

OUR CATHOLIC MISSION

TRUTH AND FIDELITY IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

FALL 2021

A young boy with a green backpack is standing in a hallway, looking down at a blue locker. He is wearing a red t-shirt and denim shorts. The hallway is filled with blue lockers, and the floor is made of red bricks.

**LET'S BE FRANK
ABOUT THE DANGERS
OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**A PASTOR HELPS FAMILIES
SWITCH TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

**TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT
SECULAR COLLEGES**



**FOR MORE THAN 28 YEARS,
THE CARDINAL NEWMAN
SOCIETY HAS WORKED TO
PROMOTE AND DEFEND
FAITHFUL CATHOLIC
EDUCATION.**

DID YOU KNOW:

- MORE THAN 1,000 SCHOOLS AND A QUARTER MILLION STUDENTS ARE USING OUR FAITHFUL CATHOLIC CURRICULUM STANDARDS.**
- MORE THAN 75,000 PARENTS AND STUDENTS WILL USE OUR NEWMAN GUIDE IN THEIR COLLEGE SEARCH THIS YEAR, AND**
- MANY DIOCESAN SUPERINTENDENTS, PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, AND COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS RELY ON THE NEWMAN SOCIETY TO HELP DEVELOP THE POLICIES THEY NEED TO MAKE CATHOLIC EDUCATION STRONG AND FAITHFUL!**

THE CARDINAL NEWMAN SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1879, MERRIFIELD, VIRGINIA 22116
(703) 367-0333

FALL 2021 ISSUE

In this Issue

We're pleased to share with you the Fall 2021 issue of *Our Catholic Mission*, a magazine of The Cardinal Newman Society. It is designed specifically for Catholic school superintendents, principals, college leaders and other educators, as well as for Catholic families and the Newman Society members whose prayers and support enable our work. We hope it's helpful to you!

In this issue, we look at public and other secular education. Specifically, we call for Catholic educators to face the reality of today's secular schools and colleges and embrace the superior mission of Catholic education. You can read more about that in this issue's editorial on the facing page.

When COVID hit in 2020, most schools went online, and parents got an up-close and personal view of their children's education. Catholic families in public schools were rightly appalled by the secular, ideologically driven education their children were receiving.

During this time, one Catholic priest in Virginia saw the opportunity to convince his parishioners of the dangers of public schools and the value of faithful Catholic education. You can read beginning on page 4 about the steps he took at his parish and how his actions can be a model for other priests, following in the footsteps of the late Archbishop John Hughes of the 1800s who helped Catholics get out of public schools.

On page 7, two expert scholars, Mary Rice Hasson, JD, and Dr. Theresa Farnan, argue that today is a "watershed" moment for Catholics to explore the state of public education. They urge Catholic educators to make available a wide variety of Catholic education options. Plus, we explain how the curricular approach and philosophy are different in public education and Catholic education.

Finally on page 10, Patrick Reilly, president of The Cardinal Newman Society, reveals why the Ivy League institutions—and all secular colleges—aren't what they're made out to be. Since the founding of the Newman Society more than 28 years ago, Patrick has been alerting families and education leaders to the problems in secular (and secularized Catholic) higher education.

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If you have any questions or comments or would like digital copies of *Our Catholic Mission* to share with your staff and others in Catholic education, please visit NewmanSociety.org/OCM or email Programs@CardinalNewmanSociety.org

Let's Face the Reality of Secular Education

Why is this issue of *Our Catholic Mission* about public and other secular schools, as well as secular colleges?

The Cardinal Newman Society's mission is to promote and defend faithful Catholic education. While we are critical of secular education, our focus is the renewal of fidelity and truth in our Catholic schools, colleges and other programs.

However, there's no escaping the fact that most Catholic students attend public and other secular institutions. This needs to be acknowledged and confronted—and Catholic educators need to confidently explain why faithful Catholic education is the much better choice.

Catholic education helps form students in mind, body and soul for this life and the one to come. It's a lofty goal, but it's a worthy one for the good of our young people!

Catholic education also has great value for our society. As St. John Bosco said, "If young people are educated properly, we have moral order; if not, vice and disorder prevail. Religion alone can initiate and achieve a true education."

Catholic school leaders, teachers and bishops should not aim to "keep up" with public or "elite" secular education. What Catholic education offers is radically different; no comparison is possible or necessary.

Instead, Catholic leaders and parents should be convinced of the superiority of faithful Catholic education and determined that every Catholic child receives it.

To this end, we need not be hesitant in telling Catholics about the inadequacy of secular education and the growing dangers to children. Especially public schools and colleges are controlled by politics and public opinion, teach from

a secular atheistic worldview, and succumb to the ideologies of the day.

The reality is that many Catholic families send their students to secular schools and colleges for a variety of reasons, and these need to be understood.

