with them as they discover life's many challenges and delights. It is through a face-to-face, "incarnate education" in an environment that is simple yet beautiful that these relationships are best forged. With a successful curriculum, students are encouraged to wonder, gain wisdom, and worship the one true God.

OCM


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HIGHLIGHTS OF EXEMPLARY CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Course offerings address the integral formation of students' intellect, conscience, emotions, body, and soul and are based on a Christian anthropology.
- Catholic doctrine and teaching align with the Catechism of the Catholic Faith and magisterial teaching.
- The teaching of the Catholic faith has priority, is taught alongside other academic disciplines, and is not diminished by more pressing priorities.
- Faith and reason are presented as valid and harmonious approaches to learning, and there is purposeful integration of the Catholic faith in all content areas, including science and math. (See *Fides et Ratio* and the Catholic Curriculum Standards for K-12)
- An interdisciplinary approach is used, weaving academic disciplines together in the pursuit of truth.
- Virtue is cultivated in curricular and extra-curricular programming.
- Catholic curriculum standards are evident and applied to academic disciplines.
- Philosophical questioning and instructional strategies are chosen to bring about wonder, wisdom, and worship.

BODY AND MIND
SPIRIT



NEWMAN GUIDE EDUCATION IS SO MUCH MORE

BY DAN GUERNSEY, ED.D.

TODAY IN SECULAR PUBLIC EDUCATION, THERE IS A “BACK TO BASICS” MOVEMENT AMONG EXACERBATED PARENTS SEEKING TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM HARMFUL IDEOLOGICAL CULTURAL FORCES IN EDUCATION. BUT THE ANSWER IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS “JUST” TEACHING READING, WRITING, AND MATH. THERE IS ULTIMATELY NO “NEUTRAL EDUCATION.” THERE IS ONLY EDUCATION IN THE TRUTH OR ITS OPPOSITE; AND THERE IS MUCH MORE TO LEARN THAN PHONICS AND SUMS.

Meanwhile in higher education, critics increasingly doubt the value of liberal arts programs, corrupted by political and ideological bias. The solution, however, is not to jettison valuable disciplines for simple career preparation. Again, education either teaches truth or opposes it.

Schools and colleges recognized in The Newman Guide know this. Not a single one was established to “just” teach kids how to read, write, and cipher or train for a job. None of them would sell their students that short, for they know that the young people in their care are of infinite value. They are sons and daughters of Christ the King, with eternal destinies.

A Newman Guide school or college does not just have a better academic curriculum. It also has a better understanding of the human person and is guided by faith and reason. It is thus itself a better guide on the path to complete human flourishing.

A Newman Guide institution is also upfront in acknowledging that a fundamental purpose of education is the generational transmission of culture—understood as the values, traditions, and mores of a community, including the Catholic faith and community. All schools, public and private, perpetuate and form culture; they should be upfront about their intentions and influences. But Newman Guide schools understand the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education’s warning that:

It is becoming increasingly clear that we are now facing with what might accurately be called an educational crisis, especially in the field of affectivity and in many places, curricula are being planned and implemented which “allegedly convey a neutral conception of the person and of life, yet in fact reflect an anthropology opposed to faith and to right reason.” The disorientation regarding anthropology which is a widespread feature of our cultural landscape has undoubtedly helped to destabilize

the family as an institution, bringing with it a tendency to cancel out the differences between men and women, presenting them instead as merely the product of historical and cultural conditioning. (*Male and Female He Created Them*, 2019)

Forming the whole person

Additionally, because faithful Catholic schools and colleges understand that their students are a unity of mind, body, and spirit with an eternal destiny, they know that there is no effective and compelling way to reach and teach young people other than as they come before them every moment: as complex, unified unrepeatable body/mind/spirit miracles. They are never just teaching a mind. A consequence of this unity it that

there simply is no way to remove culture, valuing, complex human relationships, God, and notions of good and evil from a child’s development and schooling. Catholic educators occasionally focus their formational efforts on one part of the triad more than the other, but they never fail to consider the totality of unified young person before them.

This is why, for example, schools in The Newman Guide know that they are not “just” teaching writing. Sure, for younger kids much time is spent on grammar, spelling, and punctuation. What we are really teaching through writing is *thinking and eloquence*. Good writing is good thinking. It is “showing your work” and allowing and inviting others to probe and correct assumptions and conceptions. It is demonstrating powers of reasoning, personal insight, and creativity. It is difficult and demanding to do well, but as in many human activities, the question is not about how well you

wield a tool but the end toward which you wield it. That students can write is useful; what they think and write about is what matters.

