

**Installation of Rev. Dr. Mark A. Hagemoen  
Eleventh Principal of St. Mark's College / Third President of Corpus Christi College  
September 18, 2011**

Archbishop Miller, Abbot John, bishops ..., brother priests, religious, board members, faculty, students, alumni, esteemed colleagues and guests, and friends of St. Mark's and Corpus Christi Colleges:

***INTRODUCTION***

I begin by saying how utterly humbled I am standing here before you. Never did I think that of any of my assignments in the priesthood would include being a principal and president of 2 Catholic colleges. But all of this is put into perspective for me when I realize what this is all really about. To say that I stand on the shoulders of giants seems like a great understatement. I stand on more than just shoulders: I stand on the hard work, the great talents and abilities, on the hearts and lives of very many people who have gone before us, and those who today are a part of the Catholic Colleges in the Archdiocese of Vancouver. This is a celebration not just for me, but for us; this is a celebration not just about the installation of a Principal and President, but about a great many people – faculty, staff, board members, supporters, ...and of course, students and their families - who make up our 2 great academic institutions; and this is not just a celebration about St. Mark's theological College and Corpus Christi Catholic Liberal Arts College, but about the importance of Catholic higher education, the passing on of the Catholic Intellectual tradition, and, frankly, the place and importance of all higher education in our country and our world.

I pause to acknowledge one other institution of Catholic higher education in the Archdiocese, and that is Redeemer Pacific College at Trinity Western University. I

especially acknowledge its new president, Dr. Christine Jones, and several members of its Board who are gathered with us today. In all our lives, family are so important to us – they are given to us by God as a primary community of love and caring. I thank my own parents, Eric and Myra, and my brother Dan and his family, for their ongoing and faithful support to me always. As my brother says, it's his job to keep my feet on the ground, for the sake of the other end of my body. I thank him for doing this too!

### ***HISTORY OF ST MARK'S COLLEGE & CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE***

I will now take a moment to summarize the history and features of our Colleges that we gather to celebrate today. St. Mark's Catholic Theological College, incorporated by a private bill of the BC legislature in 1956, is a degree-granting theological college situated in the theological neighbourhood of the campus of the University of B.C. St. Mark's was possible because of the collaboration between the Basilian Fathers, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver, the University of British Columbia, and the Province of British Columbia. With an active Newman Club since 1932, and three Basilian Fathers already teaching at UBC, the efforts of the Basilian, Father Henry Carr and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Vancouver, William Duke from 1937 onwards led to the opening of classrooms and buildings on September 9, 1958 following the 1956 charter. The College has since grown by expanding classrooms, student activity space, and administration offices throughout the remaining original wing, and the building of a separate church and library in 1997.

Currently St. Mark's offers Masters Degrees, Certificates, and Diplomas in theological and religious studies education. It also offers Continuing Education programs. It has also been home to the Catholic Campus Ministry outreach to the larger University of British Columbia community.

The Campus Ministry of the Colleges has operated out of St. Mark's for many decades, and has been a dynamic, evangelistic, and pastoral presence to the wider Catholic and non-Catholic community of the University of British Columbia. Campus Ministry offers many programs and services, including: celebration of Sunday and weekday Eucharist; celebration of the Reconciliation and other Sacraments; prayer and worship events and devotions; spiritual and pastoral support, retreats, lectures and presentations on various topics and themes. The Campus Ministry is also home to several Catholic groups and organizations, including the Newman Club, Development and Peace, and a student Knights of Columbus council.

Corpus Christi College was established in 1999, as a society for the establishment and development of a Catholic liberal arts college in Vancouver. It is located on the University of British Columbia campus at St. Mark's College. The college was preceded by the only other Catholic college in the province's history: Notre Dame University of Nelson, B.C., which had been chartered as a private university by the Province of British Columbia in 1963. Several administrators, alumni, and faculty at other universities and colleges in the province, including many at UBC, had come from Notre Dame in Nelson. Corpus Christi College began in 1999 with 14 students. By its 11th year anniversary, the student population had grown to about 180.

