

Chris Sparks  
Socratic Club Presentation 11/14/07

Ad Fontes!

Gonzaga's Catholic Identity From the Church's Documents

Hello, all. I am honored to be presenting this to you all today. I have a much greater appreciation for the work the professors do on a regular basis to prepare for classes, I must say. My topic is Gonzaga's Catholic Identity as laid out in the Church's documents. I will focus on a few major documents, drawing out the main themes and discussing briefly the norms set down in order to ensure such characteristics are present in Catholic Universities.

On October 25, 2007, a GU News Release appeared on the university website, announcing a new GU Identity campaign. One aspect of the campaign is the new Gonzaga Promise.

Gonzaga University challenges students through a personal learning experience that is grounded in our Jesuit, Catholic and humanistic identity. Within a caring community, Gonzaga inspires and transforms people to shape a better world through education, character, service and faith.<sup>1</sup>

Gonzaga, then, can be summed up in the words Jesuit, Catholic, and humanistic. This is our identity. These marks lead the University Mission Statement, as well.

Gonzaga University belongs to a long and distinguished tradition of humanistic, Catholic, and Jesuit education. We, the trustees and regents, faculty, administration and staff of Gonzaga, are committed to preserving and developing that tradition and communicating it to our students and alumni.<sup>2</sup>

Notice that the Mission commits the whole university community to maintaining all three aspects of the mission in the community. And these aspects are presented in a unified way. It would appear that no one can be taken in isolation from the other two. They work together, or they work against each other. Unless there is a common commitment

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<sup>1</sup> News Release. "Gonzaga University Launches Identity Campaign". Gonzaga home page. 10/25/2007. Accessed 11/6/07. <<http://www.gonzaga.edu/News-and-Events/newsdetail.asp?EventID=3389&DepartmentID=>>>.

<sup>2</sup> Gonzaga Mission Statement. Gonzaga Website. Accessed 11/6/07. <<http://www.gonzaga.edu/About/Mission/Mission-Statement/default.asp>>.

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Gonzaga's Catholic Identity From the Church's Documents to the entirety of the Mission, one part will be emphasized over the other two at the expense of portions of the University community.

But equality of emphasis is not the whole picture, for each is tied into the other two. "Jesuit" would not be possible, would not exist without "Catholic", for the Jesuits are, as we all know,

"A religious order of men in the Roman Catholic Church; its official name is the Society of Jesus. Founded by Ignatius of Loyola in the sixteenth century, the society became the spearhead of the Counter Reformation."<sup>3</sup>

And humanism, the Western style humanism which would appear to be the University's focus, judging from the special place given to Western culture in the University's

Mission statement

"Therefore, in addition to our primary emphasis on Western culture, we seek to provide for our students some opportunity to become familiar with a variety of human cultures"<sup>4</sup>

arose out of Catholic culture and scholarship done in the years right around the Reformation—right around the time the Jesuits were founded, in fact.

The Catholic Church, however, preceded both movements by many years and gave birth to both: to the Jesuits directly, and to humanism through the monastery libraries, the funding of the renaissance, and the creation of universities in Europe. So where Catholic is a source of both Jesuit and Humanistic, the Catholic identity is not a lesser offshoot of either. It is therefore relevant to direct one's attention to the Church's documents on Catholic universities in order to understand the whole identity of the university, all its aspects, in greater depth.