But perhaps

they are unaware of what these schools lack in student formation. Or maybe they don't realize the gravity of the ideo-

logical colonization that's been overtaking education. Perhaps they have never fully appreciated the great treasure that is faithful Catholic education. And maybe they didn't realize the options available to them, including financial aid and lower-cost alternatives like homeschooling.

The souls of young Catholics must be our priority over every other consideration. We need the pulpit, the bulletin, the media and every means of educating Catholic families about the importance of Catholic education—and the dangers of secular malformation.

We talk a lot about evangelization in our parishes, but we don't do enough to argue for Catholic education, forming the whole person and bringing the insights of our faith into every subject area. One or two hours of religion courses in a week cannot undo what kids learn in a public school, and it can never make up for what they didn't learn.

We cannot treat secular education as just another option, when its teaching and formation are antithetical to Catholic beliefs and morality. With the souls of students at risk, there's no time to delay in speaking up clearly and convincingly. We want young Catholics to lead holy and fulfilling lives; secular and especially public education does not help them do that.

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“ WE NEED NOT BE HESITANT IN TELLING CATHOLICS ABOUT THE INADEQUACY OF SECULAR EDUCATION AND THE GROWING DANGERS TO CHILDREN. ”



A Pastor Saves His Flock by Catholic Education

by Newman Society Staff

“We shall have to build the school-house first and the church afterward,” the bishop declared, expressing his alarm about the corruption of young Catholics in secular schools. “In our age, the question of education is the question of the Church.”

These famous words of Archbishop “Dagger John” Hughes, who was New York City’s first Catholic shepherd in the mid-1800s, seem no less relevant today. And in Fairfax County, Va., where critical race theory, gender ideology and emptied classrooms because of COVID have sparked protests by angry parents, a parish priest is taking up Hughes’s mis-

sion of helping Catholic children get out of public schools by every means possible.

When the pandemic hit last year, Father John De Celles of St. Raymond of Penafort Parish in Springfield, Va., instituted a one-time \$2,000 scholarship for each child in his parish who switches from a public elementary or secondary school to a Catholic parochial or lay-run school. Father has renewed that offer again for the 2021-22 school year, thanks to the generosity of parishioners who don’t have school-age children.

In addition, this year he doubled the parish’s annual, renewable scholarships to \$1,000 for students in Catholic grade schools and \$2,000 for students in Catholic high schools. On a case-by-case ba-

sis, St. Raymond's offers additional financial aid to families in need and helps cover the direct educational costs of families who homeschool.

These scholarships are not a marketing strategy for the parish school—in fact, there is no school at St. Raymond's. Instead, parishioners attend nearby parochial schools or Angelus Academy, one of a growing number of faithful, lay-established schools. St. Raymond's also supports an active group of Catholic homeschooling families.

The goal in promoting all of these options is to ensure that kids get a Catholic formation.

“We need to do whatever we can to help parents get their kids out of these corrupt government-run schools,” Fr. De Celles tells

The Cardinal Newman Society. “We talk a lot about ‘evangelization,’ but we’re losing the souls we already have if we let these little ones be prey to the wolves. They will leave us and Jesus. We must do everything we can to save them, literally.”

The parish scholarships and Father's efforts to highlight the dangers of public schools in bulletins and other parish communications have persuaded families to make the switch to Catholic education. One family told him they “cannot imagine going back to the public school system.”

Another family, whose 5th-grade son transferred from a public school into a Catholic school, told Father, “It was the best decision we made. Your assistance helped to make this happen for us, and we remain eternally grateful to you!”

Fr. De Celles was especially happy to grant a full scholarship to a single immigrant mom with huge financial troubles. He awarded another to a family caught up in financial problems related to the pandemic. This year, he said, the family

is back on their feet and able to pay most of the tuition themselves.

“Parents tell me all the time how they love the Catholic schools, and how grateful they are,” Father says.

Returning to an old solution

The outlook for Irish Catholic immigrants in the mid-19th century was dismal, but Archbishop Hughes did not abandon his people. Instead he brought them to Christ through rigorous moral preaching and continually proclaiming the love of the Sacred Heart. The Archbishop's attentiveness helped the Irish people relearn a sense of sin and guilt and become outstanding citizens and leaders in the city.

Importantly, he knew that education was the way to help the Irish people up from poverty and lawlessness to stable and upstanding

lives. Hughes fought against the public school system, which was essentially run by Protestants. His attempt to win state support for Catholic schools caused controversy and a backlash with the Maclay Bill of 1842, which barred religious instruction from public schools and funds for denominational schools. But Hughes was not deterred, establishing even more Catholic schools.

Were the challenges he faced much different from what we face today? American Catholics were openly discriminated against for their religious beliefs. Large numbers of Catholic immigrants were quickly assimilated into public schools, which opposed Catholic teaching. Families were in crisis—especially the poorest in the inner cities—and they were battered by promiscuity, alcoholism, disease and absent fathers.