The College provides a liberal arts education where young people can undertake their first two years of university, exploring liberal arts subjects of English, Philosophy, History and Religious Studies; Business, the Social Sciences – Anthropology, Psychology, Political Science; Math and Science and other courses in a faith-based transferable college program. Of notable mention among program offerings includes service learning courses, whereby students are engaged in the learning and practice of the

Catholic Intellectual tradition's commitment to justice, human solidarity, and the common good. The College offers two programs: i) transfer courses under the auspices of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT); ii) A degree program – We are very proud to point out that Corpus Christi College was recently awarded degree granting status from the BC Ministry of Advanced Education to offer the Associate of Arts degree.

### **RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS**

I stated a few moments ago that we stand on the hard work, the great talents and abilities, and on the hearts and lives of very many people who have gone before us. I would like to acknowledge some of these people now.

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge the Basilian Fathers. Since the first Principal, Fr. Henry Carr, took up the leadership of St. Mark's College, 8 of the last 10 principals have been from the Basilian community. Corpus Christi College began under the leadership of Dr. Gerald Sylvester, as Executive Director. Dr Gerald Sylvester, a St. Mark's honorary degree recipient, is a long time leader of and tremendous contributor to Catholic higher education in Canada. In 2000, his son, Dr. David Sylvester, took on leadership of Corpus Christi as its first president. With a small and dedicated team, which included his wife, Allyson, Dr Sylvester led Corpus Christi through its early years, successfully growing a new and exciting program in many ways against all odds. In 2005 a new type of administrative leadership was required, when the Boards of Directors of both Colleges made the decision that both Colleges would have the same academic and administrative leader, albeit one a 'principal', and the other a 'president'.

Thus, in 2005, Dr. Sylvester became the ninth principal and the first lay person to serve as leader of the Catholic theological college at U.B.C. Several years later, in what was first quite painful, the Holy Spirit blew through the Colleges, which resulted in Dr. Sylvester taking on the leadership of one of the premier Catholic Colleges in the country – Kings University College at the University of Western Ontario. Subsequently, Dr. John Stapleton came to the helm for a two-year commitment. His short tenure at the colleges yielded many results, which featured continued student growth, and achieving important accreditation benchmarks: on the St. Mark's College side associate status with the Association of Theological Schools, and on the Corpus Christi side, the Associate of Arts degree from the Minister of Advanced Education for the Province of British Columbia, her honour, Minister Naomi Yamamoto. On a personal note, I thank both Drs. Sylvester and Stapleton for their generous and ongoing support to our colleges, and their ongoing support and mentoring of myself.

In terms of the Archdiocese of Vancouver, I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of many bishops, clergy, religious, and lay persons who have been a part of the establishment and development of the Colleges. In particular, I highlight the leadership and support of Archbishops William Mark Duke, Martin Johnston, James F. Carney, Adam Exner, OMI, Raymond Roussin, SM, and now Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, who also serves as Chancellor of St. Mark's College and a member of the Board of Directors of both Colleges. As most of you know, we have a quite a leader and ally in the cause of growing Catholic higher education in our Archdiocese and province. Archbishop Miller served as the Vatican's secretary for the Congregation of Catholic Education from 2003 to 2007. He is also well aware of the issues that impact Catholic higher education institutions in North America today, having himself served as a university president of the University of St. Thomas in Houston, from 1997 to 2004.

I would also like to acknowledge the commitment and hard work from the members of our Board of Directors for the Colleges. In particular, I acknowledge the board Chairs since the Colleges undertook the new form of board governance in 2005: Rob Cruickshank, and now Neysa Finnie. We are all very grateful to them both for their strong leadership, commitment and hard work on behalf of our Colleges.

I do want to acknowledge our very dedicated, generous, and hard-working faculty and staff at the Colleges. As you all know, the colleges operate fully on tuition and donation funding from supporters. The colleges receive no public funding. Thus, we have to run a very lean operation. In fact, I thought our church organizations did a lot with a little. Well, our Catholic Colleges have in my mind set a whole new standard for doing an awful lot with the little. For example, at this time all faculty are employed as sessional appointments. They are supported by a hard-working and quite lean administrative staff. We certainly recognize that *the little* comes at a high price for our community – tuition fees are a challenge for many students and families, and the donations we currently receive represent the great generosity and sacrifice of our supporters. However, higher education requires a great many resources, and the development of the continuum of Catholic education greatly needs the growth and contribution of Catholic higher education in this diocese and province.