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<sup>3</sup> Dictionary.com "Jesuits". American Heritage citation. Accessed 11/6/07.  
<<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Jesuits>>

<sup>4</sup> Excerpted, GU Mission statement, from the website. Accessed 11/6/07.  
<<http://www.gonzaga.edu/About/Mission/Mission-Statement/default.asp>>

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The Church has emphasized repeatedly down through the years the immense importance of Catholic education. Fr. Maher's Social Encyclicals class brought that home very thoroughly, as we saw the popes repeatedly defending and proclaiming the right of parents to have their children educated as they saw fit. And for Catholic parents, the faith is to be part of the training their children receive. So important is Catholic education in the Church's estimation that Canon Law states:

Can. 793 §1. Parents and those who take their place are bound by the obligation and possess the right of educating their offspring. Catholic parents also have the duty and right of choosing those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of their children, according to local circumstances. §2. Parents also have the right to that assistance, to be furnished by civil society, which they need to secure the Catholic education of their children.<sup>5</sup>

A Catholic school, then, has an obligation to the students and their parents or guardians to faithfully instruct the student in the faith while still doing a good job at the sort of education available at non-Catholic schools. As C. S. Lewis said, we are not merely called to do good works, but also to do good work. The people obedient to the Church and sending their kids have a right to the solidly Catholic education they paid for. But this is speaking of Catholic education in the most general of terms. What is the job of the Catholic universities? What special charisms are peculiar to Catholic higher education?

(Slide) For the sake of the present discussion, I shall use two documents predominantly:

Gravissimum Educationis, the declaration on Christian education that came out of Vatican II and Ex Corde Ecclesiae, "Out of the Heart of the Church", the

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<sup>5</sup> Code of Canon Law. Vatican Website. Accessed 11/6/07.  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/\\_P20.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P20.HTM)

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Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities written and promulgated by the late great Pope John Paul II in 1990. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops also produced a document titled "Ex Corde Ecclesiae: An Application to the United States", which is the local implementation of Ex Corde.

However, it is the vision presented in Ex Corde that informs the local

implementation. Also, Rome is to the local church as the federal government is to the state or city governments, so it makes more sense to look at the Constitution to discover the rights and duties of the citizens than to look at the city charter.

In the interests of a decent presentation, I shall not merely take the documents one at a time and read them to you, as I was initially tempted to do. The documents have authority, great depth of scholarship, and the wisdom and authority of the teaching magisterium of the Church behind them, not I. But to spare you all, I shall focus on certain major themes JPII sets forth in Ex Corde, drawing on the other documents to flesh out the picture and set forth the vision of Vatican II, JPII, and the US Bishops for us here at Gonzaga.

According to Ex Corde, a Catholic university is to be a place that seeks, shares, and preserves truth:

By vocation, the *Universitas magistrorum et scholarium* is dedicated to research, to teaching and to the education of students who freely associate with their teachers in a common love of knowledge. With every other University it shares that *gaudium de veritate*, so precious to Saint Augustine, which is that joy of searching for, discovering and communicating truth in every field of knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

Through research and scholarship, truth is discovered. Through teaching, truth is passed on, and in this transmission, truth is preserved. But John Paul also points out that a Catholic University must do another great service to the world: that of defending the

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<sup>6</sup> Ex Corde Ecclesiae, John Paul II. Vatican Website. Accessed 11/6/07.  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_constitutions/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apc\\_15081990\\_ex-corde-ecclesiae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae_en.html). para. 1.

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very existence of truth. Following the thought expressed in his encyclical *Veritatis*

Splendor, *Ex Corde* says:

The present age is in urgent need of this kind of disinterested service, namely of *proclaiming the meaning of truth*, that fundamental value without which freedom, justice and human dignity are extinguished.<sup>7</sup>

In the name of tolerance, relativism is creeping into many aspects of human life, the belief that something is all right for the other because morality is a subjective affair. Yet without some objective ethical claims, without some objective truth about humanity accessible to human reason, there can be no "freedom, justice and human dignity". In the absence of universal truths about human nature, how can one claim there are universal human rights and freedoms? How can one be just in the absence of an objective standard of justice? How can one guarantee human dignity, if the existence of the grounds for that human dignity may be legitimately accepted or rejected depending on the person you speak to? By defending the existence and accessibility of truth, the Church defends humanity, defends true humanism, defends all against all.