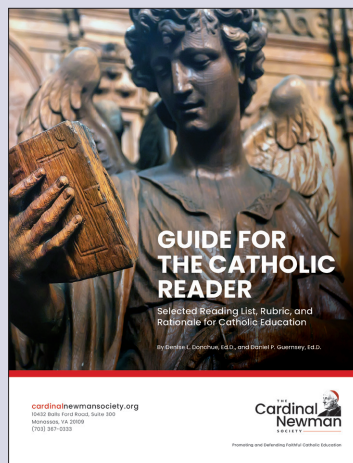
Similarly, the best Catholic schools don’t have older students read books “just” because they need more practice in the mechanics of reading (vocabulary, phonics etc.). They have students read books, because books carry culture. They teach students how to “read” not only the words in the text but also the world of the text and ultimately the world around them. They teach how to value and ascribe meaning to things. The suspect and corrupt books pushed on many kids by public schools today are also being used toward this end—just with a different effect.

Vatican II’s *Gaudium et Spes* puts it this way:

Literature and the arts are also, in their own way, of great importance to the life of the Church. They strive to make known the proper nature of man, his problems and his experiences in trying to know and perfect both himself and the world. They have much to do with revealing man’s place in history and in the world; with illustrating the miseries and joys, the needs and strengths of man and with foreshadowing a better life for him. Thus, they are able to elevate human life, expressed in multifold forms according to various times and regions. (#62)

This is why Catholic educators and parents must ensure that students are surrounded by good books when young and “the great books” when older. The Cardinal Newman Society has produced its *Guide for the Catholic Reader: Selected Reading List, Rubric, and Rationale for Catholic Education* to help parents and educators toward this end.

“RELIGION, MORALITY, AND FAITH ARE NOT EXTRAS ADDED TO A CURRICULUM BUT RATHER CORE ELEMENTS THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO REMOVE.”



Fighting for humanity

Newman Guide-recognized schools and colleges are focused on a broader array of goods than just the traditional “3 R’s” of reading, ‘riting, and ‘rithmetic. Both inside and outside of the classroom,

in academics and athletics and the arts, Catholic educators follow the Congregation for Catholic Education's vision that Catholic education is a *tour de force* of complete Christian human formation:

Students should be helped to see the human person as a living creature having both a physical and a spiritual nature; each of us has an immortal soul, and we are in need of redemption. The older students can gradually come to a more mature understanding of all that is implied in the concept of "person": intelligence and will, freedom and feelings, the capacity to be an active and creative agent; a being endowed with both rights and duties, capable of interpersonal relationships, called to a specific mission in the world. (*The Religious Dimension of Education in the Catholic School*, 55)

And to put a finer point on it: The central challenge before us now is that man has forgotten who he is; or, more sinisterly, man is up to his old tricks of making himself God and worshipping his own will and pleasures. This has dramatically impacted how schools today are conducting themselves and what they are teaching. Again, Newman Guide institutions recall what the Congregation for Catholic Education has told us:

Each type of education, moreover, is influenced by a particular concept of what it means to be a human person. In today's pluralistic world, the Catholic educator must consciously inspire his or her activity with the Christian concept of the person, in communion with the Magisterium of the Church. It is a concept which includes a defense of human rights, but also attributes to the human person the dignity of a child of God; it attributes the fullest liberty, freed from sin itself by Christ, the most exalted destiny, which is the definitive and total possession of God Himself, through love. It establishes the strictest possible relationship of solidarity among all persons; through mutual love and an ecclesial community. It calls for the fullest development of all that is human, because we have been made masters of the world by its Creator. Finally, it proposes Christ, Incarnate Son of God, and perfect Man, as both

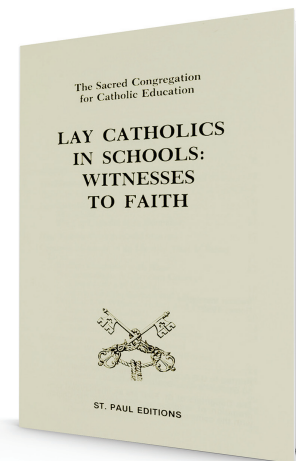
model and means; to imitate Him, is, for all men and women, the inexhaustible source of personal and communal perfection. Thus, Catholic educators can be certain that they make human beings more human. (*Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 18)

Years ago, perhaps public schools were safe enough for Catholic families, but there has been a seismic shift. Cultural revolutionists have subverted traditional American values and, more importantly, Christ and His Church. Religion, morality, and faith are not extras added to a curriculum but rather core elements that public schools have attempted to remove. In actuality, they have just supplanted what is important. The worldview of Western Christendom has been chewed up and ripped out of our children's formation and replaced by another worldview/religion that is materialist, Marxist, and relativistic. An orthodoxy is being presented, but it's now an un-Christian orthodoxy.

