

OUR CATHOLIC MISSION

TRUTH AND FIDELITY IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

WINTER 2025

NEWMAN GUIDE EDUCATION:

A NEW LIGHT IN AMERICA



- Top 10 Policy Priorities
- Teaching Patriotism
- Going on Offense

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WINTER 2025 ISSUE

Dear friend in Catholic education,

During the Christmas season, we heard the familiar prophecy of Isaiah:

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
Upon those who lived in a land of gloom
a light has shone.

For many years now, a shadow has been cast over Catholic education. The stridency of the pro-abortion and gender ideology movements has reached so far as to attempt to erase educators' religious freedom, once widely respected as America's "first right."

Meanwhile, the half-century spiritual malaise within the Catholic Church has continued to bring Catholic school closures—and now the decline of regional, lukewarm Catholic colleges.

For those who look to politics for hope, the recent election brings a new administration that advocates religious freedom, school choice, and limited government, giving us a golden opportunity to secure the renewal of faithful Catholic education for the next generation.

But if we are looking for light in the darkness, we will find it only in Christ and in those faithful disciples who keep His commandment to go teach the nations. The Newman Guide Recommended schools, colleges, and graduate programs, as well as faithful Catholic homeschooling, burn brightly in today's world—as do all those parents and educators who are associated with them.

Last year, we chose to expand The Newman Guide to include elementary and secondary schools and graduate programs. Already the Newman Guide Recommended colleges were a sign of great hope to many Catholic families, and now we want that hope to burn brightly across America, in every state, and eventually in every community.

Your part in this Newman Guide movement of renewal is so greatly appreciated! In this new year, we look to an ever-brighter future with trust in God and thanks for the blessing of your devotion.

Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene—one step enough for me.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Patrick Reilly
President and Founder
The Cardinal Newman Society



SCAN TO DONATE

A NEW LIGHT IN AMERICA

by Kelly Salomon

During last year's bitter presidential campaign, it seemed there was one thing about which Left and Right, Democrat and Republican, old and young agreed upon: America is in crisis.

The solution to that crisis is faithful Catholic education. Too many Americans are captured by false ideology. Few have been taught to reason well, and even fewer can communicate and argue well. And even many Catholics are unaware of the truths of their faith and Who is the source of truth.

In 2008, Pope Benedict told U.S. Catholic educators that "the contemporary 'crisis of truth' is rooted in a 'crisis of faith'." The prior year, he declared an "educational emergency" that leaves modern man ignorant of truth and without hope in Christ.

This is not only a crisis in the Church. It is a crisis for a nation ruled by democracy.

For six decades, most education in the United States has been corrupted, and even many Catholic schools and colleges have strayed from their mission. At its worst, some Catholic education—especially higher education—has been captured by false ideology and infidelity, malforming students and leading them away from God.

Catholic families today desperately need faithful Catholic education, and America needs the graduates of faithful Catholic education to renew our national culture. Our young people need an education that integrates faith and science, teaches

them to think critically, and deepens their understanding. They need an education that forms them in virtue and wisdom. And with the leadership of wise and virtuous graduates, America can rebuild.

Yet most Catholic colleges—and even many Catholic K-12 schools today—take a solely utilitarian approach. They are preparing the next generation of workers for careers but not faith and wisdom.

Given the state of education, it's no surprise to see the massive growth in homeschooling and hybrid programs in our country. It's also not surprising that many families are questioning the value of a college education. In fact, total college enrollment has dropped by nearly 1.5 million students since 2010. Four Catholic colleges closed in 2024—plus the large Staten Island campus of St. John's University in New York—and three more have signaled closure next year.

But the faithful K-12 schools, colleges and graduate programs recommended in The Newman Guide offer something different. Newman Guide education is so much more than a ticket to a job—it's a formation for a lifetime. It's the kind of education that helps students become the person God wants them to be.

And Catholic families are noticing the difference! More families than ever are seeking out Newman Guide education and believe that they can't afford to not send their children to a Newman Guide college because of its ramifications on this life and eternal life.

As a result, Newman Guide Recommended colleges are experiencing enormous enrollment growth, with several breaking records this fall.

Here are some highlights of undergraduate enrollment at Newman Guide Recommended colleges for the 2024-25 school year:



AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY™

Ave Maria University in Ave Maria, Fla., has a record undergraduate enrollment of 1,326 students and is close to capacity. Undergraduate enrollment has increased 29 percent in the last ten years.



Campion College in Toongabbie East, New South Wales, has a record incoming class and has increased to 110 undergraduate students.



Belmont Abbey COLLEGE

Belmont Abbey College in Belmont, N.C., has grown its undergraduate enrollment to 1,597. Undergraduate enrollment has increased about 13 percent in the last ten years.



The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., saw a significant increase in undergraduate applications this year—a trend that has continued over the past few years—and undergraduate enrollment increased to 3,177 students.



Benedictine College in Atchison, Kan., has a record undergraduate enrollment of 2,256 students, an increase of 2 percent in the last ten years. This year's freshman class is their second-largest ever.



Catholic International University (online) has increased to 123 undergraduate students, growing 19.5 percent over the last ten years.



Christendom College in Front Royal, Va., has a record undergraduate enrollment of 554 and has decided to cap further growth. The College has grown 40 percent over the last decade.



Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio, has a record incoming class and total undergraduate enrollment of 3,219. In ten consecutive years of growth, Franciscan has expanded approximately 25 percent.



Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Conn., with many of its students online, has a record freshman class and more than 200 undergraduates. That's about a four-fold increase from ten years ago.



**KATHOLISCHE HOCHSCHULE ITI
ITI CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY**

ITI Catholic University in Trumau, Austria, has a record incoming class and record undergraduate enrollment at 58 students.



**JOHN PAUL
THE GREAT
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY**

John Paul the Great Catholic University in Escondido, Calif., saw a small increase in this year's incoming class and has grown 68 percent in the last decade to 288 students.



THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, Calif., and Northfield, Mass., has a record enrollment of 565 students between the two campuses. The California campus is close to its capacity of 400 students. The New England campus is nearly halfway to capacity with 193 students. Overall, the College has grown 50 percent in the last ten years.



**The Thomas More College
of Liberal Arts**

Thomas More College in Merrimack, N.H. saw a small increase in enrollment with 98 undergraduate students.



**UNIVERSITY
of DALLAS**

University of Dallas in Irving, Tex., welcomed 395 freshmen, the University's fifth-largest incoming class, and has a total enrollment of 1,385.



**UNIVERSITY
of MARY**

University of Mary in Bismarck, N.D., has a record freshman class, surpassing last year's record, and a total enrollment of about 2,400 undergraduate students.



**Universidad
de Navarra**

University of Navarra in Pamplona, Spain, has increased to 9,693 undergraduate students, growing about 20 percent in the last ten years.



**UNIVERSITY OF
ST. THOMAS
HOUSTON**

The University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas, has a record incoming class of 683 freshmen and a record undergraduate enrollment of 3,395.



**WALSH
UNIVERSITY**
EDUCATION FOR LIFE

Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio, welcomed its largest freshman class since 2014 with 508 new undergraduate students and has increased its undergraduate enrollment to 1,555.



