

MOUNT MARTY UNIVERSITY



COMMENCEMENT

MAY 2, 2026

1:00 P.M.

CIMPL ARENA, YANKTON, SD

2026 COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

PROCESSIONAL

“Pomp and Circumstance”

Marches, Op. 39, No. 1

by Sir Edward Elgar

Led by Dr. Paul Anders

Academic Senate Chair

NATIONAL ANTHEM

“The Star Spangled Banner”

by Francis Scott Key

Mount Marty University Choir

Dr. Tyler Thress, Director

INVOCATION

Rory Forest '26

“The Mount Marty
University Prayer”

by Anthony Maglione

WELCOME

Dr. Mark Brown

President

STUDENT AWARDS

Dr. James Barnett '99, '23

Director, Nurse Anesthesia

Dr. Danielle Pierotti

Vice President of Health Affairs and

Chief Nursing Officer

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Michael “Mick” Gibbs

President and CEO

Avera Heart Hospital

HOODING AND

PRESENTATION OF

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

Dr. William J. Miller

Provost

Dr. James Barnett

Director, Nurse Anesthesia

Dr. Deborah McCuin

Director, Graduate Teacher

Education

Dr. David Pearce

Executive Director, Biotechnology

Dr. Suzanne England

Director, Nurse Practitioner

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Mark Brown

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

WELCOME

Mitchell Lonneman '21, '24

Mount Marty Alumni Council

BENEDICTION

Jackie Hanna '26

RECESSIONAL

“Procession of the Nobles”
from Mlada

by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Led by Dr. Paul Anders

It is customary for the audience to stand during the Processional, National Anthem, Invocation, Benediction and Recessional.

MOUNT MARTY PRAYER

O God,

Creator of all things and source of wisdom and knowledge, send your Holy Spirit to guide our thoughts, words, and actions so that everything we do will begin with your inspiration and continue with your guidance and blessing. Help us to speak and act with integrity so that we may uphold the values of Mount Marty University. May we use our talents and abilities in the best ways possible so that You may be glorified and our neighbor served.

We pray these things through Jesus, your Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN.

*The Mount Marty Prayer was written by
Father Thomas Wordekemper, OSB, '79.*

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

by Michael “Mick” Gibbs

Michael “Mick” Gibbs has served as president and CEO of the Avera Heart Hospital since 2017. He is also the co-leader of the Avera Cardiovascular Service Line, which delivers coordinated, high-quality care across Avera. Gibbs is in his second year serving as an adjunct professor of BioEthics in the Biotechnology Management Graduate Program at Mount Marty.

Gibbs’ Catholic faith journey began as an infant on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in Poplar, Montana, and continued through high school, where he became president of the Diocese of Wichita’s Catholic Youth Organization. He has served as a Eucharistic Minister, Mass Coordinator, and recently became a Benedictine Oblate at Sacred Heart Monastery.

He holds a Bachelor of Speech Communication from the University of North Dakota, a Master of Biomedical Ethics from Case Western Reserve University, and a Master of Health Care Administration from the University of Minnesota, where he was bestowed with the Douglass Award for high merit and promise.

Gibbs has 26 years of experience in health care administration. He began in 2000 at Rapid City Regional Hospital, now Monument Health, as a postgraduate administrative fellow. He advanced to CEO in 2012 and left in 2016. Gibbs also held senior leadership roles at Gordon Memorial Hospital in Nebraska and Sanford Health in Fargo, North Dakota, prior to his time with Avera.

He advanced to Fellowship Status in the American College of Healthcare Executives in 2007. While at Sanford Health, Gibbs was named the American College of Healthcare Executives Early Careerist Awardee. During his time at Avera, he was the recipient of the American College of Healthcare Executives Senior-Level Healthcare Executive award.

Gibbs has held academic roles at the University of South Dakota School of Business, the University of North Dakota School of Medicine, and currently at the University of South Dakota School of Medicine and Mount Marty University.

He and his wife of 27 years, Michelle, have three daughters: Abigail, Ava and Claire.