### ***STRATEGIC PRIORITIES***

I will now speak about our strategic priorities. Catholic Higher Education is a vital and necessary feature of the Church's mission and life. Pope Benedict XVI develops this theme as follows:

“Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth. This

relationship elicits a desire to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching. In this way those who meet him are drawn by the very power of the Gospel to lead a new life characterized by all that is beautiful, good, and true; a life of Christian witness nurtured and strengthened within the community of our Lord's disciples, the Church.”<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the recent Synod of the Archdiocese of Vancouver has highlighted the priority of developing Catholic higher education institutions to meet the pressing needs of churches and schools for ministerial and professional development. While this is an installation speech and not a development presentation, frankly, advancement and development are our most crucial need. I take a few moments to outline this.

On the theological college side, the present programs are modest and are in need of further development. Currently about ten – three credit programs are offered over a twelve month time period. Enrolments are small in part due to the College's inability to provide more courses which in turn would help students complete programs in a more timely manner. Limited technology capacity means that most of the courses are offered “in class”, with very few courses offered on-line. This also limits the College because of the increasing demand for on-line courses and programs. Teaching and advising are carried out by a small number of credentialed and dedicated faculty members, who are employed on a sessional basis. Our vision is to break through these barriers with a core of full-time faculty, increased course offerings and new options for on-line learning.

As already mentioned, St. Mark's College has become an Associate Member of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and will be in a position to apply for Candidacy Status in 2015-2016. Much growth is required to achieve this desired status. ATS has

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Benedict XVI: Address to Catholic Educators, April 17, 2008, The University of America.

informed St. Mark's College that we need to appoint a core of full time faculty, standardize and stabilize our program offerings, and attend more fully to seeing that our programs achieve their objectives.

On the liberal arts college side, it is very important that we continue to build on our success-to-date. Corpus Christi College invites and directs students to excellence in all areas of intellectual formation, including: academic excellence, growth in personal virtue, and service of others. It does this in large part due to our qualified and dedicated faculty and staff, engaging and dynamic instruction, strong student advisory support, and - for students enrolled in Theological Studies - access to programs and services at the University of British Columbia.

The College currently offers two major programs: i) transfer courses under the auspices of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT); ii) A degree program – We are very proud to point out that Corpus Christi College was recently awarded degree granting status from the BC Ministry of Advanced Education to offer the Associate of Arts degree.

One of our greatest tasks is to rationalize our liberal arts program and curriculum philosophy and relate this to the Catholic intellectual tradition. This development is important for our supporters as well as our own faculty and staff, as program and course development is guided by a clear educational philosophy that fits our mission and vision as a Catholic liberal arts college. The vision of the liberal arts, and certainly that of a Catholic higher education institution, is increasingly responding to the minimalizing in many realms of human potential and flourishing to mere function and utility. In our 1<sup>st</sup> Reading today, the prophet Isaiah challenges us to see the broader vision of heaven, seeking the higher and greater vision of God for humanity. In today's

Gospel according to Matthew, Our Lord challenges his disciples about the deeper meaning of involvement in the Master's vineyard: a task that is not merely about pay for time served, but about the deeper and greater issue of God's generosity in response to our engagement, whenever this happens!

To be consistent with the Catholic intellectual tradition, our vision must be the pursuit of human excellence characterized by developing intellectual ability *and* the capacity for integration and synthesis for the sake of wholeness and the betterment of the human condition, and to foster harmonious relationships within the human community and its relationship with our environment. Wow, what a task – big, but also necessary and quite exciting!!

On a personal note, I have always found the Old Testament meaning of *shalom* helpful in all of this. Occurring over 200 times in the Old Testament, *shalom* takes on its deepest significance in the Psalms and the Prophets. Regarding the meaning of this biblical concept, peace is not merely the absence of conflict. Nor is it the maintenance of *status quo* affairs, either among persons or groups of people such as nations. And, it is not limited to personal health, prosperity and fulfillment, although it certainly includes these. *Shalom* ultimately expresses the fulfillment that comes to human persons when they realize and experience the fullness of human flourishing, characterized by right and full relationship with God and humanity in a union call *communion*. Peace, *shalom*, expresses the blessing of inner and outer harmony, and is experienced despite difficult and even dangerous circumstances that face persons and nations as we move forward. In the New Testament, *peace, shalom*, takes on a particular meaning and focus with the Incarnation, *the Word that is made flesh, and dwells among us*.