**Wyoming
Catholic College**
Wisdom in God's Country

Wyoming Catholic College in Lander, Wyo., has grown 30 percent in the last decade, from 124 to 178 students.

The total number of Newman Guide Recommended colleges is growing, too! Three new colleges opened this year and were intentional about implementing policies and standards to become Newman Guide recommended. They are the College of St. Joseph the Worker in Steubenville, Ohio, Catholic Institute of Technology in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, and Rosary College in Greenville, S.C.

While the rest of American education slides further away, faithful institutions are forming students in faith and reason. Newman Guide schools and colleges teach the truth on important topics like the sanctity of human life, marriage and the family.

At the same time, the Newman Guide Recommended status is drawing more faithful Catholic families to the best schools and colleges, and these institutions are becoming known across the country. That is good news for the future of our Church and a bright light for America. **OCM**

KELLY SALOMON

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THREE **NEW** NEWMAN GUIDE RECOMMENDED COLLEGES OPENED THIS DOORS THIS YEAR



Catholic Institute of
Technology in Castel
Gandolfo, Italy



The College of
St. Joseph the Worker
in Steubenville, Ohio



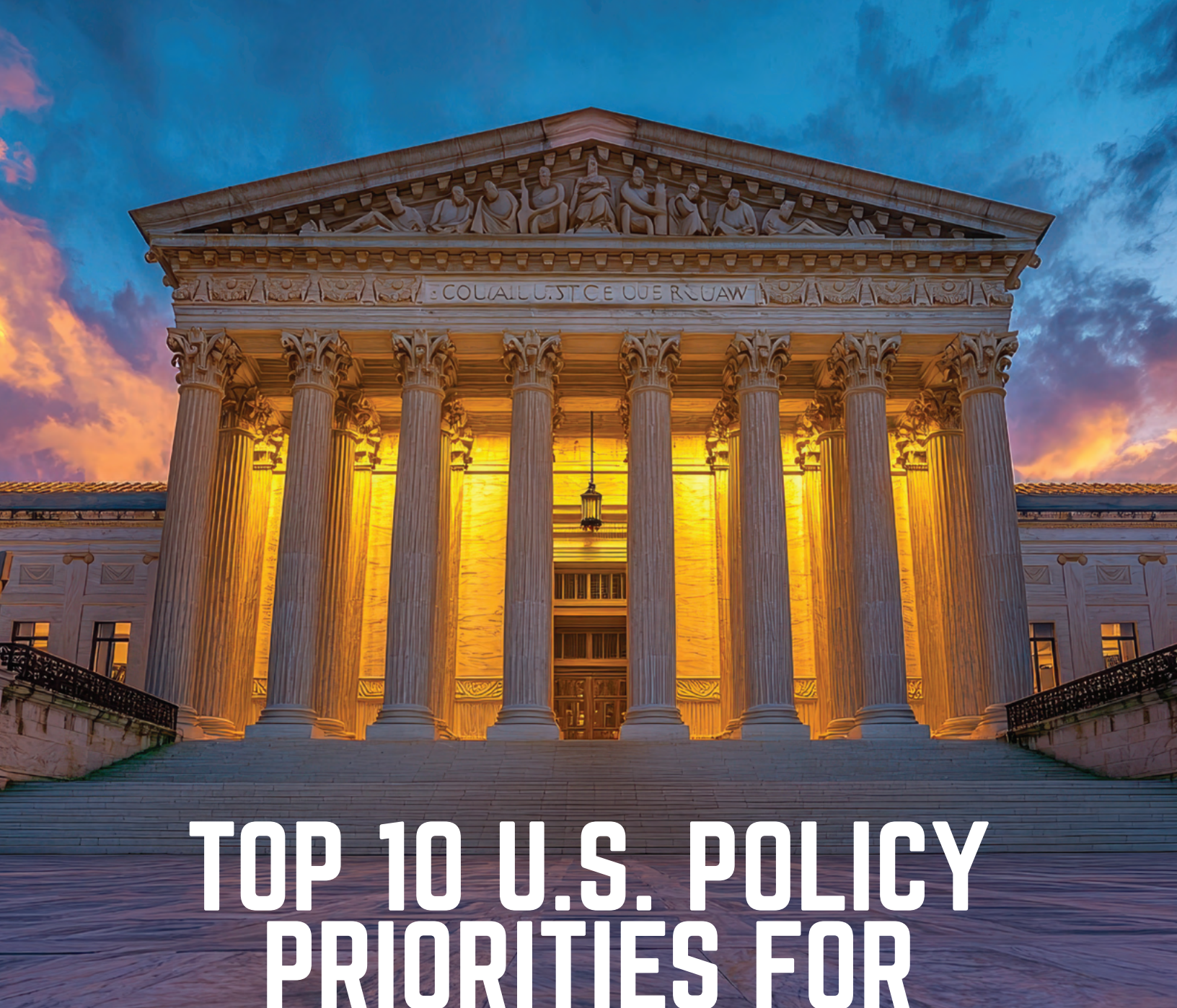
Rosary College in Greenville, S.C.

**Catholic
International
University**

**100%
Online**

- THEOLOGY
- EDUCATION &
LIBERAL ARTS
- ECCLESIAL
ADMINISTRATION
& MANAGEMENT
- CONTINUING EDUCATION
- EARLY COLLEGE

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TOP 10 U.S. POLICY PRIORITIES FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

by Patrick Reilly

SINCE THE START OF THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION IN 2009, CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN UNDER SERIOUS THREAT FROM FEDERAL POLICIES, REGULATIONS, LEGISLATION, AND COURT RULINGS CHALLENGING CATHOLIC MORALS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. THE THREATS WILL CONTINUE, BUT THERE IS REASON FOR HOPE IN THE COMING YEARS!

Without sanction by Congress or the Supreme Court, the Biden administration sought by dictatorial mandate to redefine the meaning of “sex discrimination” in education. To force a new definition of “sex” on schools and colleges, and especially to bully Catholic educators into compliance, was clearly beyond the Administration’s proper scope of authority.

Thankfully, the U.S. Supreme Court has issued important rulings increasing protection for Catholic education. *Our Lady of Guadalupe v. Morrissey-Berru* (2020) broadens the definition of the “ministerial exception,” a First Amendment protection against federal courts interfering in religious organizations’ employment decisions. The case concerned a Catholic school teacher, but the exception has since been applied to school leaders and counselors.

In *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue* (2020), the Court effectively nullified anti-Catholic “Blaine amendments” in state constitutions, ensuring that Catholic schools and colleges have equal access to public benefits. This helped open the door wider to school choice programs, which are increasing in many states.

Nevertheless, challenges remain. Some federal courts have ignored or undermined Supreme Court precedent, and the scope of the “ministerial exception”—which protects religious schools and colleges from lawsuits concerning employees engaged in religious teaching—is still hotly debated in the courts. Many states are hostile to Catholic moral values, and Catholic education faces the same sort of harassment that marked the Biden administration.

Amid all of this, there is good reason to hope that the next few years will present new opportunities for the growth of faithful Newman Guide education. Catholic families and educators look to the White House, Congress, and federal courts to provide much-needed relief for Catholic education and to restore a firm commitment to the First Amendment’s protections for religious exercise and free speech.