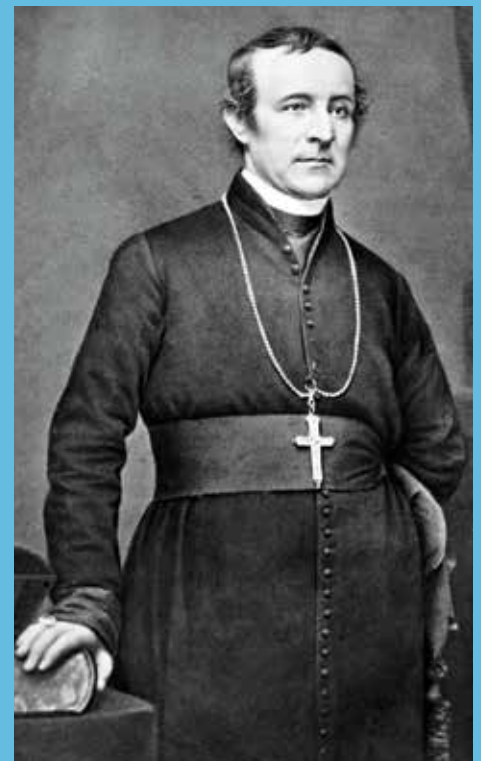
Today America is much more prosperous, yet the challenges facing the Church and society still include discrimination against Catholic beliefs, the assimilation of Catholic immigrants, sexual immorality, substance abuse, fatherlessness and

even a devastating plague—plus the corruption of public schools.

All this suggests a return to the solution of Archbishop Hughes: first and foremost, tend to the spiritual and temporal needs of Catholic families. Renew courageous moral preaching, confidence in the love of Christ. And renew commitment to faithful Catholic education in any way that serves the needs of families, forming Catholics to be lights in the darkness.

Pastors like Father De Celles carry on the mission of Archbishop Hughes and others who established Catholic education in America, including St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. John Neumann and St. Katherine Drexel. Fr. De Celles recalls the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1889, in which America's bishops urged parents to withdraw their kids from public schools.

“Today we have an even worse problem,” Father says. “In 1889 the public schools were at least teaching with a Christian foundation, albeit Protestant. Now we face an anti-Christian and really anti-Christ school system.”



Archbishop John Hughes's warnings in the mid-1800s about the corruption of young Catholics in secular schools seem no less relevant today.



At St. Raymond of Penafort Parish in Springfield, Va., Father John De Celles is helping Catholic children get out of public schools and into Catholic education.

It's a concern that Fr. De Celles wants everyone in his parish to take seriously. In a parish bulletin in May, Father wrote that the problems "cause me to wonder if it is immoral to send children to these schools."

On the dangers of public education, bishops today are "essentially silent," laments Fr. De Celles. "Parents and pastors and bishops should be doing everything possible to save their children from the abuse of public schools."

Protecting children

Northern Virginia's Fairfax County, where St. Raymond Parish is located, and nearby Loudoun County have become hotbeds for false ideology. For example, the Loudoun County public schools recently required teachers to use students' preferred gender pronouns. Students who identify as "gender-expansive and transgender" are allowed to participate in sports "in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity," Fox News reported.

In Fairfax County, public school teachers, principals and other leaders held a one-hour Zoom conference with author Ibram Kendi, an advocate of critical race theory. As the *Federalist* reported, the call cost \$20,000, and the district spent \$24,000 on Kendi's books while making them required reading for K-12 students.

Fairfax schools are also required to make bathrooms and locker rooms available

to students based on their self-identified gender. Students must be identified by chosen names and genders, even in official school yearbooks.

These are just a handful of the dangerous influences in public schools. The bottom line is that many public schools today are promoting a worldview that's inconsistent with our faith and often anti-Catholic. Parents, especially Catholic ones, are pulling their kids out.

"We sent our eldest daughter to Kindergarten at a public school, with the

“...HELPING YOUNG CATHOLICS OBTAIN A FAITHFUL CATHOLIC EDUCATION IS A PASTOR'S SOLEMN DUTY.”

hope of using public school for as long as possible, given the expensive tuitions for four children in Catholic school," recalled one of the families that sought help from St. Raymond Parish. "But we pulled her after her first year, when a teacher casually spoke about same-sex marriage."

"We have tried to instill our faith in our children as their primary teachers, and now more than ever we know how important it is to protect them from what is being taught in the public schools," the family wrote.

"Think about this: we were all rightly outraged when we heard about the abuse of children by priests and bishops a few years back," wrote Fr. De Celles. "I remember how, for a while, so many people treated all priests as suspect of these horrible deeds. And we still have all sorts of rules in place in the Church that are to protect our children from the possibility of this ever happening. I understood that.

