Howdy Longhorn Catholics,

my name is Fr. Jared Cooke and by God's grace and Bishop Vasquez's discernment, I have just been appointed as the new Associate Director of the UCC! Full disclosure, I am a proud, 3rd generation, Fightin' Texas Aggie who finds being assigned here at UT to be an example of God's divine sense of humor, but please know how thrilled I indeed am to be ministering here in "Longhorn Land," as my Aggie family always referred to it growing up!

Please allow me to introduce myself just a little bit - I was born in Denver, Colorado, but moved to North Austin at the age of 11, spending my most formative years thereafter growing up here in Central Texas. In addition to serving as the Associate Director here at the University Catholic Center, I also serve as the Chaplain of the “Mercy of God Prayer Center” in North Austin which focuses on guiding people through their individual woundedness and brokenness, towards true inner healing and even occasional deliverance. I have always had a great passion for preaching, teaching and evangelization and I love finding new and exciting ways to make faith relevant for people in our fast-paced and increasingly secular society. As a result, I've had the incredible opportunity to work extensively and especially with youth, young adults and men’s ministries throughout the country. Over the past four years, I have also traveled around the world speaking and preaching at numerous retreats, conferences, camps, missions and workshops, in addition to serving as Parochial Vicar at St. Joseph in Bryan and most recently, St. Thomas More in North Austin. I also continue to be very active with Catholic evangelization ministry across several social media platforms, especially on Instagram. I also love soccer, music, film, working out, hole-in-the-wall food joints to fine dining cuisine and everything in between, the great outdoors, traveling to new places around the world (my bucket list will forever be a mile long) and I consider myself, for better or for worse, an unabashed “coffee snob!” When I find downtime, you will likely find me spending time with friends or relaxing out in the Texas country at my family’s Vineyard and Winery just outside of Houston.

I very much look forward to meeting all of y'all over the next several days and weeks, so please come introduce yourself to me! NO promises I will remember your name right off the bat! I need to see YOU and say YOUR NAME at least 4-5 times before it locks in my mind - but, challenge accepted! HA! Here's to a happy, healthy, holy, fruitful, and fun semester! I can't wait to embark on this faith journey with all y'all. Onward and upward!

In Christ,

Fr. Jared Cooke