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Dean Chester Gillis
Vice President Advancement James Langley
Georgetown University 37th & O Streets N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20057

Dear Chet and Jim:

We met last November 17 at the luncheon at the Regency Club in West Los Angeles. Chet, you gave a talk on the subject of Georgetown and its Jesuit tradition. Jim, you asked for comments and I responded with my concerns that Georgetown had forsaken its Jesuit and Catholic identity. It was apparent that my remarks were not welcome and, at your request, Jim, I curtailed my speaking.

As I tried to explain at the luncheon, perhaps unsuccessfully, I have no problem with advocacy or speech antagonistic to Catholic values. However, such advocacy/speech should not be funded and promoted by the University, and, when it occurs, there should be a prompt response asserting the Catholic position.

You are justifiably proud of Georgetown's high academic ranking. However, it had that ranking before it changed its character. In an apparent attempt to join the "prestige" secular schools ranked above it, Georgetown embraced political correctness. The great competitive advantage Georgetown had over the Ivies and their ilk was that Georgetown stood for values – something not factored in the USN&WR ratings. Georgetown had a valuable alternative to the relativism dominating the leading secular universities. That advantage is gone.

I indicated that I had raised my concerns in letters for more than three years and had never received a reply. You both were so kind as to apologize for that and state that my concerns should have been addressed. I gave each of you copies of what I had written earlier. Although you did not say so explicitly, I had the impression you would respond. Since five months have elapsed without hearing from you, I take this opportunity to address the matters once again.

As I drove home from the luncheon, I was struck with the realization that the things you were saying were the same things I said back in the 80s when friends tried to tell me that Georgetown was no longer Catholic. I insisted they did not have the correct view and I persisted in serving on Alumni Boards and on an Advisory Committee for the College. [When I was solicited to serve on the Advisory Committee, there was an explicit representation that members would not be merely "yes" people or rubber stamps.]

My awakening came in the early 90s, when Georgetown announced it was authorizing and subsidizing a pro-abortion club on campus, GU Choice. I attended the next meeting of the Advisory Committee feeling confident that action would be taken to reverse that decision. I was confirmed in my belief at a dinner the night before the meeting when the then Dean, Father Robert Lawton, told us all that he was counting on us for our ideas and our leadership.

The next day, I made a motion, which was seconded, that the Committee go on record as opposing the authorization and subsidization of the pro-abortion club and urge the Administration to reverse the action. Father Lawton refused to let the motion come to a vote or even to be discussed - so much for our promised independence and leadership. That was the last Committee meeting I attended.

With a number of other alumni and friends of Georgetown, the Committee for Georgetown Values was established. It was chaired by one of the most popular Alumni Presidents, Bill Dooley, co-chaired by Mrs. Lauinger and Congressman Hyde and included Cardinal O'Connor, former Dean Father Ryan, author William Peter Blatty, John Carroll awardees, Coakley Medal winners, former Student Body Presidents, summa cum laude graduates, and other representatives of seven decades of Georgetown graduates.

We wrote letters informing alumni of what was happening, raised our concerns whenever Georgetown representatives addressed meetings, obtained affidavits from students as to the pro-abortion activities of GU Choice and wrote the Vatican in support the Ignatian Society's efforts.

Activities culminated at the Century Plaza in connection with the L.A. John Carroll weekend. We rented space as a headquarters to set up posters, hand out literature and "bar-GU Choice" buttons to those in attendance, and were available personally to explain what Georgetown had done. I also engaged then President Father Leo O'Donovan on the subject at one of the luncheons only to have him exclaim that he was not going "to be cross- examined."

Chet, this is relevant to your statement that you cannot influence what goes in the Alumni magazine. At that John Carroll weekend, I made a similar request, that our concerns be aired in the Alumni Magazine. Alumni leaders present at the John Carroll thought it only fair and consequently the Administration caused it to happen. It can be done. Not long thereafter, there was an announcement that GU Choice was decertified.

So here I am again to request your endorsement of my efforts to have the concerns I expressed published as part of a pro and con discussion on this vital subject. Chet, you generously conceded that I was not alone in my views and that a sizeable segment of the alumni were of the same mind. Thus, it appears important to address this.

If the magazine can devote 18 pages to the LGBT&Q organization at GU, surely this basic question as to GU's faithfulness to its Catholic tradition should have at least equal coverage. I have enclosed a proposed article, which I am willing to edit as necessary.

In addition, I am willing to debate any member of the Administration on these issues. I will not be able to attend the next John Carroll weekend but, with today's technology, I could participate by closed circuit TV in such a discussion. I believe a session on these topics would be well attended. A return to Catholic values would give GU an asset not offered by competing universities - the ability to take a stand for moral values.

Cordially,

Richard M. Coleman
cc: interested parties.