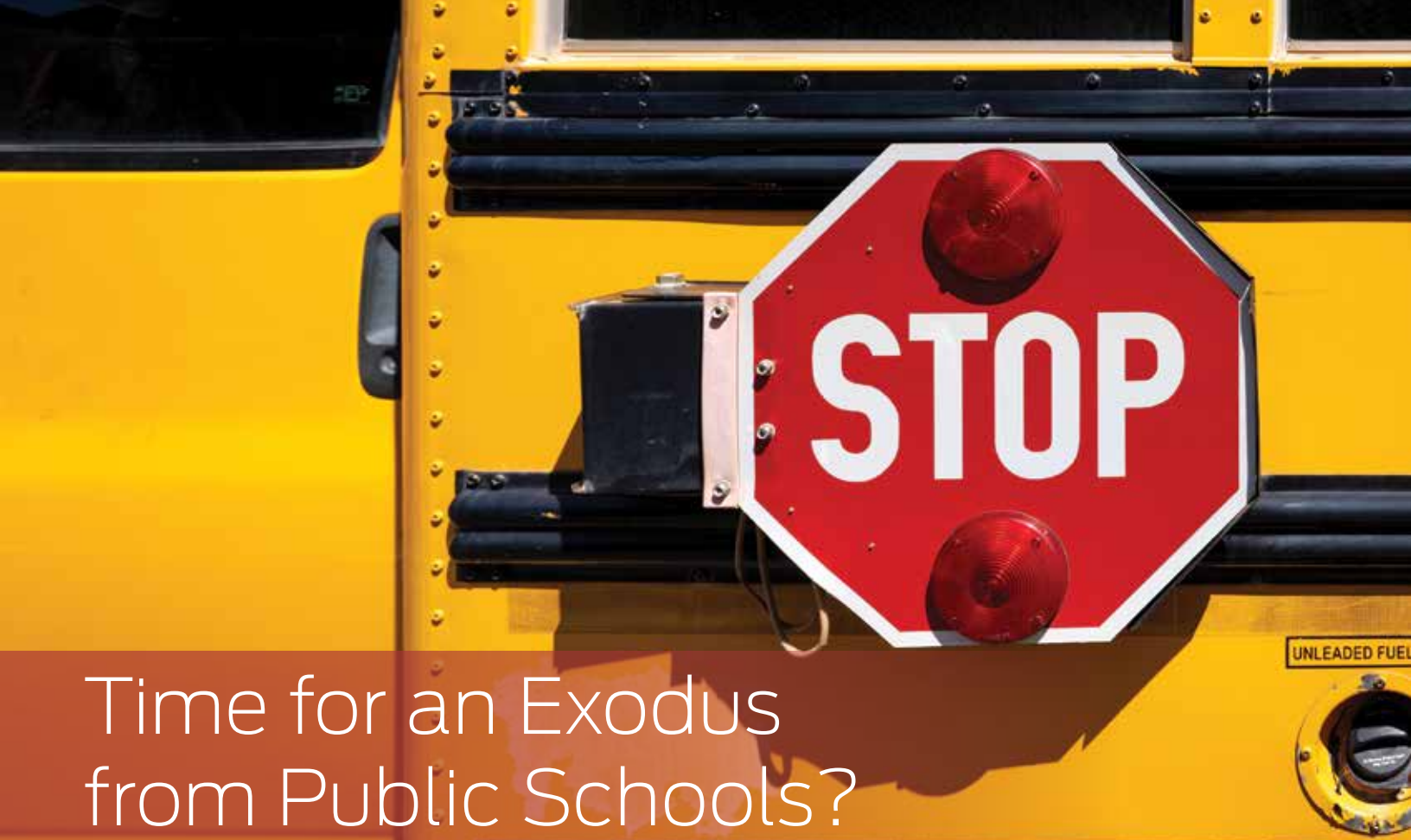
"But now I wonder, why do we not feel/think the same outrage and suspicion toward our government bureaucrats and elected officials who are also abusing our children by warping their minds with this filth and nonsense? How can we corrupt our kids with this cow manure, and still say we love them, much less expect them and ourselves to remain in God's favor? How can we do this to our little ones and not fear the fires of hell—for them and us?"

It couldn't get more serious than that. For Fr. De Celles, helping young Catholics obtain a faithful Catholic education is a pastor's solemn duty. He is leading the way through his own actions and the generosity and conviction of his parishioners.

It is an approach that will, we hope, be replicated in parishes and dioceses around the country.

A version of this piece was published at Crisis Magazine.





Time for an Exodus from Public Schools?

by Mary Rice Hasson, JD, and Theresa Farnan, PhD

Laura Morris, a public-school teacher in Loudoun County, Va., was excited about returning to a classroom of “amazing” 5th grade students this fall. Instead, in August she quit her job.