Recommendations for federal policy

Prior to President Donald Trump’s inauguration, The Cardinal Newman Society submitted a list of 42 policy priorities

for Catholic education to his transition team, key members of Congress, and Washington, D.C., policy experts. The full proposal is posted on our website, but most of it is summarized in the following 10 key priorities:

1. Restore the meaning of “sex”:

The radical drive for same-sex marriage and then gender ideology has severely distorted federal civil rights laws and put women and Catholic education in jeopardy. This needs to be reversed.

Tragically, the U.S. Supreme Court yielded to gender ideology in *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia* (2020). However, although the Court redefined “sex discrimination” to include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity,” the ruling applied only to hiring and firing decisions under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. That law contains an exemption for religious employers that can protect Catholic education, as long as school and college leaders make employment decisions with explicit devotion to Catholic teaching and evangelization.

The Biden administration and some federal courts have sought instead to expand *Bostock*’s flawed rationale to all federal law and programs. They have tried to mandate gender ideology in education, housing, public accommodations, federally funded programs, and disability laws. (See sidebar.) In so doing, they would effectively erase religious exemptions protecting Catholic education.

Catholic educators should urge Congress and the Trump administration to restore the definitions of “sex,” “male,” and “female” to agree with biological reality, not “sexual orientation” or “gender identity.” This begins with revoking President Biden’s Executive Order 13988 (“Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation”), Executive Order 14020 (establishing the Gender Policy Council), and any other “dear colleague” letter, administrative rule, executive order, or regulation that attempts to redefine “sex.”

Most importantly for Catholic schools and colleges, the new Ad-

ministration should withdraw and replace the Biden administration’s 2024 regulation (89 FR 33474) imposing gender ideology under Title IX, the portion of the Civil Rights Act that protects girls and women in education. Whatever the Supreme Court’s reason for extending gender ideology to employment decisions, Title IX was clearly intended to protect girls in athletics, restrooms, locker rooms, admissions, etc., and it allows for many appropriate practices separating males from females.

Congress should go further by amending Title IX and other civil rights laws to clarify the meaning of sex discrimination, including Title VII to nullify the *Bostock* ruling.

2. Protect religious exemptions:

Catholic educators should insist that Congress and the Trump administration defend and expand legal exemptions to federal civil rights laws for religious education when the laws interfere with legitimate religious purposes and practices. This protects Catholic schools and colleges, even when a future administration attempts to distort the laws’ application.

In particular, the Administration should oppose attempts by activists to undermine or repeal the Title IX exemption for religious schools and colleges. It should also end the Education Department’s policy of approving or denying advance determinations whether religious institutions qualify for religious exemptions to Title IX; this is a matter for the courts and should be decided according to each particular circumstance. The Trump administration should delete the archived list of institutions that the Obama administration published in 2016 to “shame” religious colleges claiming the exemption.

3. Preserve the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA):

Despite near-unanimous, bipartisan support when RFRA became law in 1993, abortion and gender ideology activists have sought to undermine or repeal it to force their radical agendas on churches and religious organizations. RFRA prevents a law from restricting religious freedom unless

there is no less restrictive means of achieving its purpose. It has been a powerful defense for Catholic education. The Trump administration and Congress should fight any legislation that includes exceptions to RFRA protections.

4. Halt discrimination against religion: The Trump administration and Congress should act to ban federal and state discrimination against religious believers and religious organizations—including Catholic education—on the basis of religious beliefs or moral convictions about abortion, contraception, gender, *in vitro* fertilization, marriage, sexual orientation, or sexual relations. Catholic education should have equal access to public funds available to secular education.

5. End immoral insurance mandates: The Biden administration's abuse of the Affordable Care Act to force its radical pro-abortion and LGBT agenda on Americans, even to the point of requiring Catholic education to violate moral principles, must be ended. During the 2024 campaign, President Trump indicated support for insurance coverage of *in vitro* fertilization, which is unacceptable to faithful Catholic schools and colleges.

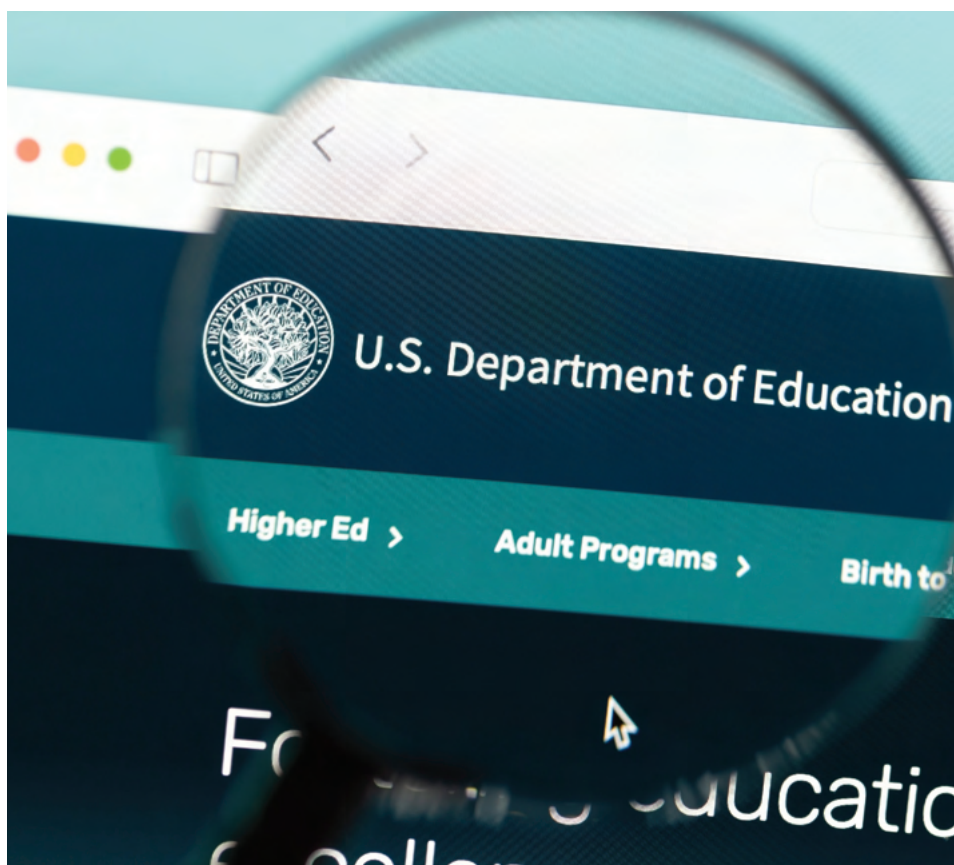
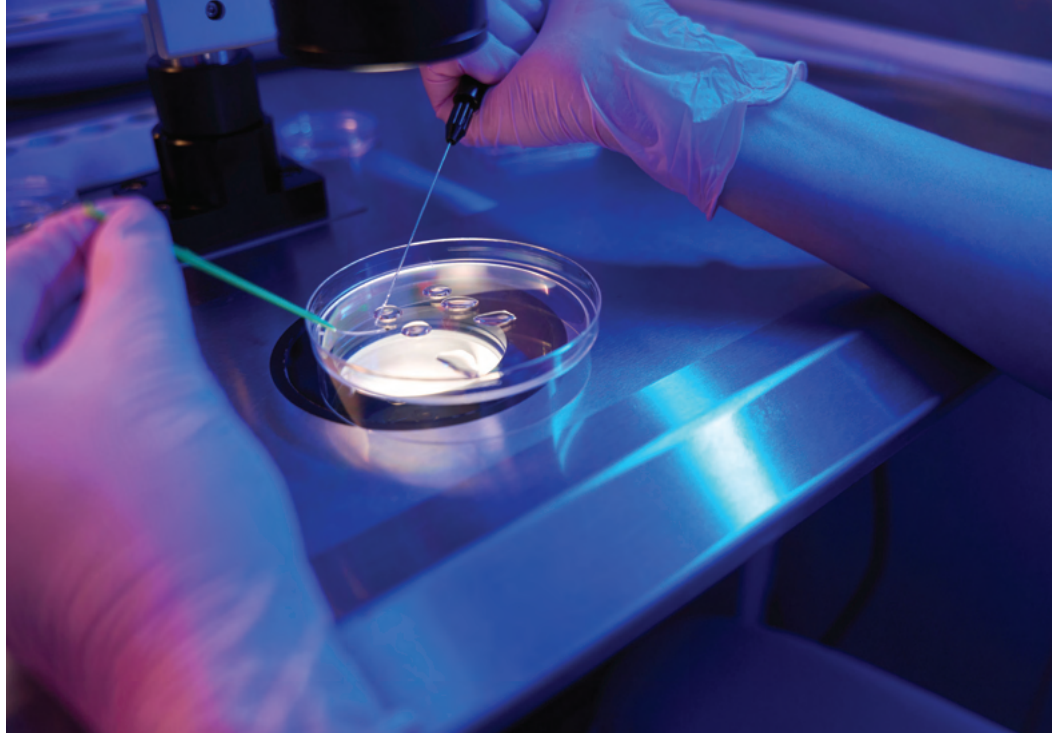
By executive order and regulation, the Trump administration should oppose and reverse dictatorial mandates for health insurance coverage for non-essential, harmful, and immoral services including abortion, contraception, “gender-transition” hormones and surgery, *in vitro* fertilization, and sterilization.

