



Holy Apostles

College & Seminary



Sixty-eighth Commencement Exercises

Saturday, April 25, 2026 | 1:00 pm
Queen of Apostles Chapel

Welcome, friends, families, and honored guests, to the 2026 Commencement Ceremony of Holy Apostles College & 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.

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.

Professional photographs will be made available to our graduating students and their guests. Guests are encouraged to take photos from their seats during the Commencement Exercises.

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.

PRELUDE

Variations on All Creatures of Our God and King (Pietro Cattaneo)

Easter Alleluia (Henry Coleman)

Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones (Noel Jones)

PROCESSIONAL

Pomp and Circumstance (Edward Elgar)

OPENING HYMN

All Creatures of Our God and King (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!

INVOCATION & WELCOME

The Very Rev. Peter S. Kucer, MSA, S.T.D.
President-Rector

HOLY APOSTLES SCHOLA

I Will Not Leave You Comfortless (Everett Titcomb)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Associate of Arts
Cecilia Basile

Bachelor of Arts
Br. Lazarus Vina, CFR

Graduate Theology
Michael McCann

Graduate Philosophy
Matthew Zickler

Graduate Pastoral Studies
Sr. Gabrielle Nguyen, SCC

Master of Divinity in the New Evangelization
Edward Hale

Master of Divinity
Rev. Mr. Phong Quang Le

Student Speaker	Ms. Hannah Barber Graduate Student Speaker
Honorary Degrees	The Rev. Msgr. Cuong M. Pham Mr. Daniel O'Connor, MA '13
Commencement Addresses	The Rev. Msgr. Cuong M. Pham Mr. Daniel O'Connor, MA '13
Chancellor Remarks	The Very Rev. Martin D. Rooney, MSA
Announcement of Class of 2026 <i>In Absentia</i>	Dr. Kristina Olsen, OCDS, D.B.A. Vice President of Academic Affairs
Conferral of Degrees	The Very Rev. Peter S. Kucer, MSA, S.T.D. President-Rector
Presentation of Degree Candidates	Dr. Kristina Olsen, OCDS, D.B.A. Vice President of Academic Affairs
Closing Remarks	The Very Rev. Peter S. Kucer, MSA, S.T.D. President-Rector

CLOSING HYMN

O God Beyond All Praising (Gustav Holst)

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 (Henry Purcell)

POSTLUDE

Organ Variation on O God Beyond All Praising (Noel Jones)

CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE OF ASSOCIATE OF ARTS

Cecilia M. Basile
Matthew Merlin Busch
Alena Castillo
Levi James Corbitt
Ada Christine Corcoran
John Benedict Crye
Mya D'Antuono
Hannah Dickerson
Joseph Tate Hilgefert
Silas Lee Hopkins
Juliette Michelle LaFrance

Mariell Landeros Mary
Grace Morris
Raphael Mueller
Michael Peterson
Brendan G. Phibbs
Samuel Rota
Lynn Therese Sigler
Lilly Gabrielle Skidd
Jacob J.G. Tawney
Louisa Turner
Hanna Williams

THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

Diego Amaro
Deirdre Archer
Albin Benny
Avery Bradley
Cooper Patrick Buckner
Amy Burkey
Michael Cacho
Miranda Cantrell
Nicholas Tomas Cavazos
Ruben Emiliano Chavarria
Liam Crandley
Joshua Culhane
Jack DeAngelis
Caitlin J. Fitzpatrick
Abigail Hannington
Michael Hoffman
Clare Elizabeth Huss
Briana Jansky
Sr. Rachel Lucia Kottoor, SCTJM

Grace Marie Law-Southworth
Grace Noelle McCormick
Joseph Molitor
Renee Montalvo
Josiah Robert Morales
Roger Mungala
Santiago Muguero
Joshua Nellis
Clarigsa Peña Llorens
Anna Pierce
Katherine Peters
Adam Renteria
Br. Eliseus of the
Mother of God, MCarm
Benjamin Rodriguez
Albert Jesse Salcido
Joshua Luke Schantz
Garth James Schulte

CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (continued)

Jackson Shelton
Rachel Smola
Jacek Szygula
Marilou J. Tan
Ashley Viens
Br. Lazarus Mary Vina, CFR
Scott Vitale