Among the truths the Church defends are the truths of faith. The popular view in the modern world is that the truths of faith have nothing to say to the realm of reason, and that reason cannot touch faith, faith being a purely private affair. This would then seem to put the Catholic Church at odds with a whole realm of truth, and thus reduce the possible scope of the Church's educational mission. But the Catholic university is not to accept this intellectual horizon. We are, rather, to challenge it, in obedience to Vatican II:

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<sup>7</sup> ECE, para. 4.

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...individual subjects [are to] be pursued according to their own principles, method, and liberty of scientific inquiry, in such a way that an ever deeper understanding in these fields may be obtained and that, as questions that are new and current are raised and investigations carefully made according to the example of the doctors of the Church and especially of St. Thomas Aquinas, there may be a deeper realization of the harmony of faith and science. Thus there is accomplished a public, enduring and pervasive influence of the Christian mind in the furtherance of culture and the students of these institutions are molded into men truly outstanding in their training, ready to undertake weighty responsibilities in society and witness to the faith in the world.<sup>8</sup>

Note especially the emphasis on Saint Thomas Aquinas, who remains the Church's theologian par excellence. With his successful synthesis of Aristotle's thought and rules of logic with the Catholic faith, he provided the invaluable service to the Church of showing exactly how rigorous logic and devout Catholic faith could meet, how the Church could learn from non-Catholic cultures without surrendering orthodoxy, and gave an example of how to achieve a successful synthesis of faith and reason without compromising either. Because of all this, his thought and method should be a part of a Catholic education. This synthesis was a theme of such importance to John Paul II that he dedicated an entire encyclical to it, "Fides et Ratio". In *Ex Corde*, John Paul echoes the call to this synthesis:

A Catholic University's privileged task is "to unite existentially by intellectual effort two orders of reality that too frequently tend to be placed in opposition as though they were antithetical: the search for truth, and the certainty of already knowing the fount of truth".<sup>9</sup>

Here we see another of the special gifts the Catholic Church has to offer. If faith and reason are two lanes in the highway to truth and not two points of opposition, demanding a decision between mysticism or science, then there can be a true dialogue

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<sup>8</sup> Second Vatican Council. "Gravissimum Educationis" Vatican Website. Accessed 11/6/07. [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decl\\_19651028\\_gravissimum-educationis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_gravissimum-educationis_en.html). 10. Catholic Colleges and Universities.

<sup>9</sup> ECE, para. 1.

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Gonzaga's Catholic Identity From the Church's Documents and cooperative relationship between them. They are not foes, not competitors greedy for adherents in a zero sum game, Enlightenment Department of Public Safety versus Inquisition. They are rather collaborators seeking a common goal of immense value, and the more likely to make a successful journey because of their cooperation. The practical consequences of this pairing for university life are made clear later in Ex Corde:

The Church, accepting "the legitimate autonomy of human culture and especially of the sciences", recognizes the academic freedom of scholars in each discipline in accordance with its own principles and proper methods, and within the confines of the truth and the common good.<sup>10</sup>

The Catholic University will pursue truth wherever it finds it, in whatever subject, in all subjects, because of the Catholic belief in the unity of truth.

By means of a kind of universal humanism a Catholic University is completely dedicated to the research of all aspects of truth in their essential connection with the supreme Truth, who is God. It does this without fear but rather with enthusiasm, dedicating itself to every path of knowledge, aware of being preceded by him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life", the *Logos*, whose Spirit of intelligence and love enables the human person with his or her own intelligence to find the ultimate reality of which he is the source and end and who alone is capable of giving fully that Wisdom without which the future of the world would be in danger.<sup>11</sup>

A "universal humanism"—though grounded in the historically Western European experience of the Catholic Church, we are to be interested in all cultures, not merely because people from all nations, all continents, all experiences and backgrounds are becoming or have long been members of the Catholic Church, but because we are to be interested in humanity. We are to study and engage human culture:

There is only one cult[u]re: that of man, by man and for man. And thanks to her Catholic Universities and their humanistic and scientific inheritance, the Church, expert in humanity, as my predecessor, Paul VI, expressed it at the United

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<sup>10</sup> ECE, para. 29.

