



FOUNDING A REAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY IN AN AGE OF UNREALITY

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The Age Of Unreality

Two decades ago, much talk existed globally of a “post-911” world and its permanency: “We’re never going back to the world that existed before the Two Towers fell,” we were told. Sometime in 2020, “The New Normal” was declared. Both these announcements signify paradigm shifts in global culture and mass psychology. Such shifts have occurred before in history, and we have learned all about them in our history books: From the Homeric to the Axial age to the Dark Ages, from Medieval Christendom to the Renaissance and to the Reformation, from the Enlightenment to the Industrial Revolution and to the Information Age. Is there anything unique or exceptional about this latest shift into “new normality,” or is it just one more in a long litany of human cultural evolutions?

In 2020, all public Masses throughout the Catholic world during Holy Week were cancelled. This has never happened—never—in the history of Christendom. The reason for the cancellation was, we were told, the worst plague in history. The fact that the Church was shut down—indeed, shut herself down—during her most sacred and otherwise inviolable celebrations reveals that this is a unique and exceptional paradigm shift.

The paradigm shift that has occurred and is still underway, with each day witnessing an ever-deepening shifting, is, I maintain, to the Age of Unreality. The most compelling evidence for the accuracy of this description is the fact that the Church herself has not only succumbed to this propaganda-concocted unreality, but has also taken a leading role in spreading it to the world.

As all the actual scientific evidence now indicates—and the data was available soon after March 2020 for those with eyes to see it and some conversance with credible alternative media journalism—no “pandemic” (in the traditional sense of the word, i.e., hundreds of millions of terminally sick and dead people all around the world) had actually existed.

What existed was a treatable, mostly non-lethal disease with an infectious fatality rate comparable to the common flu. And a pandemic exists, as I am writing this essay; it is not one of “variants,” but the mass deaths and injuries of the injected. Yet, an official Vatican conference was held in May of 2021 that supported with spurious and tendentious moral and theological rhetoric the false narrative, its attendant propaganda, and its final cause and *raison d’être*: the injection of the entire global population with what the consensus of true science indicates is, not a vaccine at all, but an experimental, untested,

and manifestly harmful—and fatal for a significant number—gene-altering serum.

As the abovementioned facts indicate, we are truly in uncharted waters: a worldwide propaganda onslaught the scale and malice of which the world has never seen hypnotizing the global populace into state of psychotic fear in which millions consented to, or at least did not widely and forcefully resist, a global economic shutdown—a crime against humanity on a massive scale. This shutdown included a deprivation of fundamental human rights, the physically and psychologically dangerous and medically useless masking of whole populations, including young children, and now the coercive program of injecting every living human being with a untested, gene-altering serum, all for a disease that according to the actual numbers is no more fatal than the flu.

Add to this the official endorsement of this totalitarian program by vast majority of Catholic clergy—indicated by closing of Churches, refusing to hear confessions or give Last Rites, mandating masks and social distancing, and even using their parishes as injection sites (not to mention the ever increasing celebration and normalization of abortion, sodomy, transgenderism, and the recent emergence of a full-fledged secularist, totalitarian technocracy), and it is easy to see we have truly transitioned into a physical, moral, intellectual, cultural, political, and spiritual Age of Unreality.

We know from Sacred Scripture and Tradition that a Great Tribulation will come upon the world in which the Antichrist will make his first personal appearance, coinciding with a great chastisement and persecution of Christians under his behest. After this, along with his counterfeit "church" now globally established and ubiquitous among Catholics and non-Catholics alike—"even the elect will be deceived, if that were possible"—he will be vanquished, followed by an Era of Peace in which Christ in the Eucharist will reign over the world in a spiritual state of supernatural and natural harmony, a civilization of love. The Age of Unreality we are now in is, if not the complete establishment of this counterfeit, global "church," the inauguration of it; and we are undoubtedly now living in the Great Tribulation.

Real Christian University (RCU)

In the remainder of this essay and in a follow-up essay, I would like to inquire into the kind of college or university that would need to be founded to educate young people most effectively in and for the Age of Unreality. I shall call this hypothetical institution, "Real Christian University" (RCU). My thesis is that such a university would have to be both radically traditional and radically new.

The kind of teachers, students, curriculum, and pedagogy that enable any university's mission to succeed must be determined in light of that mission; and the mission of any university must be determined in light of both the perennial and universal principles of education and the human soul and the exigencies and dictates of the time and place of its founding.

