Holy Apostles
College & Seminary



Sixty-seventh Commencement Exercises

Saturday
April, 26, 2025

Welcome, friends, families, and honored guests, to the 2025 Commencement Ceremony of Holy Apostles College and Seminary. Today, we gather in joyful celebration of the extraordinary achievements of our graduates. Through prayer, perseverance, and faithful study, these men and women have answered God's call with courage and commitment. Their journey reflects a deep devotion to the mission of the Church and a readiness to serve with wisdom and compassion. We give thanks to the Lord for their accomplishments and invite you to join us in honoring their dedication, sacrifice, and the bright future that lies ahead.

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Out of respect for our graduates and their guests, we request that you mute or turn off your cell phones for the duration of the ceremony.

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Professional photographs will be made available to our graduating students and their guests.

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Please note that out of devotion for Our Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the Blessed Host has been removed from the Tabernacle prior to the start of the Commencement Exercises and reposed in another campus Chapel.

COMMENCEMENT



Prelude Variations on "*All Creatures of Our God and King*" by Pietro Cattaneo and Noel Jones

Processional *Pomp and Circumstance . . .* Edward Elgar *(Military March No. 1 in D)*

Opening Hymn *All Creatures of Our God and King* by Wm. Henry Draper

All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou, burning sun with golden beam
Thou, silver moon with softer gleam
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless
And worship Him in humbleness
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

All the Redeemed washed by His blood
Come and rejoice in His great love
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Christ has defeated every sin
Cast all your burdens now on Him
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

COMMENCEMENT

Invocation & Welcome

Very Rev. Peter Samuel Kucer, M.S.A., S.T.D
President-Rector

Student Choir

These Alone Are Enough
Composer: Dan Schutte
Musical arrangement: Mr. Michael Mainella

Academic Achievement Awards:

Associate of Arts Academic Award

Joshua Patrick T. Culhane, A.A.

Bachelor of Arts Academic Award

Sr. Nga Thi Bui, B.A.

Excellence in Divinity

Huan Ngoc Tran, M.A.

Excellence in Theology

Claire Joy Gore, M.A.

Excellence in Philosophy

Matthew Walsh, M.A.

Excellence in Pastoral Studies

Deborah Kispert, M.A.

Excellence in New Evangelization

Justin Read, MDIV

Undergraduate Student Speaker: Carla Martinez, B.A. Theology

Graduate Student Speaker: Sr. Hoa Thi Nguyen, M.A. Theology

COMMENCEMENT

Honorary Degree	Mr. James Wahlberg
Commencement Address	Mr. James Wahlberg
Chancellor Remarks	Very Rev. Martin D. Rooney, M.S.A.
Announcement of Class of 2024 *In Absentia*	Dr. Kristina Olsen, O.C.D.S., Ph.D., D.B.A. Vice President of Academic Affairs
Conferral of Degrees	Very Rev. Peter Samuel Kucer, M.S.A., S.T.D.
Presentation of Degree Candidates	Dr. Kristina Olsen, O.C.D.S., Ph.D., D.B.A. Vice President of Academic Affairs
Closing Remarks	Very Rev. Peter Samuel Kucer, M.S.A., S.T.D. President-Rector
Closing Hymn	*O God Beyond All Praising* by Gustav Holst, lyrics by Michael Perry

O God beyond all praising, we worship you today
And sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay.
For we can only wonder at every gift you send,
At blessings without number and mercies without end.
We lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word,
We honor and adore you, our great and mighty Lord.

The flower of earthly splendor in time must surely die,
Its fragile bloom surrender to you, the Lord most high.
But hidden from all nature the eternal seed is sown,
Though small in mortal stature, to heaven's garden grown.
For Christ the man from heaven from death has set us free,
And we through him are given the final victory.

Then hear, O gracious Savior, accept the love we bring,
That we who know your favor may serve you as our king.
And whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill,
We'll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless you still.
To marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways,
And make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.