It's not that "Hannibal is at the gates," the warning used by ancient Romans to instill anxiety at the prospect of losing their once great culture. Hannibal has now long been in control of our common culture.

In a noble but doomed-to-fail effort, some classical charter schools are trying to revive a sense of Western culture, and they fan some Christian fumes towards the kids. But even if their secular classical view achieves its goals of cultivating virtue and patriotism, in the end it will not solve the problems facing our kids or our culture.

All the problems in our current culture are the results and fruits of Western culture without Christ. We have sickened ourselves by abandoning God. As Chesterton understood so well, removing the supernatural from man has made him unnatural. Personal and cultural problems will not be fixed by a secular West-



ern classical program or curriculum, but by Christ Himself. We cannot successfully raise our children or maintain a flourishing culture without He who is the source and summit of all that is true, good, and beautiful.

The battle for humanity cannot be sidelined, and public or public charter schools cannot be rendered safe. Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic, and career preparation are not sufficient for the battle. These are tools both side use to advance their worldviews. The survivors will be those most

rooted in truth, whose minds are most aligned with reality and who are the most generous in life. There is nowhere to hide or shield our children from the fundamental questions each must answer for himself: Who am I? What was I made to do? And ultimately Christ's questions to each of us: "Who do you say that I am?" One benefit of this

current chaos is that the stakes are clearer and more explicit. Our choices are stark. And the value of an authentic Catholic education stands out even greater. The Newman Guide's schools and colleges are rising to the opportunity. **OCM**

“ IN A NOBLE BUT DOOMED-TO-FAIL EFFORT, SOME CLASSICAL CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE TRYING TO REVIVE A SENSE OF WESTERN CULTURE, AND THEY FAN SOME CHRISTIAN FUMES TOWARDS THE KIDS. ”

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Graduate Programs: New Addition to The Newman Guide

It's been a long time coming. The Newman Guide has recognized undergraduate colleges since 2007, and now we're inviting applications from graduate programs.

Faithful Catholic education is important to a person's life at every stage—in the formative years of childhood, in high school and college, and beyond. There is never a time when learning and formation cannot help a person become more human and grow closer to God. Of course, most people never pursue a master's or doctorate degree, but graduate student enrollment in the U.S. has doubled in the last 20 years, so the need for help finding the best Catholic programs is growing.

Moreover, students who have invested in a Newman Guide undergraduate experience have told us they'd like to continue at a graduate program where they can grow in faith and virtue, make lifelong friends, and answer God's calling to explore subjects more deeply. "God has created me to do him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another," wrote St. John Henry Newman. "I have my mission."

There's another reason why recognizing faithful graduate programs in The Newman Guide is so important. In his *Idea of a University*, Newman extols the work of Catholic education to cultivate the mind, but he also warns that intellectuals can be too narrow in their specialties while ignoring the unity of all truth in the mind of God. They can also be too focused on the mind while ignoring the body and soul, even to the point of making their studies a kind of religion and becoming an "insidious foe" of the Church. By upholding and strengthening

faithful Catholic graduate education, we help students become specialized experts without losing touch with general truths and a Catholic worldview.

With all this in mind, The Cardinal Newman Society (CNS) decided to expand its popular Newman Guide to include graduate programs, and we have been flooded with applications.

What's a faithful grad program?

To apply for recognition in The Newman Guide, a graduate program must answer a set of more than 100 questions, affirming that its policies and practices conform with Church teaching and guidance for Catholic education. The program also submits a variety of artifacts, such as handbooks, specific policy samples, course catalogs, job descriptions, and the schedule of campus Masses and Confessions. CNS thoroughly evaluates the program, looking closely at how the Catholic faith influences its courses and professors, and we may ask to conduct interviews with key leaders and faculty and make a campus visit.

It is all very time-consuming for both the graduate program and CNS, which has prompted some to ask whether we aren't placing a bit too much importance on Newman Guide recognition. And it's certainly true that we greatly value the reputation of The Newman Guide as a reliable indicator of faithful education. But more than that, our mission primarily serves Catholic families who need more than someone's personal assurance that a program appears solid. They need high standards and a thorough review that they can trust without question.