As a robustly Christian and integrally classical, liberal-arts university founded in early twenty-first century America, RCU would have only to consult as her models the successful colleges and universities of similar mission that have preceded her in the last several decades to discover these perennial principles in both theory (in their founding documents) and in practice (in the concrete and dynamic life and shape of their communities). Thus, RCU would take its essential core from the Christian, predominantly Catholic, intellectual and educational tradition and institutional models that have recently been built upon it.

But these institutions, however excellent and resonant with our mission, were founded before the Age of Unreality had reached and revealed the fullness of its nature. Thus, their capacity to serve as models for a similar institution founded in 2021 is significantly limited. The cultural and educational crises to which these colleges' founders responded were profound—the culture of death, secularism, scientism, the dictatorship of relativism, the instrumentalization and fragmentation of curriculum, the loss of wonder—but none of them compare to the crisis we now face, for it is both the synthesis and culmination of all of them: the global, totalitarian, technocratic supplanting of Reality by a man-made counterfeit. As C. J. Hopkins puts it:

"The New Normals — i.e., those still wearing masks outdoors, shrieking over meaningless "cases," bullying everyone to get "vaccinated," and collaborating with the segregation of the "Unvaccinated" — are not behaving the way they're behaving because they are stupid. They are behaving that way because they're living in a new "reality" that has been created for them over the course of the last 17 months by a massive official propaganda campaign, the most extensive and effective in the history of propaganda."

Thus, in addition to being traditional and conservative, RCU would need to be radical and experimental. Józef Życiński has written:

"To live the faith of Abraham is to be ready at a day's notice to pack the tents symbolizing everything that is dear to one and to go to a new, unknown place, which God will indicate, completely independently of rational calculations or our emotional predilections. To live the faith of Abraham in the cultural context of

postmodernity is to be able calmly to pack up the tents of congenial concepts and arguments, not in order to set out on a desert path, but to set them up again in a different context and in a different form, in a place indicated by God. In an Abrahamic testimony of faith, one may not lose heart on account of the wildness of new places or on account of a feeling of loneliness in a foreign landscape. We must constantly seek the face of the Lord (Psalm 27:8), listening carefully to His voice, which could be either a discreet whisper or a delicate breeze (1 Kings 19:12). We need to love God more than the logic of convincing deductions and the collection of respected authorities, to which we like to refer in times of difficulty. We need to accept the provisionality of contingent means, in order that the Divine Absolute might all the more clearly reveal in them his power. Only then does the contemporary "wandering Aramaean" reveal the style in which, amidst the darkness of our doubt, flashes the light of the great adventure of our faith."

For our purposes, the "tents of congenial concepts and arguments" are the curricula of the predominantly and traditionally Christian, integrated liberal-arts colleges and universities. The "different context" is the Age of Unreality. The "place indicated by God" is yet to be determined. As for the "different form," we will attempt to set this out in the remainder of this essay and in a future essay, but we can say now that whatever form the "faith of Abraham" must take for today, it will not only have to incorporate, integrate, and transmit the classical and predominantly Catholic intellectual and educational tradition, modeling itself upon them, but also render this tradition fit and fruitful for an age whose discontinuity from all preceding ones is all but absolute.

An Education Into Reality

Many Catholic colleges and universities have articulated well the perennial principles and curriculum of Catholic liberal education in their founding documents. And their foundings share essentially the same *raison d'être*, though expressed differently according to their particular charisms. The reality of American Catholic higher education to which their founding was a grace-ordained response was *etsi Deus non daretur*, "as if God did not exist."

Of course, there were then courses offered in the humanities, philosophy, and theology where the idea of God was discussed, but His reality was not taken seriously by a critical mass of students, faculty, and administrators—especially the large, big-name ones that I need not mention. If it had been, the end result of four years at these institutions would have been, and be, greater Faith, wisdom, and holiness in the graduates, instead of greater confusion, immorality, worldliness, and apostasy. For the newer integrally Catholic colleges and universities, taking the reality of God seriously meant revising of the

entire curriculum and culture to be ordered mainly to the study of God as its first principle and end, with the reality of God as the heart of their institutions' mission.