Recessional	*Trumpet Voluntary in D Major* by Henry Purcell
Postlude	Organ Variation on "*O God Beyond All Praising*" by Noel Jones
Organist and Cantor	Mrs. Emma Belske

CLASS of 2025 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE of ASSOCIATE of ARTS

Henry William Bulitta, III

Leslie Elizabeth Townsend

Joel Alexander Van Kleeck

Travis Don Tabor

Angel Urbinatafoya

Carmen Elizabeth Horvath

Michael Gabriel Mueller

Brian Wesley Casey

Joshua Patrick T. Culhane

Eileen Beth Morgali

Jacqueline A. Jones

Anastasia Wahmbeck

THE DEGREE of BACHELOR of ARTS

Miguel Luis Andrade

Bernadette Rose Beckman

Courtney M. Blalock

Kelly Elizabeth Brown

Greyson Brown

Hannah Leann Bruckner

Sr. Nga Thi Bui

Sr. Anamargarita Certain Dangond, SCTJM

Karen Marie Del Castillo

Thau Van Duong

Ernani Domingos dos Santos

Gavin Michael Coutinho

CLASS of 2025 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE of BACHELOR of ARTS (continued)

Christina Leung Coronel

Gregory John Somers

Isabel Teresa Sanclemente

Faith Stegall Bruno

Carla M. Martinez

Alexandra Mucerino

Alvin Mukkattu

Nicholas Moore

Jerome Simon Montpetit

Roger M. Mungala

Michael D. Murray

Sr. Elizabeth Linh Nguyen

Sr. Mary Nga Thi Nguyen

Noemi Julia Palihnich

Joseph Richter

Sofía Isabel Kiani Fountain Rivera

Christopher Ryan Rodriguez

Sarafina Marie Shopa

Mary Francis Shopa

Elizabeth Ann Shopa

John William David Shackle

Jacob F. Simila

Cameron Robert Small

Cole Edward Stockdale

Christa Elise Hudson

Kaelisa Mara Kelley

CLASS of 2025 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE of MASTER of ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY

Antony Youssef Assaf
Maureen Johanna Etzel
James M. Denning, Jr.
Eric R. Wallace
Greyson Brown
Matthew Joseph Walsh
William Thomas Archer
Gordon V. Moccio
Demetrio Hernandez
Onisauda Ifa
Matthew Peter Grupp
Jason Henry Kirstein
Yul Ibay
Thomas Aquinas Dirck
Stephanie Havens
Guadalupe Miguel Ayala Gonzalez
Caleb James Burdine
Josh Howard Harvell
Meghan Rose Gordon
George Markov
Christopher Edward Olson
Mary Elizabeth Roush
Brandon J. Munson
Aaron Lindsay Smith
Stacy A. Trasancos
Anthony Gutierrez
Andrew J Sidwell
Thomas J. Wyatt
Vincent R. Turner II
Daniel McErleane
Nicholas Matthias Quiambao
Jacob Andrew Cortright
Susan Marie Anne Ganoe

CLASS of 2025 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE of MASTER of ARTS IN PASTORAL STUDIES

Mary Katherine Spalding Sankey
Raquel Tamayo Tripp
Diana R. Ray
Deborah A. Kispert
Emily Anne Fleck
John-Robert DiVietri
Elizabeth Ikard -Magalong
Renee Christine Jackson
Joanna Robin Downing
Deborah A. Landry
Kayla Rose Serratore

THE DEGREE of MASTER of DIVINITY

Nguyen Han Van
Tran Huan Joseph

THE DEGREE of MASTER of DIVINITY NEW EVANGELIZATION

Joseph Harb
Justin Read

POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN PASTORAL STUDIES

Ian Zettervall

POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN PHILOSOPHY

Doran Giles Hunter

GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE IN CATHOLIC PASTORAL COUNSELING FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Patrick Gerard McCrossen, D.D.S., M.D., M.P.H.
Marsha Christine Drees