<sup>11</sup> ECE, para. 4

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Nations, explores the mysteries of humanity and of the world, clarifying them in  
the light of Revelation.<sup>12</sup>

We are then free as students and teachers to study all human experience, all culture, all  
truth—required to do so, in fact—the ultimate in academic freedom.

But how is this universal scholarship distinct from the work done at a secular  
university? John Paul II lays out four distinct marks of a Catholic University:

Since the objective of a Catholic University is to assure in an institutional manner  
a Christian presence in the university world confronting the great problems of  
society and culture, every Catholic University, as *Catholic*, must have the  
following *essential characteristics*:

- "1. a Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community  
as such;
2. a continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon the growing  
treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research;
3. fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church;
4. an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the  
human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to  
life".<sup>13</sup>

Let us take these points one at a time. Christian inspiration--We are to be open to the  
world, seeking truth wherever it is to be found. We are to engage human culture and seek  
the synthesis of the divinely revealed faith with the truths of reason, but our focal points  
for action, study, and reflection are to a certain extent determined by this Catholic  
character. As the USCCB points out:

In 1979, Pope John Paul II, in an address to the Catholic academic community at  
The Catholic University of America, stressed the importance of the Catholic  
character of Catholic institutions of higher learning:

Every university or college is qualified by a specified mode of being. Yours is the  
qualification of being Catholic, of affirming God, his revelation and the Catholic  
Church as the guardian and interpreter of that revelation. The term 'Catholic' will

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<sup>12</sup> ECE, para. 3.

<sup>13</sup> ECE Part I Identity and Mission A. The Identity of a Catholic University 1. Nature and Objectives Para.  
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never be a mere label either added or dropped according to the pressures of  
varying factors.<sup>14</sup>

The canon of a medical school is determined by that school's focus on medicine. The canon of a college of engineering is determined by that school's focus on engineering. It is not suppression or censorship that an engineering school not have classes on English literature, or that a medical school express a strong distaste for offering classes on the best way to prepare shish kebab. These subjects, while useful and valuable in the broader sphere of human activity, are simply not part of the specialized areas of study that a medical school is created for.

Similarly, at a Catholic university, we are "qualified by a specified mode of being." Of course we shall study Catholic theology before Protestant theology, and Christian theology before non-Christian theology. Of course we shall study orthodoxy before heterodoxy, and the received teaching of the Church before new speculation. We shall have the history of the Church before the history of the rest of the world, and the teaching of the Church before the teaching of the rest of the world, and the philosophy, and political science, and literature, and all the rest of the Catholic intellectual heritage before that which comes from the rest of the world. The Catholic experience shall come first in the university's teaching, though this does not demand an exclusion of non-Catholic experience, teaching, and history. We would be foolish to keep ourselves ignorant of the rest of the world, and the Church does not intend this. It merely means that the canon and the whole university life are formed by Catholicism. Indeed:

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<sup>14</sup> USCCB. "Ex Corde Ecclesiae: An Application to the United States". USCCB website. Accessed 11/8/07. <<http://www.usccb.org/education/excorde.htm>>. Part 1. V. Catholic Identity.

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Catholic teaching and discipline are to influence all university activities, while the freedom of conscience of each person is to be fully respected. Any official action or commitment of the University is to be in accord with its Catholic identity.<sup>15</sup>

So our teaching shall be distinct from the teaching of secular universities by the salt, the Catholicism added to every aspect of university life. What ought this to look like?