This includes rescinding and replace the Biden administration's 2024 reg-

ulation (89 FR 37522) implementing Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, which interprets sex discrimination to include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” and thereby mandates coverage for “gender-affirming care,” which may include “gender-transition” hormones and surgery.

Congress should amend Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, ensuring that religious believers and organizations—including Catholic education—can opt out of health insurance coverage for services that violate deeply held religious and moral beliefs, such as abortion, contraception, “gender-transition” hormones and surgery, *in vitro* fertilization, and sterilization.

6. Eliminate the U.S. Department of Education: In its short lifespan since 1976, the Education Department has presided over the decline of American education, impacting many Catholic families in public schools and reinforcing a near-monopoly of taxpayer-funded secular education. At minimum, the Trump administration and Congress should convert federal funds to block grants allowing flexibility and school choice programs in the states. They should also end the Department's interference with teacher training programs, accreditation, education standards, and testing.



7. Fund school choice: The Trump administration and Congress should incentivize states to adopt school choice policies and funding—such as education savings accounts, tax credits, and vouchers—to help children attend the school or homeschool of their parent’s choice, including Catholic education. They should establish universal savings plans to increase savings limits and allow spending for elementary and secondary education expenses, including homeschooling, in addition to higher education—and ensure that families have equal access to funds for Catholic education. Congress should also increase tax credits for education expenses including homeschooling, increase the federal child tax credit, and increase the child’s age limit to 17.

8. Reform accreditation: The Trump administration and Congress should amend the Higher Education Act to stop requiring accreditation of colleges to receive Title IV student aid, end the Education Department’s approval of accrediting agencies, exempt religious education from accreditation standards and criteria that would compromise an institution’s religious beliefs and governance, ensure that Title IV student aid is not considered federal support that triggers Title IX enforcement, and allow a private right of action against an accreditor by a college that is unjustly discriminated against in the course of accreditation.

9. Strengthen the federal courts: Appoint federal judges with clear records of conformity with the First Amendment, ministerial exception, Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and natural law principles of conscience and religious freedom. The U.S. Supreme Court has been a bulwark against violations of religious freedom, but the Biden administration appointed hundreds of federal judges, and Catholic education is likely to face difficulties in many federal courts. Protecting the Supreme Court and strengthening other federal courts must be a top priority for the Trump administration.

10. Strengthen federal independent agencies: The Trump administration should appoint commissioners to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission who respect religious freedom and will not misinterpret sex discrimination to include “sexual orientation” and “gender ideology.” Also appoint commissioners to the National Labor Relations Board who respect religious freedom and will uphold the

U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *NLRB v. Catholic Bishop of Chicago* (1979), which forbade the NLRB from interfering in labor organizing at religious schools and colleges as a violation of the First Amendment. **OCM**

PATRICK REILLY
is president and founder of
The Cardinal Newman Society.



ASSAULT ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 bans unjust discrimination based on religion, race, color, or national origin in public accommodations (Title II), state and municipal facilities (Title III), public education (Title IV), federally funded programs (Title VI), and employment (Title VII).

Only Title VII, regarding employment, also includes a ban on sex discrimination. In 1972, Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments to ban sex discrimination in federally funded schools and colleges. These laws were clearly intended to protect especially women and girls from unjust discrimination.

Today, however, activists for abortion and gender ideology seek to redefine “sex” to include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity,” and to add these categories to all the civil rights laws. This would effectively force gender ideology on Catholic education because only Title VII and Title IX include exemptions for religious organizations. While no Catholic school or college would wish the freedom to discriminate unjustly, they must be able to uphold Catholic teaching on abortion, contraception, sexuality, gender, and marriage—a right protected by the First Amendment.





TEACHING PATRIOTISM

by Maj. Gen. Patrick H. Brady

Those of us who wear the Medal of Honor fully realize that it does not make us special, but it does make us beholden. We are beholden first to America's nobility, our fellow veterans, many who sacrificed their youth that liberty might grow old — who are responsible for us wearing it, and for whom we wear it. But most of all, we are beholden to the good Lord who allowed us to be born into this great country and to serve her in uniform. We are patriots.

We know that what we did to earn the medal is far less important than what we are able to do with it. We realize we were saved to serve, and to show our gratitude, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society began a Character Development Program some years ago.

We use the celebrity associated with the medal as a teaching aid to instill in our youth the symbolic values of the medal: courage, sacrifice, and patriotism. These values, although vital, are seldom taught in our schools.

Teach and inspire

Courage is the key to success in life. And I believe it is founded in faith. Sacrifice, love in action, is the key to happiness and the capacity for which is the true measure of human goodness. And patriotism is the key to the future of our country.

Over the years, in our visits to hundreds of schools and thousands of students, we noticed some significant shortfalls in

these values. All too often, we found that less than a majority of our youth are extremely proud to be Americans. A significant percentage would not sacrifice or defend America. And one in seven young people think we started World War II by bombing Japan. Only one in six Americans can pass a basic test on American history. Not only are many not well-informed, but much of what they are learning is negative. How can you be proud of your country, if you are misinformed about it?