In a short, heart-wrenching speech before the county school board that was shared on social media, Morris explained why: the school district’s “transgender” policies and “equity” trainings promote “political ideologies that do not square with who I am as a believer in Christ.” Her final words—before the school board silenced her microphone—urged “all parents and staff in this county to flood the private schools.”

In other words, leave public schools. Catholics should listen well.

A good education forms the whole person: intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual. But today’s public schools promote a curriculum that is radically antagonistic to Judeo-Christian morality and anthropology. Public schools of past generations were not perfect, but they incorporated an implicitly Judeo-Chris-

tian moral viewpoint and vision of the person (anthropology). No more.

Current public-school curricula and programs view the person through the lenses of atheism and materialism, often distorted even further by gender ideology. As a result, Catholic children in public school must navigate a school culture hostile to foundational Catholic beliefs. They face pressure from peers, teachers and administrators to use wrong-sex pronouns that affirm a classmate’s “gender identity” and to pretend “everything’s normal” when a male student who identifies as a “girl,” for example, undresses in the female locker room. LGBTQ-inclusive sex education programs break down modesty and function as “how to” instructions for children too young to understand or even legally consent to sexual activity.

At the same time, the militantly secular atmosphere within public schools sends the message to Catholic students that their religion has no place in the public square and that they should be ashamed of Catholic moral teachings, which are painted as intolerant and hateful. The Church’s beliefs about marriage and gender are described as bigoted, “trans-

phobic,” and a form of “cis-heteronormative” oppression. The schools exalt the individual as “self-creator” and define fulfillment in terms of pleasure and self-gratification.

The impact is predictable. The Center for Applied Research

in the Apostolate reported in 2015 that weekly Mass attendance was only five percent among millennials who attended non-Catholic schools.

“TODAY’S PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROMOTE A CURRICULUM THAT IS RADICALLY ANTAGONISTIC TO JUDEO-CHRISTIAN MORALITY AND ANTHROPOLOGY.”

Unless we take seriously, right now, the need to give every Catholic child a Catholic education, our churches will be nearly empty of young people before the decade is over. And our nation will suffer as well. Eight years ago, only about one in 10 Catholic children attended Catholic schools. Today Hispanic families account for the majority of Catholic children, yet more than 95 percent of them enroll in public schools.

This really is a watershed moment. Public-school parents are shocked at the prospect of daughters changing for gym in the presence of male (“transgender”) students, angered by the erosion of athletic opportunities for their daughters, and troubled that teachers encourage impressionable kindergarteners and vulnerable teens to “explore” alternative “gender identities.” They are alarmed over school policies that intentionally keep them in the dark about their own child’s “gender” confusion and frustrated that they are unable to shield their children from school curricula or programs that will undermine their child’s faith. Remote learning during the COVID lockdowns gave many parents an unvarnished look at their children’s daily lessons and the “woke” indoctrination embedded within.

Many parents today are rightly questioning whether public schools are the right choice for their children. There is no better time for Catholic dioceses to explain why a Catholic education—whether at home or in hybrid, classical, or parish schools—is not only a good option but the best option. The Church must do three things at once:

1 educate parents about the ideological capture of public education and the very real threats that gender ideology and “wokeness” pose to their children’s faith and psychological stability;

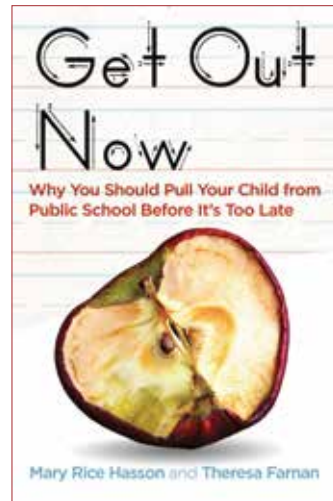
2 convey the vision of Catholic education (broadly speaking), which offers unparalleled benefits for faith, character-building and educational excellence; and

3 work alongside parents and the larger Catholic community to ensure that financial costs will never prevent a Catholic child from receiving a Catholic education, not only by reducing costs in parochial schools but also by promoting less costly options.

These steps require a radical shift in mindset not only among parents but also among priests and diocesan personnel, who have long regarded public education as a lesser but benign alternative. Perhaps that was true in the past; it is not true today.

It is critical for diocesan bishops to assess each pastor’s commitment to Catholic education, in all forms. A priest who thinks Catholic education is unimportant, or who discounts homeschooling as a means of Catholic education, would seem to be a poor fit for a parish with

many young families or a parish school. On the other hand, a bishop or pastor who is committed to ensuring a strong Catholic identity in diocesan schools, willing to listen to parents’ insights and be open to new educational models, and motivated to reach out to Catholic



Hispanic families, whose children represent the future of the Church, will see the Church flourish in spite of the challenging culture.