CLASS of 2025 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE of MASTER of ARTS IN THEOLOGY

Tyler Schmitt

Mary Irvine

Fr. Hien Minh Nguyen Tran

Gregory L. Mitchell

Claire Joy Angeles Gore

Luis Carlos Trujillo

Kimberly Ann Kurkowski

Faith Ashleigh Bardet

Fr. Trang Pham

Michael Lance Yandell

Thomas Michael Eskro

Antony Youssef Assaf

Richard Livingston

Jason John Alderuccio

Fr. Chan Minh Do

Courtney Holbrook

Eric Daniel Smith

Kathryn Anne Lynnette Hart

Justin A. Conover

Susan L. Miller

David William Laidler

Charles Michael Romano

CLASS of 2025 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE of MASTER of ARTS IN THEOLOGY (continued)

Margaret E. Allwein

Shane P. Kapler

JeriSue Petrie

David Christopher Maloney

Fr. Divine Esua Fossoh

Jeffery Fox

Fr. Lich Xuan Dang, MSA

Cameron J. Daly

Fr. Raymond C. Marquez

Sydney Michelle March

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Blake Alexander Jaubert

Paul H. Brunner

Dominique Dalmasso

Douglas Jose Delgado Landaeta

Derek Alexander Noble

Vanessa Renée Forsblad

Eric C. Kabitzke

Bishop Payton Darby

Archdeacon Job Serebrov

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Mr. James Wahlberg

Holy Apostles College and Seminary is proud to announce that Mr. James Wahlberg, writer, speaker, and filmmaker will deliver the commencement address at the Holy Apostles 67th Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, April 26. Holy Apostles will bestow an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters (L.H.D.), honoris causa, upon Mr. Wahlberg in recognition of his notable contributions to society.

Mr. Wahblerg is the Executive Director of the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation, which was created to improve the quality of life for inner-city youth through a working partnership with other youth organizations. He is also the founder and CEO of Wahl St. Productions, a full-service production company that independently produces films, television, and web content. He has worked in the field of addiction recovery for more than 25 years and uses his talents and experiences to raise awareness about opioid addiction and point to the hope found in God.

Jim Wahberg is the author of *The Big Hustle,* a story about his personal journey of recovery. He is the Executive Producer of Fathom Event's #1 documentary of the year, *Mother Teresa: No Greater Love,* Which was released in the US in 2022 and internationally in 2023. Most recently he produced, *Jesus Thirsts: The Miracle of the Eucharist,* a documentary that takes viewers on a global journey to uncover the transformative power of the Eucharist. Jesus Thirsts won #1 Documentary of the year 2024. Currently, he is producing *Carlo Acutis: Roadmap to Reality* exploring the life of Blessed Carlo Acutis, a film that is scheduled for a limited release between April 27-29, 2025, coinciding with his April 27 canonization date.

Jim has been married to his lovely wife Benny for 30 years and they have three children. The story of his faith journey is truly inspiring.

CITATION FOR HONORARY DOCTORATE



Holy Apostles College & Seminary
proudly and gratefully bestows the

Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D),

Honoris Causa, upon

Mr. James Wahlberg

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Reverend José Humberto Ángel Martínez, M.S.A.

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ORDINATION DATES FOR SEMINARIANS

Transitional Diaconate Ordination	Diocese/Community	Ordination Date
Br. Minh Hoang Nguyen, CSF	**Congregation of the Holy Family**	**March 18, 2024**
Priestly Ordination		
Rev. Minh Hoang Nguyen, CSF	**Congregation of the Holy Family**	**July 11, 2024**
Rev. Loi Duc Tran, CSF	**Congregation of the Holy Family**	**January 26, 2024**
Deacon Hieu Huu Ho, MSA	**Missionaries of the Holy Apostles**	**May 11, 2024**
Deacon Daniel M. Valente, MSA	**Missionaries of the Holy Apostles**	**May 11, 2024**

Prayer for Vocations

Gracious God, Jesus has told us that "the harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so we ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest." Thus we pray to You with confidence in accordance with the desires of His Heart.