As with the Newman Guide reviews of schools and colleges, evaluating a gradu-

ate program's fidelity in every aspect—curriculum, faculty, teaching, personnel policies, admissions, spiritual formation, and more—is the only way to ensure that a student can expect a truly Catholic education. And in graduate programs, with their deeper exploration of one particular subject or practice, the strength of the faculty and their teaching require even closer review.

Also, it is the mission of CNS to both promote and defend faithful Catholic education. The Newman Guide not only identifies the best programs for prospective students, but it also helps strengthen education by holding institutions to high standards of truth and fidelity while helping them protect against ideological threats and corruption. We have seen many schools, colleges, and graduate programs that are sincerely faithful and hire outstanding faculties, but their internal policies are weak and invite scandal and lawsuits from those who oppose Catholic teaching. The best legal protection today is to have clear, forthright policies that are explicitly rooted in the Catholic mission so that courts cannot refuse to protect religious freedom.

Catholic families can be assured that a graduate program recognized in The Newman Guide is worth a close look and promised a strong, faithful Catholic education. CNS is eager to see many graduate programs in the Guide so that students can have a wide variety of choices, each distinct in the particulars but all faithful to their mission. **OCM**

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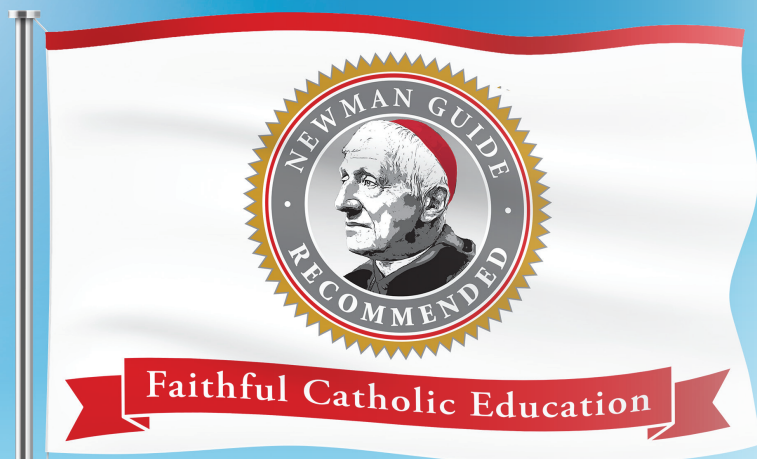
Process for Graduate Program Recognition in The Newman Guide

If you meet requirements, request Newman Guide application.

- Program Name
- Application with 100 yes/no questions
- General information about program
- Artifact upload
(including handbooks, specific policy artifacts, course catalog, job description samples, etc.)

Submit application for review!
Interviews with key people on campus
(includes a campus visit).

Celebrate your recognition in The Newman Guide by proudly flying the Newman Guide flag!



Celebrating Every Kind of Catholic Education

*Classical schools... Great Books colleges...
homeschool programs... trade schools...*

What are we to make of the wide and growing variety of Catholic education options?

As Catholic education keeps getting better, The Cardinal Newman Society (CNS) believes that we need to celebrate the very best, regardless of form. Exemplary educators deserve to know how much they are appreciated by Catholic families, and others need models to follow. Catholic families should know where to get the best formation. These are all reasons for The Newman Guide.

But is it all “Catholic education”?

Many in the Church today think of Catholic education as the equivalent of parochial schools. And to be sure, parochial schools have held pride of place in the United States for many decades and continue to do so. CNS works extensively to aid parish and diocesan schools and their leaders, whose commitment to fidelity and strong formation is crucial to evangelization in America.

But Catholic education is not a method or institution; it can be served well or poorly by various methods and institutions, just like healthcare or assistance to

the poor. Catholic education is an art, a vocation, and a ministry. It cultivates the intellect by the aid of grace and the truth of Catholic doctrine, within an integral human formation that is ordered to full communion with God.

While its mission should remain constant, Catholic education’s response to various family circumstances and student needs has required several methods and school structures including homeschooling, parish schools, m o n a s t e r y schools, boarding schools, trade schools, residential colleges, research universities, on-line programs, and variations on these. Catholic education simply cannot be limited to any particular

method or institution, without unjustly excluding portions of Catholics who were promised formation in the faith as a right of Baptism.

Catholic education also cannot be limited to any age group, as if the opportunity to know God and His creation expires at a certain age. Of course, formation of the mind and character is especially important for young people.