Now, more than ever, Catholic parents, clergy, parishes and philanthropists need to prioritize Catholic education. Like

Laura Morris, we must be unafraid to say that today's public schools promote "political ideologies do not square with who [we are] as believer[s] in Christ." Our children deserve better, and there are no do-overs on childhood. Let's give our kids the education they need not only for the here and now, but for eternal life.

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MARY RICE HASSON and **THERESA FARNAN** are authors of *Get Out Now: Why You Should Pull Your Child from Public School Before It's Too Late*.

Hasson is the Kate O'Beirne Fellow in Catholic Studies at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., and director of the Catholic Women's Forum. Farnan is a founding member of the Person and Identity Project and has taught at Franciscan University of Steubenville and two seminaries. Both have been leading Catholic voices on education, gender ideology and other issues.



The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate reported in 2015 that weekly Mass attendance was only five percent among millennials who attended non-Catholic schools.

Catholic vs. Public Education

Catholic education aims for the salvation of souls and to make disciples of Christ. It critically and systematically transmits culture through the light of faith for the integral development of a student's intellectual, moral, emotional, physical and spiritual needs so that, through effort and grace, the student can attain full human flourishing and effect "the good of society to which he belongs and... the duties of which he will, as an adult, have a share" (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1).

A central part of this holistic program is the school's curriculum, which is grounded in an underlying educational philosophy such as perennialism, essentialism, progressivism or reconstructionist/critical theory. Catholic schools often integrate various elements from each of these philosophies but might favor one, due to a particular charism. For instance, Catholic classical schools might emphasize perennialism, by which enduring truths

are taught in all subject areas, and Jesuit schools a reconstructionist/critical theory philosophy, wherein issues are analyzed for power structure and social change. Another Catholic school might be more essentialist in its emphasis on practical, back-to-basics, no-nonsense skills.

Curriculum theory, which educational designers use to support a philosophy, is primarily content-oriented and focused on the needs of society, the child or the knowledge to be acquired.

Catholic schools' content-oriented theory approach is primarily knowledge-centered, where the structures of the disciplines are integrated and aligned in a progression based upon a child's development. In this knowledge-centered approach, faith as a way of knowing has an important place. Children are formed so that they will, as adults, affect the society in which they belong.

Public schools have their own missions. As a function of the state, public education works first and foremost to generate a knowledgeable populace by providing academic knowledge and job skills so students can lead productive lives as good workers and good citizens. Students are formed within a relativist and materialist worldview.

For the most part, American public education has operated under the essentialist and progressive educational philosophies, with occasional forays into a reconstructionist/critical theory approach. Their curriculum theory is society-centered, with categories of "society-conformists," "society-reformers" and "society-radicals." It is the society-radicals who we see today creating curriculum which pushes sex education, gender ideology and radical civic activism into public schools.

— Denise Donohue, Ed.D.

Facing Hard Truths About Secular Colleges

by Patrick Reilly

An article by R.R. Reno made waves this summer, especially in academic circles, because of his frank rejection of “elite” secular universities.

Reno is editor of *First Things* magazine, which caters to a generally highbrow readership. He is a graduate of the prestigious Haverford College, earned his Ph.D. at the Ivy League’s Yale University, and taught theology at Creighton University—a Jesuit institution that has national prominence, despite having drifted away from its Catholic mission.

Still, Reno no longer recruits Ivy League graduates for employment.

“I don’t want to hire someone who makes inflammatory accusations at the drop of a hat,” he writes, responding to the increasingly hostile “cancel culture” on Ivy League and other “elite” college campuses. He also doesn’t want to hire graduates who have become “well-practiced in remaining silent when it costs something to speak up” against the prevailing campus ideologies.

“I have no doubt that Ivy League universities attract smart, talented and ambitious kids,” Reno acknowledges. “But do these institutions add value? My answer is increasingly negative. Dysfunctional kids are coddled and encouraged to nurture grievances, while normal kids are attacked and educationally abused.”

Toxic for Catholics

Most Catholic college students attend secular colleges (and largely secularized Catholic colleges) where the anti-reason “cancel culture” threatens anyone who espouses Catholic teaching and even Western culture. Shouldn’t the Church be doing more to warn them of the dangers?

Jennifer Frey, a philosophy professor at the public University of South Carolina, is a faithful Catholic who promotes multidisciplinary dialogue about virtue and goodness among her faculty. But as she explained recently in *The Point Magazine*, she is confronted by the very definition of secular higher education today. Its focus is deliberately concentrated on scientific knowledge, it rejects philosophical thinking about higher truths, and it excludes the essential truths of theology.