But the most serious shortfall is patriotism. Our country cannot survive if our people are not patriots. By definition, a patriot is not someone who says they love our country; a patriot is someone who proves they love our country by

supporting and defending our country. Support and defend are the keywords.

All the sheep and chickens in the world hope that everyone will be vegetarians. That will never happen; there are too many wolves out there. The time will come when support and defense are necessary for survival.

Patriotism is not born in us; we don't naturally sacrifice ourselves. It must be taught, better yet inspired. The task of every parent, every teacher, all of us, is to make patriots of our children. How? Convince them that we are an exceptional country worthy of the love necessary for the sacrifices that will be essential to our future. But the love comes first, and we may have a shortfall there. You will die for someone or something you love, not so much for something you do not love.

It is so true that, if love is to survive, it must be exercised. It is also true of patriotism.

American exceptionalism should be a part of the curriculum in every school, especially Catholic schools, where teaching values is not, or should not be, controversial.

How to teach patriotism

I teach American exceptionalism by breaking it down into three components: we are exceptional because we are an exceptionally courageous people, an exceptionally compassionate people, and an exceptionally competitive people. Any teacher worth their salt should be able to explain what American courage, compassion, and competitiveness have done to make the world a better place.

Once we convince students that America is exceptional and worthy of their love, patriotism will follow. And our future is secure.

To impress on young people the importance and seriousness of patriotism, I use a story about Webster Anderson, a

soldier attacked on an outpost in Vietnam by communists. Despite repeated and near-fatal wounds, Webster led his men to victory over the communists. I flew in that night and picked up Webster and his wounded men. Amazingly, the physicians saved his life, but they could not save two legs and one arm. For that action, he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Webster and I became close, and some years later, we were speaking at a school in Oklahoma. One of the youngsters asked Webster if he would do what he did again, knowing that it would cost him two legs and an arm. Webster's answer moves me to this day. He said, kid I only have one arm left, but my country can have it any time they want.

“KID, I ONLY HAVE ONE ARM LEFT, BUT MY COUNTRY CAN HAVE IT ANY TIME THEY WANT.”

• WEBSTER ANDERSON, A UNITED STATES ARMY SOLDIER WHO ALSO RECEIVED THE MEDAL OF HONOR AND TAUGHT PATRIOTISM ALONGSIDE MAJOR GENERAL BRADY.



Above: Major General Brady receiving numerous distinguished service awards at a ceremony in Vietnam in 1964.

Below: Major General Brady talks with Clint Eastwood after presenting Eastwood with an award from the Congressional Medal of Honor Society.



Webster defined, perhaps for the first time, patriotism for those young people. I doubt they will ever forget that great soldier propped up before them, more plastic than flesh, and his lesson on patriotism.

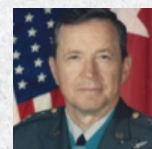
Peace is the ultimate victory of all warriors, and peace is possible only through strength. Patriots are the essence of American strength and the only sure guarantee of peace and our future.

The bottom line is that we have a crisis in our classrooms, devoid of values and patriotism — both threats to our future. Our schools must instill in our children a love of country and a willingness to serve and sacrifice for her. Secular schools may have an issue with this, but our Catholic schools should not. Love, courage, and sacrifice are at the core of Jesus's teachings and the Catholic faith.

OCM

MAJOR GENERAL PATRICK HENRY BRADY

served 34 years in the U.S. Army, earning 87 medals including the Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, six Distinguished Flying Crosses, and two Distinguished Service Medals.





A CATHOLIC AND A SOLDIER

"I cannot emphasize enough the role my faith played in any success I have had," says Major General Patrick Henry Brady. He is widely recognized as the most highly decorated living veteran, holding the Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, six Distinguished Flying Crosses, and two Distinguished Service Medals. His 87 total medals include 65 combat-related and 12 for valor.

After graduating from a Catholic high school and following his future wife Nancy to a Catholic university, the young Brady was commissioned in 1959 to the Army Medical Service Corps. Later, as a helicopter pilot serving two tours in Vietnam, he flew more than 2,500 combat missions and evacuated more than 5,000 wounded soldiers. Regardless of danger or weather, his unit never left a patient in the field, carrying more than 21,000 patients in nine months.

"God surely blessed this remarkable unit," General Brady wrote later. "He most certainly showed me the light, despite my doubts in the darkness and in the fog. I may have been a willing instrument, but He is the Author of those two awards [Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Cross] that were the result of two epiphanies." He says he constantly talked to God and received special insights, such as an impulse to fly his chopper sideways.

His Catholic faith "was the source of whatever courage I had: a constant source of comfort, calm, and of the confidence that allowed me to do things that for me would have otherwise been impossible," he says. "For reasons that escape me, the Good Lord has seen fit to bless my life in so many ways, not the least of which was saving lives."

General Brady is a past president of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, through which he and fellow honorees have worked to teach virtue and patriotism to school children. With his daughter, Meghan, he wrote the book *Dead Men Flying*, which tells his story and describes *Dust Off* as the greatest battlefield evacuation in history. He has also established The General and Nancy Lee Brady Foundation to help religious sisters serving the needy.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, "The love and service of one's country follow from the duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity" (CCC 2239). May God bless General Brady for his extraordinary gift of sacrifice and service to God and to all Americans.

“ This goes back to the beginning of Common Core and a number of conversations I had with Denise Donohue where I was observing that we didn’t have a solid Catholic alternative.

I challenged The Cardinal Newman Society to help provide Superintendents with resources and they have responded spectacularly.”

Fr. John Belmonte
Superintendent,
Diocese of Venice, FL



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GOING ON OFFENSE

by Kevin Roberts, Ph.D.



WE CAN USE THE NEXT FOUR YEARS TO ADVANCE CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND SECURE IT FOR DECADES.

Our Lord promises that the “gates of hell shall not prevail” against the Church. With these words, Jesus not only reassures us that He will never abandon his Church to evil, but He also extolls us to go on offense for the Kingdom of God. Saint Paul later calls on Christians to do the same thing. “Do not be conquered by evil,” he writes, “but conquer evil with good.”

In the wake of Donald Trump’s recent victory, the Church in America needs to be reminded of these words, and it would do well to heed them. This is especially true in the realm of Catholic education. For too long Catholic education in the United States has been stuck in a defensive posture, timidly defending its most basic rights while slowly secularizing and giving ground to radical progressives. This diffident approach has produced poor results and only invited further aggressiveness from the enemies of the Church.

In the past four years, Democrats in Washington have pushed far beyond the Obama-era policies of demanding con-

traception coverage in Catholic health-care plans and mandating that Catholic schools open their bathrooms and locker rooms to students of the opposite sex. Most notably, the Equality Act that progressives attempted to pass would have effectively ended Catholic education as we know it. By making it illegal to discriminate because of “sexual orientation” or “gender identity,” the Equality Act would have allowed gay or transgender employees and students to sue Catholic institutions simply for standing by Catholic teaching, thus forcing many schools to abandon their faith or close their doors.