*Shalom* is a helpful concept when one reflects on a vision of a liberal arts education. I add that this analysis also suggests the special place of theology and philosophy in a Catholic Liberal Arts program. These particular disciplines provide in the Catholic intellectual tradition both perspective and orientation to other academic disciplines and fields. As Blessed John Henry Newman points out, the ancient and highly developed field of knowledge, namely theology, has a special and pre-eminent place because of its roots in the history and life of the Church universal. I add that Newman also supported what he described as genuine academic freedom and autonomy for a Catholic university. For Newman, conflict and challenge in the academic environment was common-place, and led to knowledge and truth that features deepening insight and increasing wisdom.

So, given the many definitions and versions of the liberal arts in a vast number of great academic institutions throughout North America and beyond, what should a small Catholic liberal arts College with about 200 students adopt? Should we merely look at circumstance and current opportunities? Or should we weight towards versions already tried and familiar? Should our liberal arts college be practical, visionary, prophetic, ...or should it adopt the description and form of other Catholic institutions that have been tried and tested, and found to be bastions of orthodoxy and familiar & reliable institutional form.

Well, the Catholic intellectual tradition does not generally tolerate simple either-or scenarios. Our Catholic Colleges must address our circumstances, **and** be creative in addressing challenges; they must honour, indeed celebrate, our traditions; they must look to institutional models that provide helpful terms of reference *and* they must be prophetic and look to where the good Lord is guiding us as we face a future that demands a compelling vision for the contribution of holistic higher education.

## ***THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION & TASKS MOVING FORWARD FOR THE COLLEGES***

In all of this, articulating and understanding our Catholic intellectual tradition is crucial. It is a rich, compelling, and necessary tradition that continues to make a tremendous contribution in our world today. If I may briefly sum up, it features:

- 1) A commitment to the education of the whole person;
- 2) A conviction that faith and reason are mutually illuminating and united in the search for truth;
- 3) A hopeful commitment to intellectual integration among disciplines;
- 4) A Sacramental vision of reality that holds that each discipline reveals something of the sacred;
- 5) Trust and confidence in reason's ability to grasp the intelligibility, meaning, and purpose of the universe;
- 6) Openness to God's mystery and our fulfillment that lies beyond our vision at present;
- 7) A commitment to justice, human solidarity, and the common good.
- 8) A dynamism and openness that features a desire for seeking greater clarity and truth vs. being static and complete.

As we reflect on this tradition, many questions come to mind for our liberal arts program. For example, we have achieved much as a College which partners with many other B.C. post-secondary colleges and universities as a transfer institution. Yet, as important as this feature is in helping students towards many other academic destinations, being a transfer institution is only one of our goals. As one supporter of our Liberal Arts College recently told me, Father Mark, I want to support a Catholic

College that is distinctive in its mission, is faithful to its identity, and is compelling with its vision. My response was, “So, what does that mean??” She responded, “That’s your job!”

Well, that’s *our job*, ... and options and opportunities are many. For the sake of brevity, I highlight key references. Of course, a Catholic higher education institution seeks those features outlined in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae: Born From the Heart of the Church ...are* Catholic colleges and universities. Features include: knowledge for the good of the human persona and all humanity; the search for meaning and truth as a primary and orienting academic imperative; Christian inspiration and the continuing reflection in the light of faith on the growing treasury of all human knowledge; ecclesial fidelity that features service of *communion* and God’s people wherever they are encountered; integrating faith with reason and life – as you see, themes reflected in the Catholic Intellectual tradition just described.