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY

Philip Ashton	Andrew S. Kubick
Brian Asmus	Matthew Lawson
Antony Youssef Assaf	James D. Lyle
Daniel Battis	Allison Lea McCord
Brady Taylor Beckerman	Jonathan Milton
Abba Adhanom Debesay Bekit	Kyle J. Myers
Mr. Jonathan Bryden	Bertram Neurohr
Rev. John Buerger	Carlos A. Parra
Julia Brown	Tomás A. Pedrozo
Marshall L. Daigre	Fr. Chris Pietraszko
Madeleine Dobrowski	Andrew Pope
Connor Dykes	Roger D. Pratt
David J. Elwertowski	John M. Quick
Brandon Fike	Paul Stephen Radatovich
David K. Ford	Jacob Ragozzine
Ronald Greene	Brice Robell
Elijah D. Grubb	Seanin Shearn
Johnathan F. Harris	Sean Wilde
Daniel J. Herrera	Scott Robert Wilkes
Christopher Antonio Jimenez-Ferreto	Matthew Zickler

CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY

Hannah Elizabeth Barber
Jeanne M. Bateman
Avery Bradley
Ryan Matthew Brandon
Cliff Daniel
Luca De Stefani
Phyllis Geraldine D'Arrigo
Maria Dimura
Michael Anthony Duch
Brian Duong
Michael Pdraig Seanan Ferreiro
Peter M. Glendinning
Fr. Kidane Yosief Ghebreyohannes
Joshua Robert Hamilton
David Paulo Hernandez
Jeremy V. Hollis
Jennifer Isolde Everly Kendall
Stephen A. Lichtenwalner
James McHale

Michael McCann
Brett Montminy
Ryleigh Marian Myers
Sr. Oanh Nguyen
Fr. Simon Otorue Okelezo
William O. Pressprich
James Robert Raymond, Jr.
Christina Ann Robidoux
Matthew James Schmidt
Cecilia Seiglie
Rev. John F. Somers
Dr. Abiel Teclehaimanot
Sr. Walet Tesfay
Carter VanKirk
Ivan Vargas
Lorena Villa-Prado
Edward Vinciguerra
Angela Marie Wilhelmi

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PASTORAL STUDIES

Abba Tesfu Tesfamariam Asghedom
Abba Solomon Weldu Bahta
Nicholas Bertocchini
Carter Carruthers
Danielle Christine Cutting
Sister Thuy Thi Dam
Bela Gross
Sean Hussey
Christopher Gardner Hurlburt
Dana Inzeo
Jeffery D. Koss

Emily Martinez
Sr. Gabrielle Nguyen, SCC
Joseph Patrick Savidge
Melanie Szlucha
Nhan Thi Tran
Chad E. Tripp
Fr. Abraham Varghese
Sr. Yeu Thi Vu
Rev. Surafiel Weldegiorgis
Andrea Zachman

CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATES

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY

Br. Robert M. Cantoni, MSA
Br. Augustine Marie Jewell, KHE
Rev. Mr. Phong Quang Le
Br. Son Ngoc Nguyen
Br. Ruben Veloz, MIC

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY NEW EVANGELIZATION

Rev. Mr. Paul Peter Bolus
Edward Hale
Patrick Maguire
Rev. Fr. Peter E. Raad, Ph.D.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN CATHOLIC PASTORAL COUNSELING FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Erica Kavalauskas
April D. Lincoln
Frank C Perham
Rev. Ray Sarkees

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Colin Smith

CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATES

POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN PASTORAL STUDIES

Patricia Connelly

POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN PHILOSOPHY

Rev. Mr. George D Angelich, Sr.

POST MASTER'S CERTIFICATE IN THEOLOGY

Rev. Victor C. Anokwute

CITATION FOR HONORARY DOCTORATE

The Rev. Msgr. Cuong M. Pham

Monsignor Cuong M. Pham, a priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn, has devoted his ministry to serving both the Universal Church and the local Church. From 2011 to 2019, he served at the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts in Rome, assisting the Holy Father in matters of canon law and contributing to major legislative initiatives while promoting the study and faithful application of canon law worldwide.