When the Living God, the Most Holy Trinity, was dethroned from Catholic higher education in America, reality itself became obscured. For God is ultimate reality, and when education leaves God aside through practical atheism, or relegates Him to one belief or idea among others through theological relativism and subjectivism, it is bound to become an education into the unreal, regardless of how 'scholarly' or 'scientific' it might claim to be. As Frank Sheed wrote decades ago:

"Therefore if we see anything at all—ourself or some other man, or the universe as a whole or any part of it—without at the same time seeing God holding it there, then we are seeing it all wrong. If we saw a coat hanging on a wall and did not realize that it was held there by a hook, we should not be living in the real world at all, but in some fantastic world of our own in which coats defied the law of gravity and hung on walls by their own power. Similarly if we see things in existence and do not in the same act see that they are held in existence by God, then equally we are living in a fantastic world, not the real world. Seeing God everywhere and all things upheld by Him is not a matter of sanctity, but of plain sanity, because God IS everywhere and all things are upheld by Him. What we do about it may be sanctity; but merely seeing it is sanity. To overlook God's presence is not simply to be irreligious; it is a kind of insanity, like overlooking anything else that is actually there."

For Sheed, education into reality meant first reauthorizing the Church in Catholic education, and not just one community of like-minded religious believers among others, but as the true and unique Mystical Body of Christ whose infallible teachings on nature, humanity, and God, and whose eternal-life-giving sacraments and liturgy serve as the bulwark and guide for all learning.

And it meant a rejection of the anti-tradition of Enlightenment scientism, naturalism, and pragmatism, with its soulless curriculum of fractured disciplines ordered to will-to-power and ideology. It meant a return to the medieval, sapiential Tradition of the marriage of Faith and reason, with its soul-nourishing curriculum of the trivial and quadrivial arts and humanities ordered to the architectonic natural and divine sciences of philosophy and theology.

The means of education are determined by its subject and end. The subject is the human person who is to be educated, and the end is the transformation we seek to make in his soul. The telos of this educational transformation is, generically, the same for all ages and places—perfection of the human

soul and person through attainment of contemplative wisdom in intellectual virtue through perfecting of the speculative, or contemplative, powers of the intellectual soul and moral virtue through perfection of prudential powers of choice within the same soul.

In modern cultures, this end is prudentially adapted to the exigencies of practical life, including an orientation of the curriculum and pedagogy to the needs of the Church for evangelization and vocations, the common good of large-scale, technologically conditioned political and economic order, and the flourishing of family life through professional education and career success. This is not to say that liberal education must become mere job training and preparation for career, but only that it must have an eye to these things as at least indirect, subordinate, and prudent, or common sense, ends.

The various curricula developed by these colleges were identical in the end to which they were ordered: natural and supernatural contemplative wisdom. Thus, they were also very similar in fundamental content and pedagogy, with philosophy, theology, and Great Books at the core, and Socratic discussion as the primary mode of teaching and learning. The trivial arts, mathematics and the natural sciences, and classical languages were also considered essential and given varied but serious weight, and lecture and pure seminar were employed, again, to varying extents, to complement the primary pedagogy of Socratic dialectic.

The main differences were in emphasis and charism, with colleges like Thomas More and the University of Dallas focused more on humanities, Thomas Aquinas College giving Thomistic philosophy pride of place, and Wyoming Catholic College attempting a balanced synthesis of theology, philosophy, and humanities undergirded by an experiential outdoor curriculum ordered to physical, emotional, and moral virtue.

All sought to provide their students a deep, comprehensive, and integrated immersion in the Real, both imaginatively, intellectually, and spiritually (with WCC including physically), through a curriculum and institutional milieu grounded in the Catholic intellectual, spiritual, and cultural tradition and leading their students from wonder to wisdom to God.

RCU would be no different than the aforementioned colleges and universities in being a Catholic and classical “school of reality,” with its curriculum, pedagogy, and culture essentially modeled upon these institutions—there is no reason to reinvent the wheel. Yet, as all of these institutions were founded before the Age of Unreality, RCU could not use these as adequate models. Indeed, there is no model

for her to use that would be adequate to her traditional, yet unprecedented mission. We are literally in uncharted territory. So, a sense exists in which the educational wheel must be reinvented. What would educational immersion in the Real look like in an Age of Unreality?