“My own vision of what a university should be is inspired by the Catholic tradition in which it originally came to be: a university is, in its essence, a community of scholars and students who seek the truth together as a common end for its own sake,” writes Frey. She cites St. John Henry Newman and his argument for theology as the foundational discipline of all education, “since God is the only coherent source of the sort of unity and order that such a search presupposes.”

Newman’s vision of a true university “has no chance of being realized outside of a Catholic context,” Frey acknowledges. But she strives for some “alternative vision of a secularized university” that at least recaptures an appreciation of vari-



ous theologies. It might be the most that can be accomplished in a public university today—but is this the education young Catholics deserve?

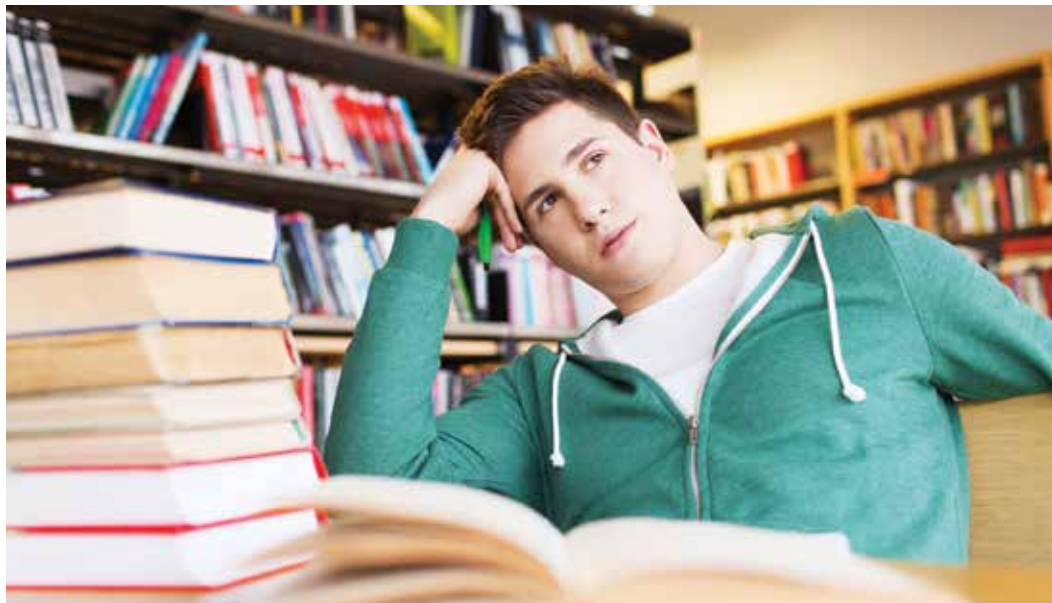
Concerns about secular education go well beyond academics, of course. Student life on most secular campuses is toxic to students trying to uphold Christian morality and to simply live healthily. Many students lack sleep and good physical habits, they abuse alcohol and possibly drugs, and they may suffer anxiety as a result of promiscuous lifestyles and shallow relationships. Most secular institutions today aggressively promote gender ideology and sexual immorality, even to the point of demanding students' assent in contradiction to our Catholic faith.

The Church has made it a priority to provide Catholic centers and Bible studies on secular campuses, offering some opportunity for Christian fellowship and the grace of the sacraments. But these cannot alter the general campus culture, which is increasingly dangerous for young Catholics. Such apostolates also cannot provide an authentically Catholic education, in which the insights of our Catholic faith bring light to every subject and provide a solid foundation for personal formation.

Parents' right to know

The Catholic Church must not turn a blind eye to the growing dangers of secular education. There is surely nothing "elite" about colleges that embrace depravity and lack commitment to truth and reason. Long ago, they turned against faith-filled, liberal arts education. Many today seem intent on malforming young people.

"We do not flourish without communion with the good," Frey argues, and that first requires forming students in "virtues like



wisdom, courage and justice." These are best cultivated in the home and within an education that is centered on Christ.

Secular education, with its focus on training students for functional roles in the economy and society, rejects an authentic higher education that forms the whole person. Catholic leaders must recover confidence in Catholic education and proclaim it, especially (but not only) to the faithful who either have lost appreciation for

“WE NEED TO TALK OPENLY ABOUT THE DANGERS THAT YOUNG CATHOLICS FACE AT SECULAR COLLEGES.”

the superiority of a Catholic education or have been let down by colleges that are not truly committed to their Catholic missions. We need to restore trust as well as confidence.

Frey, who argues the essential roles of theology and philosophy to higher education, concedes that the ideal is a Catholic institution. Reno has chosen to hire graduates of "quirky small Catholic colleges such as Thomas Aquinas College, Wyoming Catholic College and the University of Dallas," which are not "de-

formed by the toxic political correctness that leaders of elite universities have allowed to become dominant." These are among the colleges highlighted by The Cardinal Newman Society in our Newman Guide, which offers Catholic families a variety of faithful options for higher education.