“CATHOLIC EDUCATION IS NOT A METHOD OR INSTITUTION... IT IS AN ART, A VOCATION, AND A MINISTRY. IT CULTIVATES THE INTELLECT BY THE AID OF GRACE AND THE TRUTH OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE...”

That’s why we are so excited to expand our Newman Guide recognition to include a wide variety of elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and graduate programs—and soon homeschool programs as well. And it’s why CNS eagerly assists and promotes all

kinds of educational programs that faithfully serve the Church's mission of evangelization.

Independent schools

One new and growing segment of Catholic education is independent schools, not affiliated with any parish, religious order, or other Church entity. And the longest-operating independent school is Holy Angels Academy in Louisville, Ky., faithful to Catholic teaching and authority and devoted to the true mission of Catholic education.

In June, marking Holy Angels' 50th anniversary and more than five decades of independent Catholic schools, CNS President Patrick Reilly and Vice President of Educator Resources and Evaluation, Dr. Denise Donohue, were among the featured speakers at a large celebration in Louisville. Reilly presented a commemorative plaque to Academy headmaster Michael Swearingen and longtime leader Joe Norton announcing to more than 600 educators, parents, and alumni the Academy's recognition in *The Newman Guide*. Participants included representatives of other independent schools nationwide and the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education.

Donohue had a dual role at the event, representing both CNS and the National Association of Private Catholic and Independent Schools (NAPCIS). Donohue and our senior fellow Dr. Dan Guernsey are both long-time board members of NAPCIS and founding leaders of independent Catholic schools



From left to right: Headmaster of Holy Angels Academy, Michael Swearingen, and Headmaster Emeritus of Holy Angels Academy, Mr. Joe Norton, receive a 50th-anniversary plaque from Patrick Reilly recognizing the school for its extraordinary leadership in Catholic education.

in Texas and Florida, respectively. Donohue addressed the Holy Angels celebration with a message from Dr. Eileen Cubanski, whose leadership of NAPCIS has been instrumental to the growing independent school movement.

Donohue also researched and authored a special report on the importance and history of independent Catholic schools, which is available on the Society's website. The report is being shared with dioceses, schools, and Catholic media to promote better understanding of their unique contributions to Catholic education.

Historically, Catholic schools have been affiliated with religious orders, parishes, dioceses, and other Church entities. But independent schools arose in the late 1960s and 1970s, when many religious orders abandoned parochial schools and the schools lost focus of their mission. Since then, the Church has embraced lay vocations in teaching and administration, and today more than 97 percent of parochial school employees are laypeople.

Therefore, parents should be applauded for developing new schools when needed to ensure the sound for-

mation of their children in fidelity to the Church. According to NAPCIS, the first known independent school was Holy Innocents Academy in Kinnelon, N.J., founded in 1967 by Dr. William Marra. That school eventually closed, and thus Holy Angels Academy in Louisville—founded in 1973 by a Dominican nun in partnership with Catholic families—is the longest-operating independent school today.

The Academy has a student body of 101 students in grades PreK-12 and used a classical approach even before it gained its current popularity. The school's motto, *ad majorem Dei gloriam* (for the greater glory of God), is evident in its religious practices. Students attend daily Mass and recite the Morning Offering, with prayers to St. Michael and their guardian angels.

Today, according to Donohue's report, there are 82 member schools in NAPCIS, including 20 that joined since 2010. About an equal number of independent schools have been launched but closed their doors due to financial struggles. Starting and maintaining a school without parish support can be difficult, but it's all the more reason CNS promotes these schools and helps them develop strong policies and protect against ideological threats.

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www.eucharisticeducation.org

Join the Task Force for Eucharistic Education

A recent survey showed that nearly seven-in-ten Catholics believe that the bread and wine used at Mass are mere symbols of the body and blood of Jesus. However, the survey also found that most of those same Catholics do not know what the Catholic Church teaches regarding transubstantiation.

This is why The Cardinal Newman Society is launching the Task Force for Eucharistic Education—an initiative to help solicit, identify, and promote inspiring efforts by Catholic schools, homeschools, colleges, and individuals to help revive Eucharistic understanding and devotion.

We want you to participate! All you have to do is visit www.eucharisticeducation.org and share the projects you or your school are engaging in, including academic conferences, research, publications, formative student programs, liturgies, prayer, videos, or any other ideas.

If you have any questions, contact Bob Laird at 703-367-0333 x103 or blaird@cardinalnewmansociety.org