A Catholic University pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ. The source of its unity springs from a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ which gives the Institution its distinctive character. As a result of this inspiration, the community is animated by a spirit of freedom and charity; it is characterized by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals. It assists each of its members to achieve wholeness as human persons; in turn, everyone in the community helps in promoting unity, and each one, according to his or her role and capacity, contributes towards decisions which affect the community, and also towards maintaining and strengthening the distinctive Catholic character of the Institution.<sup>16</sup>

This talk of common dedication, common vision, common vision of Christ—this doesn't sound like a place with room for non-Catholics. Is that what the Holy Father is intending? Is a Catholic University a place where everyone has to accept the Church, Jesus Christ, all the teachings, go to Mass, go to Confession, observe Lent, etc., etc., etc? No. Funnily enough, it is precisely the common vision laid out above that ought to ensure a friendly welcome to non-Catholic students and faculty. Because of the Catholic Christian character of the institution, "the community is animated by a spirit of freedom and charity; it is characterized by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals." The followers of the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Life and Love, are going far wrong if there is someone who is not experiencing Christian charity on the Catholic home turf. It is because of the Catholic character of the institution that we

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<sup>15</sup> ECE, Part II, General Norms. Article 2. The Nature of a Catholic University § 4.

<sup>16</sup> ECE, Part I, Identity and Mission, A. The Identity of a Catholic University, 2. The University Community.

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Gonzaga's Catholic Identity From the Church's Documents would welcome anyone who wanted to come and be a part of the university community, provided they are committed to fulfilling their 'civic duties': "everyone in the community helps in promoting unity, and each one, according to his or her role and capacity, contributes towards decisions which affect the community, and also towards maintaining and strengthening the distinctive Catholic character of the Institution."

Consider now the second essential point: "a continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research". What would such a reflection and contribution look like? Ex Corde fleshes this out:

In the light of these four characteristics, it is evident that besides the teaching, research and services common to all Universities, a Catholic University, by *institutional commitment*, brings to its task the inspiration and light of the *Christian message*. In a Catholic University, therefore, Catholic ideals, attitudes and principles penetrate and inform university activities in accordance with the proper nature and autonomy of these activities. In a word, being both a University and Catholic, it must be both a community of scholars representing various branches of human knowledge, and an academic institution in which Catholicism is vitally present and operative.<sup>17</sup>

This "penetration" of Catholicism throughout the institution goes beyond a mere set of restrictions on what cannot be done by student clubs, or what speakers cannot come, and so on. By penetration, the Pope means the practice, teaching, and research of the faith is an integral part of the whole university life. Whenever some aspect of the faith is relevant to a discipline, that aspect of the faith is to be introduced in the course of the teaching and scholarly work of that discipline:

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<sup>17</sup> ECE , Part I, Identity and Mission, A. The Identity of a Catholic University, 1. Nature and Objectives.

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In a Catholic University, research necessarily includes (a) the search for an *integration of knowledge*, (b) a *dialogue between faith and reason*, (c) an *ethical concern*, and (d) a *theological perspective*.<sup>18</sup>

In all disciplines, there is some aspect of their teaching and work that intersects with the faith—in ethics, for instance, or the nature and dignity of the human person, or epistemology, or metaphysics—and so room to bring in the Church's teaching and practice. The Holy Father directs especial attention to the dialogue between the Church and the natural sciences:

An area that particularly interests a Catholic University is the *dialogue between Christian thought and the modern sciences*. This task requires persons particularly well versed in the individual disciplines and who are at the same time adequately prepared theologically, and who are capable of confronting epistemological questions at the level of the relationship between faith and reason. Such dialogue concerns the natural sciences as much as the human sciences which posit new and complex philosophical and ethical problems. The Christian researcher should demonstrate the way in which human intelligence is enriched by the higher truth that comes from the Gospel: "The intelligence is never diminished, rather, it is stimulated and reinforced by that interior fount of deep understanding that is the Word of God, and by the hierarchy of values that results from it... In its unique manner, the Catholic University helps to manifest the superiority of the spirit, that can never, without the risk of losing its very self, be placed at the service of something other than the search for truth".<sup>19</sup>

The truths of the Catholic faith need not be presented merely dogmatically. They can be presented as relevant facts—data points for non-Catholics, and a deeper exploration of their faith and the Church's experience for Catholics. In order to assist these interactions and the synthesis of faith and reason:

In Catholic universities where there is no faculty of sacred theology there should be established an institute or chair of sacred theology in which there should be lectures suited to lay students.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> ECE, para. 15.