The fight for the religious freedom to

provide truly Catholic education, hire faithful teachers and staff, and reject immoral practices like abortion and bodily mutilation is also ongoing in the states and the private sector. In Governor Gretchen Whitmer's Michigan, for example — where the Equality Act is the law of the land — Catholic schools like St. Joseph's outside Lansing and Sacred Heart of Jesus outside Grand Rapids are fighting for their lives in the courts.

Meanwhile, progressive activists are convincing more and more big corporations and athletic associations to put pressure on Catholic schools that refuse to comply with the latest pro-abortion, LGBT, or DEI policies. In 2020, for example, the Human Rights Campaign lobbied hard for Biden's Department of Education to "tighten" its accreditation policies and encourage agencies to refuse accreditation to any Catholic schools that didn't enforce "nondiscrimination policies" or meet "scientific curriculum requirements."

Though the political and legal threats are great, they are not insurmountable. Indeed, despite them, there are good reasons to be hopeful. Since 2022, for example, ten states have passed universal education choice initiatives, which allow parents to use their children's taxpayer-funded education dollars for the school of their choice, or even help cover certain homeschool expenses. These laws, in turn, have been a boon to Catholic schools, especially the burgeoning Catholic classical school movement. Since 2019, more than 264 new classical schools have been founded, and existing ones saw enrollments surge. And the momentum for classical education is only growing. According to some estimates, the classical school enrollment of 677,500 students this year is expected to more than double to 1.4 million by 2035.

Under these circumstances, Donald Trump's recent victory offers not only a respite from the federal government's total onslaught on Catholic education, but also a unique opportunity to advance our cause and secure the future of Catholic education for generations to come.

What does this look like in practice? For starters, it means dismantling the



“FOR TOO LONG CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN STUCK IN A DEFENSIVE POSTURE, TIMIDLY DEFENDING ITS MOST BASIC RIGHTS WHILE SLOWLY SECULARIZING”

Department of Education, as President Trump has promised. Next, the incoming administration should seek to expand school choice with as little regulation as possible, get rid of common core standards as well as other career- and college-focused standards, and restore the original meaning of Title IX. Finally, the president-elect could take action to deregulate teacher preparation and de-link school accreditation and student aid from Title IX policies. The Cardinal Newman Society has helpfully provided details on how President Trump can make many of these changes and offered several more specific actions that the incoming administration can take to protect Catholic education.

But it's not just the White House that needs to seize this opportunity. Catholic educators across the country should use the next four years to aggressively expand their operations, deepen their commitment to Catholic teaching, and fortify them-

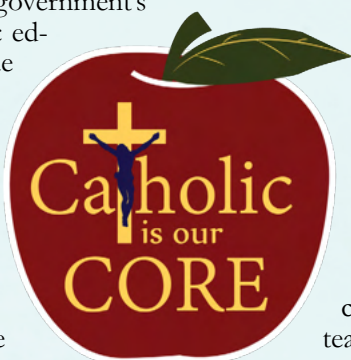
selves against future attacks. Indeed, we should use every moral means at our disposal — from lobbying to lawfare — to push back against the radical Left.

In this fight, The Heritage Foundation stands ready to support you. As a proud partner of The Cardinal Newman Society, we provide essential guidance to Catholic schools on how to protect their religious freedom and confront contemporary challenges without shying away from their beliefs. We also have extensive resources for Catholic teachers and administrators, from a curriculum library to school models. And for all parents and students, we offer data-driven college recommendations so you can choose a school with confidence.

In conclusion, we must remember that our religious freedom doesn't come free. God invites us to join Him in His suffering, but also in His triumphant victory. When we refuse to take an active role in securing our freedom, we are effectively rejecting that invitation.

The next four years are critical for securing the future of Catholic education in the United States for the next 40 years. Despite facing more serious attacks than ever before, with Donald Trump's victory we have a unique opportunity to go on offense. Now is the time for action. In the words of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton: "When so rich a harvest is before us, why do we not gather it? All is in our hands if we will but use it." **OCM**

KEVIN ROBERTS, Ph.D., is president of The Heritage Foundation, which formulates and promotes public policies based on traditional principles. He founded and led John Paul the Great Academy, a co-ed, K-12 Catholic liberal arts school in Lafayette, La., for seven years, and he was president of Wyoming Catholic College, a Newman Guide Recommended institution, from 2013-2016.



ACCREDITATION REFORM

by Dan Guernsey, Ed.D.



TENSIONS BETWEEN CATHOLIC EDUCATORS AND THIRD-PARTY ACCREDITORS ARE NOTHING NEW, BUT IN RECENT YEARS THE IDEOLOGICAL THREATS TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION HAVE INCREASED. IT'S TIME TO EMBRACE NEW APPROACHES TO ACCREDITATION.

ACCREDITATION REVIEWERS TEND TO EMBRACE THE "NORMS" OF HIGHER EDUCATION, WHILE CATHOLICS ARE OFTEN—AND NECESSARILY—COUNTER-CULTURAL. THE BEST ACCREDITING OPTIONS, THEN, ARE THOSE THAT FULLY RESPECT CATHOLIC NEEDS AND VALUES AND REJECT GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE.

Problems with accreditation

An excellent school or college will naturally engage in continuous assessment, evaluation, and improvement to ensure it is advancing its mission. Part of the rigor of such assessment often involves inviting third-party review. Reputable accreditation can enhance the perception of legitimacy and quality among donors, governments, and students in selecting schools and colleges to support.

In higher education, accreditation that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education is also required to get access to federal financial aid for students. While some Newman Guide Recommended colleges—including Christendom College and Wyoming Catholic College—forego such aid to avoid the burden and risk of government intrusion, most Catholic colleges participate. Over half of all college students receive some form of federal financial assistance. Tying these funds to accreditation is intended to help prevent taxpayer funding from going to unreliable institutions or diploma mills. Until recently a college, based on its location, was assigned to one of six approved regional accrediting bodies to which they would send in annual reports, get approval for new programs and changes, and receive an intensive on-site review every 7-10 years.

Too often, the accreditation process demands great time, expense, and stress.

Few educators look forward to navigating the huge bureaucracy and extensive regulations and procedures required. Accrediting agencies have minimal competition and little need to adapt to customer needs or exceptions. Even when Catholics protest accreditors' embrace of educational or social ideologies, agendas, irritations, or idiosyncrasies, the agencies rule the realm and need not fear losing customers.

Accreditation has not improved the perception of legitimacy and quality of education, which has plummeted among all Americans and particularly among conservatives. According to Gallup, in the last 10 years Republicans saying they had a great deal of confidence in higher education has dropped from 56 to 20 percent, and those saying they have no confidence has risen from 20 to 50 percent. Many Americans have lost confidence in a higher education system which they believe has become monolithically and ideologically progressive, is overly focused on political agendas, offers too many irrelevant classes and programs, and is too expensive. To faithful Catholics, most colleges are antagonistic and morally corrupt.

Working toward solutions

Increasingly, state Catholic conferences and dioceses are turning to their own accrediting programs to ensure the quality and fidelity of Catholic schools. The

problem with larger accrediting programs, even those that are Catholic, is that their need for members conflicts with any firm commitment to high standards, and they seem prone to popular trends in secular education that are not appropriate to Catholic schools. A new accrediting program from The Catholic University of America, a Newman Guide Recommended college, aims for big improvements.