Help all Christians to take seriously their responsibility as citizens of the Royal Kingdom and as living stones of the Church.

Choose from among your people apostolic workers: priests, deacons, religious men and women, committed lay people, so that the Good News is proclaimed to all nations and that your mercy is known to all our brothers and sisters. Amen.

Mary Queen of Apostles, **pray for us**.

Holy Apostles, **pray for us**.

Please keep our seminarians in your prayers.

To support the Holy Apostles College and Seminary Scholarship Fund—which provides financial assistance to seminarians, sisters, and clergy—please make checks payable to "Holy Apostles College and Seminary" and write "Scholarship Fund" in the memo line.

Holy Apostles
College & Seminary

WHY SUPPORT CATHOLIC EDUCATION?

Our Vision statement reads: The Apostles, their central focus on Jesus Christ, and their evangelical outlook inform and shape the vision of HACS: "**Cultivating Catholic Leaders for the Purpose of Evangelization.**"

In his address *"What the Church expects from Catholic Universities"*, Cardinal de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, writes: "We have to strive for Catholic Universities to be good universities. But we must also bear in mind that this is not enough."

In Pope Francis's mind, Catholic Universities shouldn't just deliver quality degrees and ensure the pursuit of ambitious careers for their students. As the Pope said in his *World Day of Peace message of 2021*, the Church wishes our institutions of higher learning to shine as world universities that, by offering their educational services, are in a capacity to "pass on a system of values based on the recognition of the dignity of each person, each linguistic, ethnic and religious community and each people, as well as the fundamental rights arising from that recognition."

In short, our hope is that our Catholic education can provide more. That it can be more deeply rooted in the Christian ethos and therefore "more daring in the pursuit of truth," "more culturally creative," "more tuned to society," "more open and inclusive, capable of patient listening, constructive dialogue and better mutual understanding." *(Pope Francis, Message for the launch of the Global Compact on Education, September 2019)*

At Holy Apostles, we can make ours a sentence that Pope Francis used in 2020: "**Education is an act of hope that, from the present, looks to the future.**"

Holy Apostles College & Seminary is committed to offering an affordable Catholic education that transform the world through evangelization.

The fall semester starts August 23rd. Apply Now, Start Living Your Mission Today!

To continue this mission, we welcome your support.
Give today – HolyApostles.edu/Giving
Or call our Development Office at 860-632-3017

Live Your Mission with a great education that is affordable & authentically Catholic. Studying at Holy Apostles is more than the classes you take. Built to strengthen your gifts and form you to effectively and persuasively articulate goodness and truth.

At Holy Apostles College & Seminary we boldly proclaim our **Catholic identity**.

We are committed to providing an affordable and distinctly personal Catholic education for men and women who desire to become leaders who think with the mind of Jesus and love with His heart in the one Mystical Body, the Church.

"It is the honor and responsibility of a Catholic University to consecrate itself without reserve to the cause of truth."
– Pope St. John Paul II, Ex Corde Ecclesiae –

A Catholic education should be available to everyone. Time and cost should not stand in your way. You deserve the highest quality academics that are both convenient and affordable. Let Holy Apostles set you on the path to achieving your goals.



Programs include:

Associate of Arts

Bachelor of Arts

Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies

Master of Arts in Theology

Master of Arts in Philosophy

Master of Divinity in the New Evangelization

Master of Sacred Scripture

A Fully Accredited College

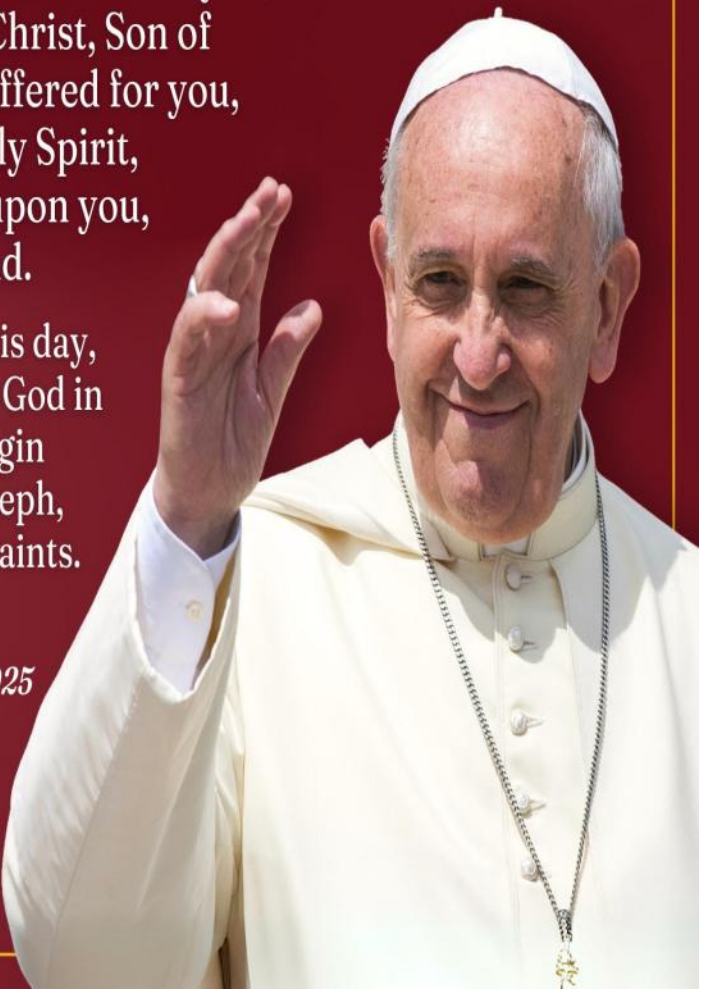
Your education is an investment and the quality of that education matters. Holy Apostles is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education, the Connecticut Office of Higher Education, and the Association of Theological Schools.

As we pray for all Christians at the moment of death,
we offer the Church's prayer for God's servant Francis:

Go forth, kind soul, from this world in the name of God
the almighty Father, who created you,
in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of
the living God,who suffered for you,
in the name of the Holy Spirit,
who was poured out upon you,
go forth, faithful friend.

May you live in peace this day,
may your home be with God in
Zion, with Mary, the Virgin
Mother of God, with Joseph,
and all the Angels and Saints.

Pope Francis
December 17, 1936 - April 21, 2025



In Memoriam: Pope Francis (1936–2025)

Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, passed away on Easter Monday, April 21, 2025, at the age of 88, after suffering a stroke. His death marks the end of a profoundly influential era for the Catholic Church and the world.

Elected in 2013 following Pope Benedict XVI's resignation, Francis became the first pope from Latin America and the first non-European in over a millennium. From the outset, he embraced humility and simplicity, choosing modest accommodations and a hands-on approach to leadership.

Francis will be remembered for his unwavering commitment to the poor, migrants, and those marginalized by society. He challenged global leaders to confront inequality and encouraged the Church to act as a "field hospital" for the wounded. His leadership focused on mercy over judgment and dialogue over division.

He also sparked long-overdue conversations within the Church on sensitive issues, including the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals, support for divorced and remarried Catholics, and the possibility of married priests in some regions. Though he stopped short of major doctrinal changes, his openness signaled a cultural shift.

A staunch advocate for the environment, his 2015 encyclical Laudato Si' called for urgent ecological action and linked environmental care to social justice. Though his papacy faced criticism—especially from conservative circles—Francis remained devoted to a vision of a more compassionate, Inclusive Church rooted in the Gospel.

He once said, "A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just." In word and deed, he lived that truth.

Requiescat in pace, Pope Francis.



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