<sup>19</sup> ECE, para. 46

<sup>20</sup> Gravissimum Educationis, 10.

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*Theology* plays a particularly important role in the search for a synthesis of knowledge as well as in the dialogue between faith and reason. It serves all other disciplines in their search for meaning, not only by helping them to investigate how their discoveries will affect individuals and society but also by bringing a perspective and an orientation not contained within their own methodologies. In turn, interaction with these other disciplines and their discoveries enriches theology, offering it a better understanding of the world today, and making theological research more relevant to current needs. Because of its specific importance among the academic disciplines, every Catholic University should have a faculty, or at least a chair, of theology.<sup>21</sup>

By what means shall we implement the third essential point and maintain “fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church”? John Paul II is pretty clear on the need to ensure the teachers at a Catholic university are on board with the mission and identity of the university. Ex Corde declares:

The identity of a Catholic University is essentially linked to the quality of its teachers and to respect for Catholic doctrine. It is the responsibility of the competent Authority to watch over these two fundamental needs in accordance with what is indicated in Canon Law (49).

In the footnote to this section, the Pope makes clear what is indicated in Canon Law:

49. Canon 810 of CIC, specifies the responsibility of the competent Authorities in this area: § 1 "It is the responsibility of the authority who is competent in accord with the statutes to provide for the appointment of teachers to Catholic universities who, besides their scientific and pedagogical suitability, are also outstanding in their integrity of doctrine and probity of life; when those requisite qualities are lacking they are to be removed from their positions in accord with the procedure set forth in the statutes. § 2 The conference of bishops and the diocesan bishops concerned have the duty and right of being vigilant that in these universities the principles of Catholic doctrine are faithfully observed".<sup>22</sup>

I'd like to add a thought here. This does not mean that we hire only people who are utterly without fault, lily pure saints who have no back story and who are living the fullness of the faith without doubt or question every day of their lives. If there was enough such people to staff any university, let alone all the Catholic ones, I'd say the

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<sup>21</sup> ECE, para. 19.

<sup>22</sup> ECE Part II General Norms Article 4. The University Community, § 1.

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Second Coming had already occurred and somehow I'd overlooked it. A Catholic university will always be, on one level, a community of sinners trying to live and work in such a way as best to allow Christ, the fullness of truth, the essence of true humanity, to enter in. A standard has been set, but there's a reason Confession is a sacrament. I'm just saying...

To this safeguard of oversight, the Holy Father adds the safeguard of number:

In order not to endanger the Catholic identity of the University or Institute of Higher Studies, the number of non-Catholic teachers should not be allowed to constitute a majority within the Institution, which is and must remain Catholic.<sup>23</sup>

It is interesting to note the provisions in place address teachers far more directly than they do the students. We are a rotating group, here one year and gone the next. It is a rare student who lasts anywhere near long enough to get tenure, occasional "eleven years in college and still going stories" aside. We are not going to be shaping the university community for nearly as long as any of the teachers here.

Another interesting note is the absence of any provision regarding ratios of Catholic/non-Catholic students like the ones regarding Catholic/non-Catholic faculty. I suspect this is because *Ex Corde* is addressed to the universal Church. The Church has universities in places where I doubt you could assemble enough Catholics to even make a Catholic university worth your while if it was only open to Catholics. We will teach whoever wants to come, whoever will respect the Catholic character of the place. We do not demand the students be Catholic, or good Catholics, or Christian. We do expect a university community sharing "a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ which gives the Institution its distinctive character". You do not have to believe in him, but you

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<sup>23</sup> ECE Part II General Norms Article 4. The University Community § 4..