We promote accreditation that embraces strong Newman Guide standards, leading to Newman Guide recognition. Educators can also use our Catholic Identity Self-Assessment and Reflection Tool and our forthcoming Catholic Identity Evaluation to uphold their mission, with or without formal accreditation.

In higher education, the first Trump administration issued executive orders to promote free speech and inquiry rights on campuses and prohibited the use of federal grant money to promote the idea that an individual, "by virtue of his or her race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously." Additional changes included increasing the rights of defense for those accused of sexual assault on campus.

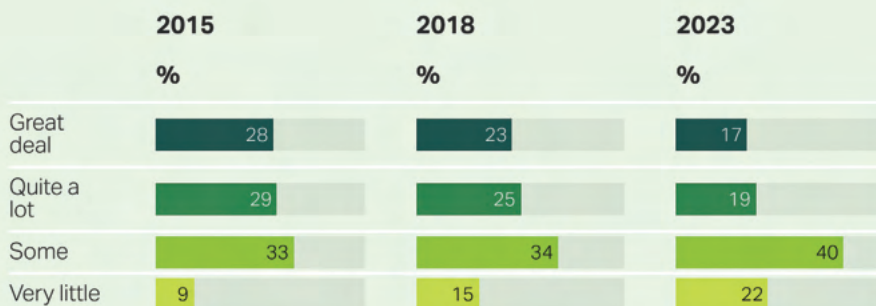
Specifically related to accreditation, the first Trump administration reduced the outsized role of regional accreditors:

- It removed any regional limitations on whom the agencies can accredit. Any college can now seek out any approved accreditation agency they choose.
- The rules streamlined accreditation and recognition processes and made it easier and faster for new accrediting agencies to get government approval.
- They also provided more flexibility in the sanctions an accreditor might give colleges that are out of compliance with their standards.

This breakup of regional monopolies was intended to incentivize accreditors to work with colleges as providers and supporters, rather than bureaucratic regulatory overlords. It also was intended to safeguard against the fear that outside agencies might push cultural or ideological requirements, as colleges could now

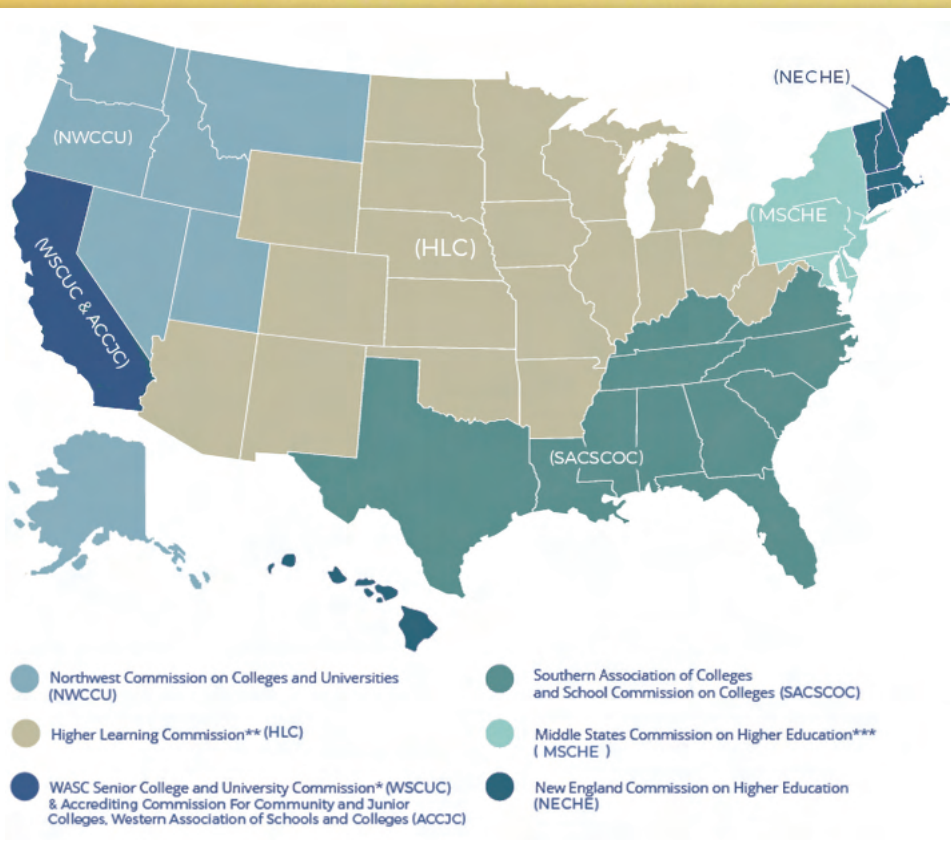
Americans' Confidence in Higher Education Continues to Fall

Now I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one -- a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little. **Higher education**



Those with no opinion are not shown.

GALLUP



“shop” for a less intrusive provider or one that better matches and serves its particular religious or academic ends.

Under these changes, a number of colleges are beginning to move out of their previously assigned accrediting agencies, including five colleges in New York and 40 in Florida. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, chaffing at the control his regional accreditor has long held over Florida schools, signed a law requiring all 40 of Florida’s public colleges and universities to change accreditors every 10 years. Florida law now also allows colleges to take legal action against accreditors, if the colleges are negatively impacted by retaliatory action.

While the Biden administration sought to hamper this process by requiring federal approval to change accreditors, we can expect the incoming second Trump administration to abandon that requirement and push for even more reforms in accreditation, as it seeks to break up established structures.

More changes likely

It is unclear what exactly to expect from the incoming Administration, but there will no doubt be numerous roadblocks to more bold notions such as eliminat-

ing the Education Department entirely, since that would require strong dual party legislative support. We can gain some clues from a campaign speech on reforming American higher education, in which Trump said,

Our secret weapon will be the college accreditation system. It’s called accreditation for a reason. The accreditors are supposed to ensure that schools are not ripping off students and taxpayers, but they have failed totally. When I return to the White House, I will fire the radical Left accreditors that have allowed our colleges to become dominated by Marxist maniacs and lunatics. We will then accept applications for new accreditors, who will impose real standards on colleges once again and once and for all. These standards will include defending the American tradition and Western civilization, protecting free speech, eliminating wasteful administrative positions that drive up costs incredibly, removing all Marxist diversity, equity, and inclusion bureaucrats... (Agenda47 video: Protecting Students from the Radical Left and Marxist Maniacs Infecting Educational Institutions, May 2, 2023)

Trump’s temperament and rhetoric pro-pend that he will continue to look for ways to champion conservative voices on college campuses and dismantle unhelpful bureaucratic structures and regulations. There are several accreditation-related moves that could come in the new administration. Among them have been noted:

- The expanding variety of approved accreditors with divergent ideas may allow for more adaptations to higher education, such as three-year bachelor’s degrees and more trade schools and online schools.
- Because regional accreditors have made it difficult to start new colleges, new agencies might form, or existing ones adapt, to help start-up colleges like those with Newman Guide provisional recognition: Catholic Institute of Technology, The College of St. Joseph the Worker, The Collegium, and Rosary College.
- It is also possible that additional methods apart from accreditation may be created to help colleges qualify for Federal financial aid, such as state approval for such aid (states already license and monitor higher education in their domain) or direct federal approval if an institution can demonstrate certain student outcomes.
- Additionally, Catholic colleges can expect greater protections for their religious freedom and renewed commitment to the original meaning of “sex” under Title IX regulations.