From 2019 to 2021, he served at the Apostolic Nunciature in Washington, DC, supporting the mission of the Holy See in its relationship with the Church in the United States. In 2016, Pope Francis named him a Chaplain of His Holiness, conferring upon him the title of Monsignor. At the time, he was the youngest recipient of this distinction in the Church.

Born in Saigon, Vietnam, Msgr. Pham came to the United States with his family as political refugees. He attended St. John's University in Queens before entering the seminary in Douglaston and later Huntington, New York. He was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood on June 2, 2001. He currently serves as pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Astoria, New York. Fluent in English, Italian, Spanish, and Vietnamese, with familiarity in Latin, French, and Chinese, Msgr. Pham continues to devote himself to fostering unity among cultures.



Holy Apostles College & Seminary
proudly and gratefully bestows the degree

Doctor of Sacred Theology

honoris causa

upon The Rev. Msgr. Cuong M. Pham

CITATION FOR HONORARY DOCTORATE

Mr. Daniel O'Connor, MA '13

Daniel O'Connor is a professor of Philosophy and Religion who teaches undergraduates at a State University of New York community college. Originally an engineer for GE Global Research doing quantum beam research, he switched careers and helped to establish the John Bosco House – a transitional home for homeless young men – where he then served the residents as a live-in house father.

Daniel has an undergraduate degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), and obtained a Master of Arts in Theology from Holy Apostles College & Seminary in 2013. He has since completed several years of study toward his PhD in Philosophy. An expert in eschatology, Professor O'Connor is a featured guest on popular Catholic podcasts.

Professor O'Connor is an accomplished author and speaker. His most recent book, *First Line of Defense*, aims to inspire men in their Catholic faith and was co-authored with longtime EWTN host and U.S. Grace Force host Doug Barry. It will be published by Ignatius Press in 2026.

Daniel met his wife, Regina, at Holy Apostles, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in 2013. They live in New York with their six children: Joseph, David, Mary, Luisa, John Paul, and Patrick.



Holy Apostles College & Seminary
proudly and gratefully bestows the degree

Doctor of Philosophy
honoris causa

upon Mr. Daniel O'Connor

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ORDINATION DATES

Transitional Diaconate

Mr. Phong Quang Le, Diocese of Manchester	January 10, 2026
Mr. Huan Ngoc Tran, Diocese of Lang Son-Cao Bang	April 9, 2026
Br. Christopher Orante, MIC	May 8, 2026
Br. Ruben Veloz, MIC	May 8, 2026

Ordination Date

Priestly Ordination

Dcn. Phong Quang Le, Diocese of Manchester	June 6, 2026
Dcn. Huan Ngoc Tran, Diocese of Lang Son-Cao Bang	August 4, 2026

Ordination Date

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.

WHY SUPPORT CATHOLIC EDUCATION?

To cultivate Catholic leaders to be coworkers in the vineyard of the Lord. 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.”

These sentiments are echoed by Pope Leo XIV, who reminds us that Catholic universities are called to become “pathways of the mind towards God” and seek “the development of the human person, forming minds capable of critical thought, hearts rooted in faith, and citizens committed to the common good.”

As the Holy Father reminds us, “The Catholic university continues to be one of the best tools the Church offers to our age,” an expression of God’s love for the human person. Catholic higher education is not simply about academic excellence or professional formation but about forming the whole person.

Pope Leo XIV reflected in 2025, “Wisdom is the natural place of encounter and dialogue with all cultures and all forms of thought,” because in Christ-Wisdom, we discover what is both most faithful to our belief and most universal to human understanding.

At Holy Apostles, we take to heart his invitation: “May the loving knowledge of Him be the impulse for a new evangelization in the field of Catholic higher education.”

(Pope Leo XIV, 28th General Assembly of the International Federation of Catholic Universities, 2025)

Holy Apostles College & Seminary is committed to offering an affordable Catholic education that transforms the world through evangelization. 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 and authentically Catholic. Studying at Holy Apostles is more than the classes you take. Our programs are 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 who 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
Graduate Certificates
Post-Master’s Certificates

The fall semester starts August 29.

Apply now, start living your mission today!

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.



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