



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 13, 2018

Dear Regis University community and all concerned faithful,

It recently came to my attention that Provost Janet Houser is using her position of influence to advance gender ideology in several ways at Regis University that conflict with the Catholic faith.

These efforts were detailed in an October 29th email to faculty members from Provost Houser and the Queer Resource Alliance (QRA). The provost and QRA's guidance includes encouraging faculty to attend a student drag show, not using gender-specific pronouns in class, avoiding phrases that reinforce the gender binary, such as "ladies and gentlemen," assigning texts from "queer, and especially transgender, authors," and warning teachers not to take attendance using the official roster, since this might involve accidentally using a student's "dead name."

Some of the lay faithful of the archdiocese have brought this matter to my attention, since as Archbishop it is my responsibility to ensure that Catholic institutions maintain their Catholic identity. I want you to know that Regis University never discussed any of these initiatives with me or my staff, and that this guidance is not in conformity with the Catholic faith, despite the attempts made to justify it as rooted in Jesuit values.

On the contrary, Pope Francis has repeatedly decried the promotion of gender fluidity as a type of ideological colonization. Speaking to the bishops of Poland in 2016, he said, "In Europe, America, Latin America, Africa, and in some countries of Asia, there are genuine forms of ideological colonization taking place. And one of these - I will call it clearly by its name - is [the ideology of] 'gender.' Today children - children! - are taught in school that everyone can choose his or her sex. Why are they teaching this?"

I echo the Holy Father's question. Why is Regis University promoting and teaching an ideology that is contrary to what we know from the Scriptures? In Genesis we read, "God created mankind in his image ... male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27).

In *Amoris Laetitia* 56, the Holy Father addresses the errors of this ideology in greater detail. He wrote, "Yet another challenge is posed by the various forms of an ideology of gender that 'denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family. This ideology leads to educational programmes and legislative enactments that promote a personal identity and emotional intimacy radically separated from the biological difference between male and female. Consequently, human identity becomes the choice of the individual, one which can also change over time.' It is a source of concern that some ideologies of this sort, which seek to respond to what are at times understandable aspirations, manage to assert themselves as absolute and unquestionable, even dictating how children should be raised. It

needs to be emphasized that 'biological sex and the sociocultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.'"

This deconstruction of human sexuality has already introduced great confusion into society and it is not in conformity with the Catholic faith. As Pope Francis emphasizes in *Amoris Laetitia* 56, we must "not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator. We are creatures, and not omnipotent. Creation is prior to us and must be received as a gift. At the same time, we are called to protect our humanity, and this means, in the first place, accepting it and respecting it as it was created."

For those who struggle with their sexual identity, it is important to accompany them with compassion, helping them to encounter Jesus Christ, who can bring them healing and lead them to their true identity as sons or daughters of the Father, unlike the false freedom promoted by gender theory.

Jesus teaches us in the Gospels both the importance of listening and speaking the truth with charity, as seen in his encounters with the Samaritan woman, Peter and the apostles, the woman caught in adultery, Zacchaeus, and so many others. Truth and charity are inseparable, and one cannot claim to be acting charitably while disregarding or leading others away from the truth.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Samuel J. Aquila". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of a small cross symbol.

Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L.
Archbishop of Denver