New accreditation options, increased competition, customer-focused innovation, and perhaps even additional access points to federal financial aid outside of the accreditation pipeline may all play a role in ensuring authentic ideological diversity and freedom in education. This could work in favor of Newman Guide institutions ensuring they can continue rigorous accreditation practices and access to government aid as society and education continue to deteriorate around them.

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CORRUPT STANDARDS FOR PRINCIPAL FORMATION

National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Program Standards (2018) are the reigning industry standards for principal preparation and are supported by all major organizations involved in educational leadership formation around the country. Most principal preparation programs in colleges, even Catholic colleges, are tied to these secular and ideologically progressive standards.

It is now clear how over the last decade, terms like diversity, equity, and inclusiveness have been co-opted and re-defined to usher in a radical agenda of divisiveness. They are setting cultures and communities at odds with each other, in service to a dictatorship of relativism.

The NELP Standards Document uses the term “culture/cultural” 208 times, “equity” 90 times, “inclusion/inclusiveness” 83 times, and “diversity” 37 times. One of their eight core standards is entirely dedicated to “Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness.” Unfortunately, these now charged words bring with them a deep political and secular-relativist agenda, which is highly problematic

for Catholic schools that need principals who have been trained in the Church’s own international, multi-cultural, and rich tradition of social justice, Christian community, and compassion.

Instead, future Catholic school leaders are too often subject to corrupt NELP Standards, which require that candidates not just understand a secular relativist progressive agenda but that they also act upon them in activities and internship experiences:

- To be NELP-approved, programs must show evidence that, “Candidates demonstrate the capacity to 1) evaluate the root causes of inequity and bias, 2) cultivate equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive practice among teachers and staff, and 3) advocate for equitable practices among teachers and staff.”
- New leaders must “monitor and addresses individual and institutional biases” and, “in order for school leaders to ensure equity, they must support the development of teachers’ and staff members’ ability to recog-

nize, respect, and employ each student’s strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning and to recognize and redress biases, marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, religion, and disability or special status.”

- This is not just about understanding these concerns via academic coursework. The candidates in approved programs have to “understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote” radical secular agendas. Required six-month internships in multiple diverse settings are required toward this end.

Our Catholic schools need a new generation of leaders who are formed by the Church at faithful Newman Guide Recommended colleges to reform and lead Catholic schools into the future, in a post-Christian world. Tragically, the secular and ubiquitous NELP standards too often stand in the way.



THE CARDINAL NEWMAN SOCIETY PODCAST

This podcast acquaints listeners with the beauty of a faithful Catholic education—what it is and what it is not; you'll discover how to determine if a school or college is faithfully Catholic. Our content courageously confronts the "educational emergency" declared by Pope Benedict XVI by featuring the brightest minds from Newman Guide institutions and how they are renewing faithful Catholic education worldwide. These are the superheroes at work in the trenches daily fighting for the souls of our youth amidst today's relativistic culture.

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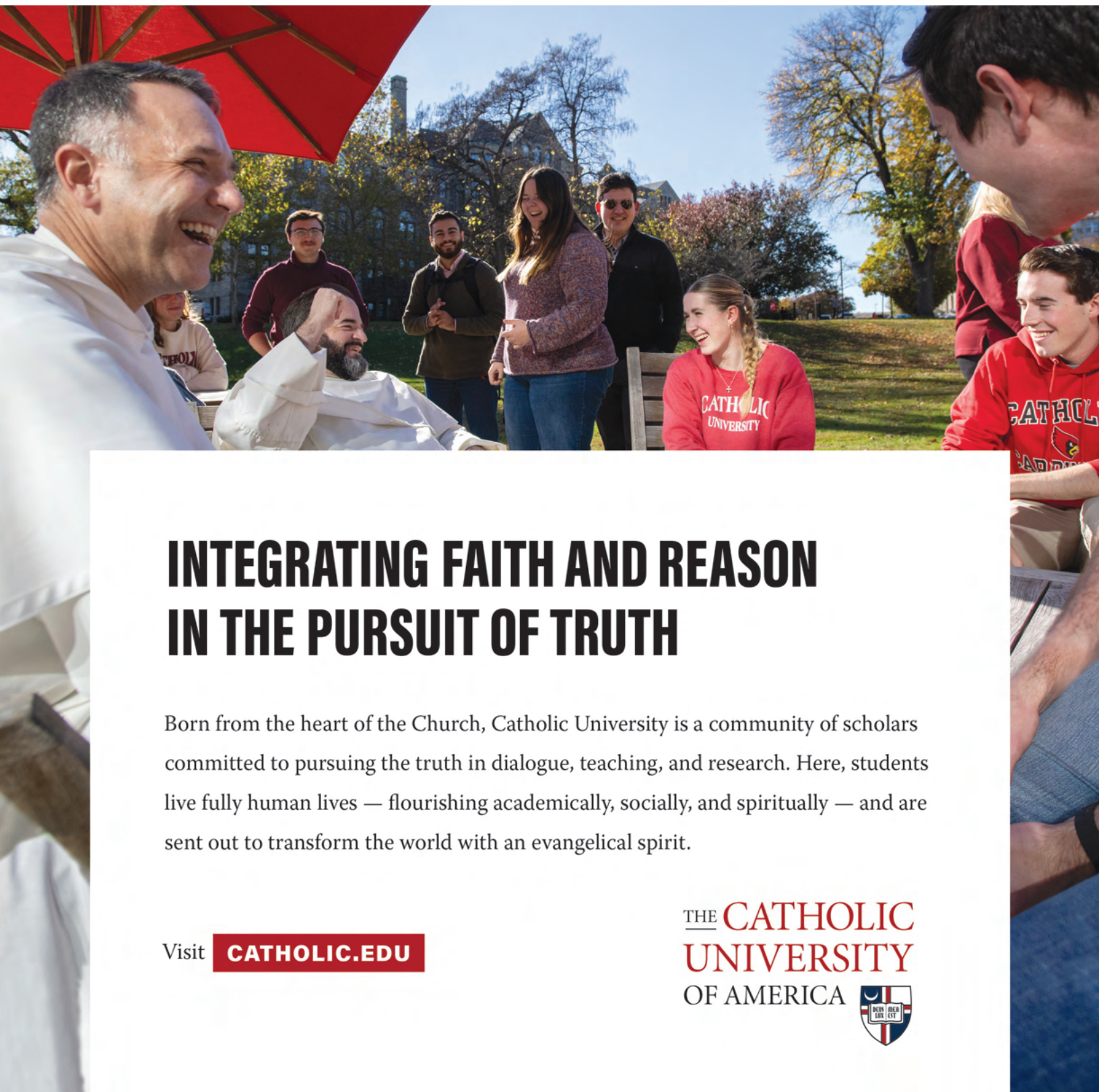




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