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have to come to terms with the institutional commitment to his message, and you have to be willing to take part in the university wide effort to synthesize the truths of faith with the truths of reason.

The fourth essential point, "an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life", relates specifically to the intended relationship between the university and the Church, and the university and the human community. The USCCB lays out the particular commitments to be made part of the university's governing documents and implemented in practical terms:

- Commitment to be faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church;
- Commitment to Catholic ideals, principles and attitudes in carrying out research, teaching and all other university activities, including activities of officially-recognized student and faculty organizations and associations, and with due regard for academic freedom and the conscience of every individual;
- Commitment to serve others, particularly the poor, underprivileged and vulnerable members of society;
- Commitment of witness of the Catholic faith by Catholic administrators and teachers, especially those teaching the theological disciplines, and acknowledgment and respect on the part of non-Catholic teachers and administrators of the university's Catholic identity and mission;
- Commitment to provide courses for students on Catholic moral and religious principles and their application to critical areas such as human life and other issues of social justice;
- Commitment to care pastorally for the students, faculty, administration and staff;
- Commitment to provide personal services (health care, counseling and guidance) to students, as well as administration and faculty, in conformity with the Church's ethical and religious teaching and directives<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> USCCB Implementation, Part 1: Theological and Pastoral Principles V. Catholic Identity.

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More specifically, this service is to take the form of pastoral ministry on campus, various works done in collaboration with the local church, and acts of charity and service for the surrounding community.

There is a great deal more to be drawn from these documents. JPII's broader teaching from his pontificate ought to be taken into account--Veritatis Splendor and Fide et Ratio, at the very least, deserve special consideration from GU. The Congregation for Catholic Education continues to develop the themes laid out here. The USCCB document contains more specific norms, and is engaged in an ongoing review of the implementation of Ex Corde in the Catholic universities of the U.S. There are the documents from the Jesuit order that seek to assist the universities in their implementation and safeguarding of their Catholic, Jesuit identity. I urge everyone to read the documents for themselves.

One final consideration: will this overall emphasis on Catholicism blind students to the world around them? Will it limit their horizons and cramp their understanding, merely reinforcing truths long since learned and challenging them not at all? My father was a pilot for the Coast Guard for many years, and I've grown up all over the country. As a product of the public schools and catechesis programs of a fairly broad sector of America, I say you nay!

American Catholics are usually quite badly formed in their faith. Catechesis has, for whatever reason, been generally bad across America. The Catholic side of the story is not well represented in the teaching in public schools or in American culture. Catholic schools are the only ones out there with an interest in teaching, studying, and remembering the vast riches of the Catholic heritage. We can offer students and the



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broader community intellectual and cultural treasures they are unlikely to receive anywhere else. This distinctive focus brings diversity to the American intellectual scene and, with the great Catholic teaching on truth, human dignity, human rights, and so much else, can truly form men and women for others, fully integrated people, people the world needs most.

If we do not form Catholics in the best fruits of the Catholic heritage, then we will produce a great many people who can be swayed by any wind of doctrine, by expediency, by fallacies of all stripes. We do have great things to share with all people, of all cultures, one of which is openness to all the truth in their cultures and their experience. Because we are Catholic, we are to seek and to find reflections of the highest truth wherever we can find it, to plumb the depths and the heights of human culture, human experience. We are to love all men and women as our neighbors, as our brethren, as though they are Christ. We are to welcome all, and to educate all, and to light a lamp of truth, of hope for all the world. We are to defend human dignity and human rights. We are to refuse to allow our world to be dragged down into darkness. We are to raise ourselves and all God's beloved, all of humanity, towards him in community, in compassion, in service, and in truth.

Given this great commission to spread the truth throughout all the world, Catholic universities are to be outstanding in the good fruits which they produce. In congruence with the Jesuit zeal for fidelity to the Holy Father, Gonzaga ought to aim for the fulfillment of this great vision, set by a great pope, for its Catholic identity.