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Statement on Ex Corde Ecclesiae

I greeted the arrival of Ex Corde Ecclesiae with great enthusiasm. In my early years as a college student, I saw a need for greater clarity regarding Catholic identity in Catholic institutions. This was especially the case regarding norms for Catholic Universities. This Apostolic Constitution went well beyond general statements on the relevance of an authentic Catholic Education to the modern world and serves as a document of education itself. It does this by reviewing Catholic teaching about doctrine and norms but also by drawing the reader into a kind of dialogue regarding the relevance of these to modern education.

In the first section it lays out an outline of the importance of dialogue with the modern world, the material sciences, and numerous schools of thought while insisting that it is not contradictory to hold simultaneously “the search for truth and the certainty of already knowing the fountain of truth.” Calling to mind the words of St. Augustine: *"Intellege ut credas; crede ut intellegas"*, we are reminded that the rich heritage of Catholic education flourishes when all forms of intellectual prejudice are dropped in favor of a truly open search for truth.

In later sections it provides a practical structure regarding how to pursue these goals and the norms to accomplish them within the framework of the various structures, diocesan and/or otherwise, in which a University lives and functions.

True to the early work of John Paul II we are given the admonition to act with courage and to be confident that we can discover how to place our research and outcomes into a Catholic ethical framework since science and faith do not contradict. This is a very important point and another of the educational aspects of the document. Too often we hear that modern processes cannot be distracted by ethical considerations as if the latter are somehow detached from human life. Ex Corde Ecclesiae accomplishes a revival of the relevance of Catholic doctrine in

education. I fully support it and believe the document itself is a useful tool in the education of students and all those who play a role in a Catholic University.

It is my hearts desire to always remain in full communion with the Catholic Church and to teach theology, and any other discipline with that in mind and to refrain from teaching as Catholic doctrine anything contrary to Catholic teaching.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Corrigan". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "John" and "Corrigan" being capitalized and prominent.

John Corrigan

Director St. John Paul II Institute

University of St. Thomas Houston