Lovers Of The Real

The proper means of liberal education, especially the curriculum and pedagogy, is determined by the result at which it aims. Liberal education aims at the perfection of the rational powers of the soul of a rational animal—to the attainment of wisdom. Pater Edmund Waldstein has put it well:

"A liberal education aims at helping educating persons to attain to universal truth, and thus be truly free. Such an education is worthwhile for its own sake, rather for the sake of some further end, such as professional success. Nevertheless, it also enables persons to contribute to the good of society. It provides the foundation for sound political activity, based on a true understanding of the common good. Moreover, it helps to articulate the theological understanding necessary for the life of the Church, and the habits necessary for the Christian life."

To attain universal truth and be truly free, to contribute to the good of society, to engage in sound political activity based on a true understanding of the common good, and to articulate theological understanding and develop the habits necessary for the Christian life are the ends for which RCU would be established; and, in light of these ends, its curriculum and pedagogy would be essentially similar to the colleges that have come before it.

In all ages, the means to attain these perennial ends are also perennial: master teachers and master works in dialectical discussion, theology, philosophy, and the seven liberal arts in a community of learning ordered to truth and holiness. How these curricular and pedagogical means would themselves be applied to the educational end, the 'means to the means,' as it were, will be different, adapted to the particular language, culture, habits of mind, and exigences of the place and time in which they are engaged.

For example, the medieval trivium and quadrivium have been radically revised and extended due to the exponential growth and complexity of the arts and sciences beginning in the Renaissance. And so, what a successful and fruitful liberal-arts college education means and requires for an eighteen-year-old,

middle-class, homeschooled freshmen in twenty-first century America is, however alike in essentials, dramatically different from what even a late twentieth-century American student would have required, let alone a European or Middle Eastern one.

But in an Age of Unreality, the age-place-time requirements and hence the differences will need to be even more dramatic. For, again, what we are dealing with in our day is something unprecedented and unimaginable to prior generations. Therefore, RCU would teach theology according to the Catechism, the Encyclicals, Council Documents, the Fathers, and the Scholastics, as well as those modern and contemporary theologians faithful to the Deposit of the Faith. It would teach the perennial philosophy in accordance with the Catholic philosophical tradition, with St. Thomas Aquinas as Master-guide, again, along with those modern and contemporary philosophers who have continued and developed this tradition.

And while it will teach the humanities, contemporary physical sciences, and the fine arts in an integrally Catholic manner ordered to the True, Good, and Beautiful, the exigencies of our time would require a radical and innovative adaption of these perennial sources and disciplines.

We must prepare future evangelists and religious for a Church that has been deeply coopted by the vilest of forces, and for a world that is awash in the most sophisticated, effective, and malicious propaganda ever created, causing the vast majority of people in the world to be in a perpetual state of psychological trauma and delusion.

We must prepare future Catholic families to flourish in a world where men and women no longer exist as stable identities, where children are seen as exploitable commodities or insufferable burdens, and where marriage no longer exists as a natural, let alone a supernatural, reality. We cannot afford merely to have 'an eye' to these challenges.

We must incorporate them intimately and intrinsically in the curriculum and pedagogy. This does not entail any essential change in the traditional Catholic liberal-arts program in its means and end but it does mean more than keeping these challenges in the background. RCU must face them head on.

In a future essay I hope to delve into the details of what this would look like in terms of mission, curriculum, pedagogy, and culture. To give you a taste, let's just say that Jacques Ellul's *Propaganda*,

Andrzej Łobaczewski's *Political Ponerology*, and the complete works of René Girard will be some of the Great Books we study; courses will include the liberal art of deconstructing media and government narratives, the history of false-flag terrorism, the nature of the Deep State, Catholic prophecies of Antichrist, and the reality and power of occult societies, such as Freemasonry.

There will be practical, skills courses on economic independence and self-sufficiency. There will be deep teaching in psychology, especially psychopathy, narcissism, and ritual scapegoating. In sum, to claim that our students will become aware of the actual world in which they live and adept at Socratic inquiry and dialectics would be a bit of an understatement. Lastly, education of their hearts to love the One, Good, True, and Beautiful will take precedence over mere intellectual formation. For it is only wise and prudent, loving and courageous hearts that can supplant the Age of Unreality with the Civilization of Love, and usher in the Great Era of Peace.

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The [featured image](#) shows, "The Education of the Virgin," by Michaelina Wautier; painted in 1656.