These colleges are for the most part growing each year, even as many private colleges across the country are struggling to maintain enrollment. Catholics should be rallying around these faithful colleges and encouraging families to give them strong consideration. Meanwhile, we need to talk openly about the dangers that young Catholics face at secular colleges and steer them to better options.

I recently spoke to a good friend who provided a strong Catholic education to his children but then sent the eldest to his *alma mater*, a highly reputed public university. He regrets the choice and bemoans the poisonous campus culture.

"I just didn't know how bad it had become," the father told me. I think he deserved to know.

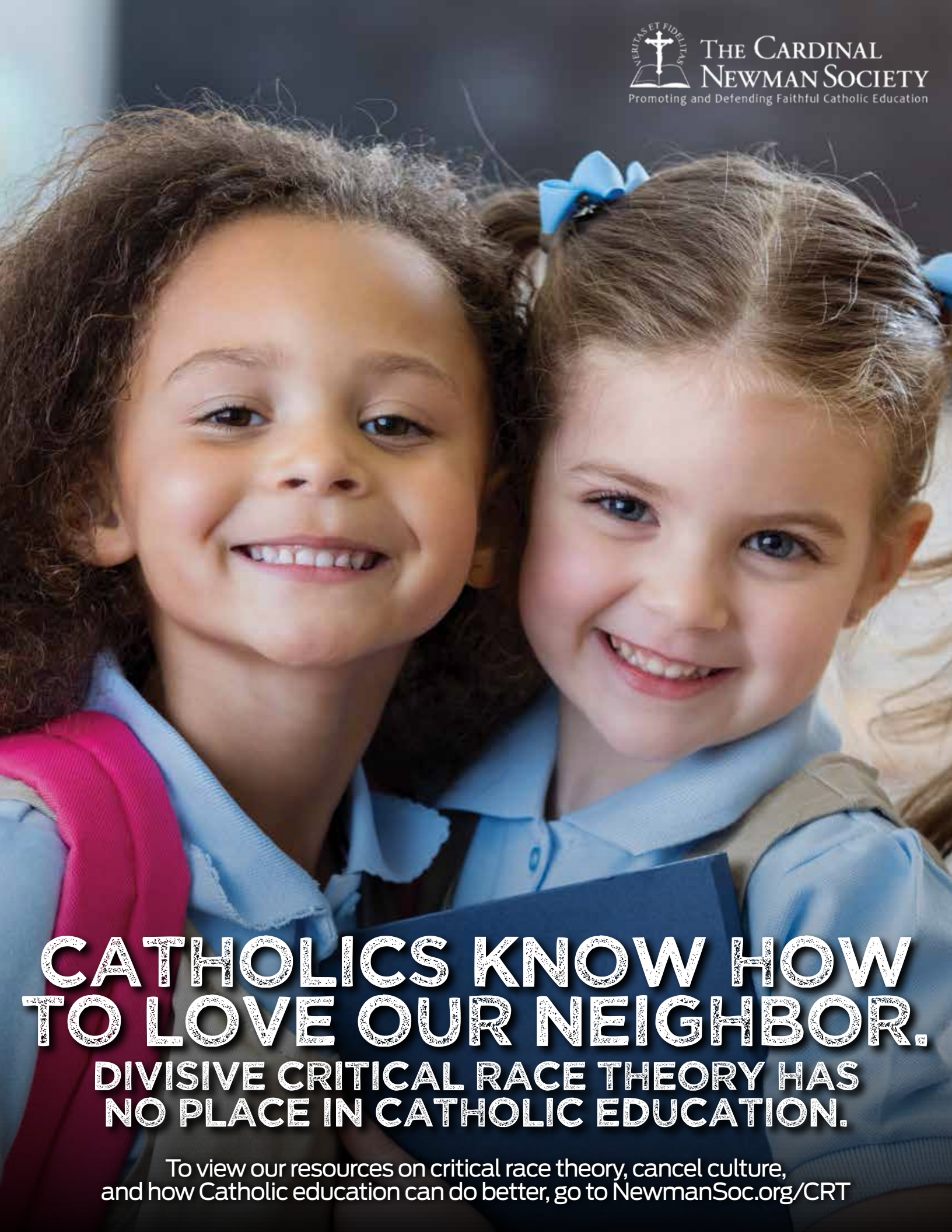
PATRICK REILLY is president and founder of The Cardinal Newman Society. A version of this piece was published at The Catholic Thing.





THE CARDINAL
NEWMAN SOCIETY

Promoting and Defending Faithful Catholic Education



**CATHOLICS KNOW HOW
TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR.**

**DIVISIVE CRITICAL RACE THEORY HAS
NO PLACE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION.**

To view our resources on critical race theory, cancel culture,
and how Catholic education can do better, go to NewmanSoc.org/CRT