When it comes to relating *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* to different models of the Catholic liberal arts, many approaches and models abound. I find helpful the analysis of Fr. John Piderit, S.J. and Dr. Melanie Morey, to sum up these approaches that emphasize a range of institutional responses.<sup>2</sup> These include: 1) ***immersion universities*** that attract and educate committed Catholic students; 2) ***persuasion universities*** that try to install in all students, regardless of religious persuasion to some sort of development in knowledge of the Catholic faith; 3) ***diaspora universities*** that attract a wide number of students but are somehow constrained in terms of the Catholic educational dimension by the type of students that they attract, and 4) ***the Catholic cohort universities*** that

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<sup>2</sup> See Melanie M. Morey and John J. Piderit, S.J., *Catholic Higher Education*, Oxford University Press, New York, New York, 2006, pp. 62-66.

seek to attract talented students of Catholic and other religious backgrounds who will upon graduation use their influence to promote Catholic viewpoints.

Other observations and nuances on these approaches include the following. As described by Dr. Sidney Callahan, those institutions that seek to educate Catholics and other Christians to integrate Christianity with the life of work and secular thinking. As described by Dr. Rosanna Demarco, rigorous scholarship and pursuit of ethical values in the overall effort to engage in service to others. As described by Fr. John Haughey, S.J. higher education that seeks to move from a hospitality towards pluralism and tolerance to concrete engagement of the Catholic intellectual tradition with issues and persons of our day. As described by Fr. Michael Himes, education that is multi-disciplinary and encourages critical reflection so that 'thinking' and 'doing' become a seamless garment. Another perspective may be summed up as follows: an all-embracing vision that entails a specifically Catholic way of apprehending reality, and that inspires a university's teaching, scholarship, and service. The author of this point is Archbishop J. Michael Miller in an address to Boston College in Sept. of 2006. Or, as simply summed up by Dr. Stephen Pope, Catholic education seeks both 'enlargement of heart' and 'enlargement of mind.'

On the practical point regarding the model for approaching the Catholic liberal arts I again cite Piderit and Morey, who relate the developing models to the traditional liberal arts curriculum of classical and medieval times, which featured the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, logic) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy). Piderit and Morey outline four (4) major features: theology, philosophy, liberal arts, and extended liberal arts. The liberal arts feature English, History, and Classical Studies. The extended liberal arts include Business, Service Learning, and other areas such as Film. Mathematics and Science could also be included under the

liberal arts, and the Social Sciences under the extended liberal arts. Our undergraduate college currently offers all of these courses. If transferability is brought along side of educational identity and mission, as well as current practical realities regarding size, resources, and maximum impact, then our colleges need to do some further serious work in terms of rationalizing the right liberal arts curricular model.

One final feature to highlight is the quality and features of student life at our Colleges. It goes without saying that students are the reason for colleges and universities. Growing and supporting student life appropriate to both our undergraduates and graduates must be a strategic priority. As one experienced college president recently shared, 'Neglect student life at your peril!' Yes, there are special circumstances and challenges that relate to our 2-year undergraduate transfer program and our widely-spread students in our theology college, and I look forward to responding to this. I again highlight and thank our Campus Ministry for not only the great work they do in this regard, but also for impacting and calling together other students through their comprehensive approach to ministry at the very large campus setting of U.B.C.

## **CONCLUSION**

I conclude with a brief reflection on the logo of our Colleges. I think that our logo is both well-chosen and providential. It provides for us a symbol of what we are about, and where we are going. The winged lion, the figure of courage and dominion associated with St. Mark, represents the boldness and courage of the Evangelist of the Gospel who proclaims, with the brave and courageous roar like that of a lion, the kingship of the Messiah, the servant-king of the world, and the distinctive and wonderful way that humanity is called to seek excellence. The orb or sun around the head of the lion is the symbol of the Saviour, the one who draws us together as *Corpus*

*Christi- the body of Christ* – the one who calls all to share in Him and with one another. This one, mystical body of Christ persists towards the sun from on High which rises before us.

Let us *stay the course* towards this vision with dedication, hard work, and utilizing all the God-given gifts we can for the sake of building a truly excellent academic and formational community at the Colleges of St. Mark's and Corpus Christi. Yes, a lofty vision for our 2 small Catholic Colleges – but, as we can see, we are not alone! We are the privileged part of something much greater than ourselves. We in the present are part of an intellectual tradition and community universal, that looks back and looks forward, that compels us to sing, *laudate omnes gentes, shout out, give praise, all you nations and peoples!* It is this mission and vision that compels us forward with great *hope!!*

So, lets get at it!! *Thank you! God Bless you!*