

## Foreword

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Father Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R.

If nothing else, my 40 years of teaching in Catholic higher education have convinced me that much of it is going in the wrong direction. The command of Our Lord Jesus Christ “Go and teach all nations” was the foundation of the educational endeavors of the Catholic Church. This was true when I was a student, and thousands of faithful priests and religious brothers and sisters worked very hard for generations to produce a magnificent network of fine institutions of Catholic higher education.

I have seen all of this sadly and tragically erode. Some of the religious communities best known in the past now run colleges that are the furthest removed from Catholic identity. As a result, I often encourage parents to send their children to secular colleges and universities that have an active and involved campus ministry loyal to the Catholic faith rather than use what I call a phony Catholic school. The word “phony” is not a slang word; it comes from the Greek word for sound, and it means that something sounds like what it is not.

There is, however, cause for hope, and it is manifested in those oases of Catholicism profiled in this publication. Colleges listed in *The Newman Guide* are genuinely Catholic, with an indication of those that are most loyal to the Catholic tradition. The colleges and universities mentioned vary considerably, but they have in common a serious attempt to teach the Catholic faith in an orthodox manner and to preserve a campus atmosphere that encourages good Christian life.

You will not find the moral decadence that pervades our culture at these institutions. On

the contrary, if you were to visit them, you would be surprised at the large number of students who voluntarily attend daily Mass and receive the sacraments devoutly. Some smaller colleges have a strong emphasis on literature and Catholic culture. They go far beyond the usual meaning of the term “liberal arts.” They communicate great cultural values in an exceptional manner. Others are more typical broadly based colleges and universities, but again, when it comes to religious and cultural values, they are clearly dedicated to what is meant by a Catholic education.

I am impressed when I see colleges that reflect their Catholic identity in every aspect of their campus life. It is truly heartening to see this devotion to the Lord, which is in so many ways countercultural.

Some of the colleges profiled here are quite small—institutions whose purpose is unabashedly to help form young Catholic men and women. They emphasize the riches of the remarkable Catholic intellectual tradition. And they provide the spiritual nourishment for which many students hunger and most need.

A few of the colleges are brand new. They are hoping to add their voice as a second generation of orthodox Catholic colleges born after the tumult in Catholic higher education in the 1960s. These new colleges offer a further example of hope.

I also am excited about the older institutions that through strong leadership and often with student activism are successfully navigat-

ing the shoals of modernism. We are indebted to those colleges that are battling outside pressures—including financial challenges and the allure of “academic freedom”—to adhere to their historical identity.

When Cardinal Newman Society president Patrick Reilly asked me to assist in putting out this guide, I was both delighted and concerned. When you make a presentation like this, there is always the danger of leaving out a college that should be included. There is also the necessity of selecting those that are on the border. For example, there are a number of Catholic universities and colleges not included in this guide where a sizable portion of the administration and faculty is trying to preserve or restore the school’s Catholic identity.

However, in many cases they have not so far been particularly successful. If you find that some are annoyed that their college is not mentioned in this guide, encourage them to examine the guide and see how their institution could come closer to the realization of an authentic Catholic school. Along with providing Catholic parents and students with good guidance on where to go for college, I hope that the guide will encourage institutions that also ran but didn’t “make the cut,” as they say in athletics. Let them do a little soul-searching and with it some housecleaning.

It is a sad fact that our country is currently squandering its most essential valuable resource, namely, its youth. They are exposed to advanced technical training masquerading as education. In the process they are also exposed to all kinds of values that are contrary to life and their good as human beings, especially their spiritual good. In response to this, one would expect Catholic education to present a broad and clear humanistic approach to culture with emphasis on the Catholic tradition in Western civilization.

We have every right also to expect Catholic institutions to inspire and lead students to the pursuit of an intelligent and good life despite the present situation. Sad to say, many institutions with a Catholic name do just the opposite. The reason for their lethargy and failure to fulfill their purposes is not an attack on faith, but stems rather from greed. Somehow or other the belief is still strong that the more buildings they build and the more students they have, the better the education will be. This is absolute nonsense, which becomes obvious if we only give it some thought. Saint Paul’s observation (1 Timothy 6:10) that greed is the root of all evil is certainly pertinent to understanding the large-scale apostasy of much of Catholic higher education.

There is a Christian way to teach anything, Chesterton said. He mentioned that even if you teach the alphabet and you do it in such a way that those who learn it do not despise those who do not know it, you have taught it in a Christian way. How important it is for every student to want to bring his or her life in agreement with the Gospel and the saving message of Our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other purpose ultimately to life.

What we do in the following of Christ is what we will bring with us through the doors of death at the end of life. Nothing else will come with us. A faithful educational institution is going to prepare people not only for the immediate future of job and career but also for the ultimate future, which is our entrance into the kingdom of God. A college that does not have this as its top priority does not deserve to call itself Catholic. In this guide you will find a list of colleges that understand their responsibility and wholeheartedly embrace it.

I am delighted to be a supporter of the Cardinal Newman Society and hope that this guide will be the beginning of a series of directories that will indicate that Catholic higher education is getting back on course.