DOCTOR OF NURSE ANESTHESIA PRACTICE

SUMMER SHAW ANTHONY

Jefferson, GA

HEATHER FRAZEUR

Redwood Falls, MN

MACKENZIE BARTEL

Rochester, MN

AUSTIN HANSEN

Montevideo, MN

CHANCE C. BILA

Chadron, NE

SHAELYNNE ROSELLA HEITSCH

Hermosa, SD

ALLISON BLACK

Elk Point, SD

SHELBY LYNN HICKMAN

Sioux Falls, SD

CLAIRE BROCK

Albertville, MN

CARLY HOHMAN

Sioux Falls, SD

SHYLAH CASSIDY

Elysian, MN

MARGARET HORTNESS

Canton, SD

MEGHAN KATHLEEN CHARLEY

Minot, ND

LYSSA HOVELSON

Viroqua, WI

MATTHEW CHRABASCZ

Dayton, OH

LAURA JARAMILLO

North Oaks, MN

JACOB RYAN CONAWAY

Sioux Falls, SD

TYLER S. JOYAL

Rapid City, SD

PIERCE CREVIER

Sioux Falls, SD

SARAH ELIZABETH LEW

Boise, ID

MATTHEW CRISPO

Salt Lake City, UT

LAURA I. MACE

Aspen, CO

KRYSTAL FELDMAN

Athens, GA

GRAYDEN MELICK

Sioux Falls, SD

HARCHIE FIGUERRES

Fargo, ND

JARED MURPHY

Watertown, SD

HANNA MUTSCHELKNAUS

Brandon, SD

QUYEN NGUYEN

Omaha, NE

TRUMAN NORD

Harrisburg, SD

BROOKANNE NOELLE PFAFFLE

Okoboji, IA

ABBY PRESZLER

Menno, SD

MAKENZIE ELIZABETH REICHELT

Sioux Falls, SD

HANNAH C. SAVELKOUL

Albert Lea, MN

HANNAH SCHMIDTLEIN

Box Elder, SD

KAYLA STAMMER

Vermillion, SD

ASHLEY BOPHANY STEADMAN

Salem, UT

KIMBERLY A. THESING

Rochester, MN

TYLER THORSON

Louisville, CO

NICHOLAS WESTPHALEN

Sioux Falls, SD

MASTER OF EDUCATION

TASHLYNNE BADGER

Coaching Leadership

Brandon, SD

MCKENZIE GRAY

Coaching Leadership

Imperial Valley, CA

SAMUEL F. GUEST

Coaching Leadership

Blue Springs, MO

J.D. HUBERTY

Coaching Leadership

Elk River, MN

ALEC LARABY

Coaching Leadership

Winter Park, CO

PEYTON RILEY LUDEMANN

Coaching Leadership

Austin, TX

CONOR MERTON

Coaching Leadership

Perth, Australia

ANDREW JOHN SORENSON

Coaching Leadership

Manhattan, KS

MASTER OF SCIENCE

GABRIELLA CECILIA ABAD*

Biotechnology Management
Fort Collins, CO

ERIN ASHLYN CITARELLA

Biotechnology Management
Superior, CO

CINDY ODALIS ARCHILA*

Biotechnology Management
Leesburg, VA

BROOKE MORGAN ENNEY

Biotechnology Management
Arvada, CO

SHELBY SORAYA ARDEHALI

Biotechnology Management
Thornton, CO

BENJAMIN HAWKINS*

Biotechnology Management
Renner, SD

RONALD JAMES BELLES JR.*

Biotechnology Management
Loveland, CO

TIERNEY ROBINSON HOPKINS*

Biotechnology Management
Casper, WY

ZACHARY BENDER*

Biotechnology Management
Rapid City, SD

ETHAN KING

Biotechnology Management
Bloomington, IL

JONATHON COLE BLAKELEY

Biotechnology Management
Denver, CO

CHRISTOPHER JEFFREY KOVACIC

Biotechnology Management
Cleveland, OH

SOPHIA GRACE BLUMENSTEIN

Biotechnology Management
Maui, HI

XANDRIA KOVACIC

Biotechnology Management
Camp Hill, PA

CARLEY BOULGER

Biotechnology Management
Loveland, CO

CAMILA MEZA HERNANDEZ

Biotechnology Management
Philadelphia, PA

RILEY J. BOYLE

Biotechnology Management
Aurora, CO

HOSEIN MIRAZI*

Biotechnology Management
Rapid City, SD

SIERRA T. BROWN*

Biotechnology Management
Englewood, CO

ELLIE NELSON*

Biotechnology Management
Avon, CO

EMILY NELSON

Biotechnology Management
Bayfield, CO

COURTNEY LYDIA PIMENTEL

Biotechnology Management
Burlington, CO

CATHERINE SYDNEY RAIHALL

Biotechnology Management
West Chester, PA

ANDREW D. RAMIREZ

Biotechnology Management
Las Vegas, NV

JUSTINA RICE

Biotechnology Management
Georgetown, KY

SOPHIA WARD

Biotechnology Management
Fort Collins, CO

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

KATIE ANN AASE

Family Nurse Practitioner
Sioux Falls, SD

KRISTINA MARIE BOLDT

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Omaha, NE

DRAKE ALLEN BURNISON^

Family Nurse Practitioner
Huron, SD

JAMIE KAY WERNER CRUM

Family Nurse Practitioner
Cherokee, IA

ALEXA MARIE DAUTCEHAJIC

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Sioux Falls, SD

BRITTNY ALIYA-KETURAH

DRELLACK
Family Nurse Practitioner

RORY ARTHUR FOREST

Family Nurse Practitioner
Clark, SD

PAIGE T. GOLDADE

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Brandon, SD

JACKIE LYNN HANNA

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Lemmon, SD

FAITH ELIZABETH HENNEN

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Minneota, MN

DEVAN MARIE HOEKMAN

Family Nurse Practitioner
Tulare, SD

LINDSAY NICOLE JERVIK

Family Nurse Practitioner
Hudson, SD

JASON M JOHNSON

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Salem, OR

ANGEL MARIE JOHNSTON^

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Astoria, OR

SARAH J. KADRMAS

Family Nurse Practitioner
Washburn, ND

KARLY JO KENNELLY^

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Saint Thomas, ND

ALEX NICOLE KIRBY

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Norfolk, NE

SHERIANN LEMKE

Family Nurse Practitioner
Broadus, MT

BRITTANY MICHELLE LONG*
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Woodbine, IA

MADLYN ELIZABETH MONROE
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Rapid City, SD

NICOLE PARKER
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Rapid City, SD

VIRGINIA M. SARGENT
Family Nurse Practitioner
Spearfish, SD

COURTNEY L. SMITH
Family Nurse Practitioner
Saint Charles, MN

KIRA A. WILDER
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner
Tempe, AZ

ELIZABETH WOOKEY
Family Nurse Practitioner
Watertown, SD

*** INDICATES DECEMBER 2025 GRADUATE**

^ INDICATES AUGUST 2026 CANDIDATE

Names listed in this publication and participation in the commencement exercises may not be construed as documentation of completion of degree requirements. Certification of the conferral of a degree is by official transcript noting degree completion.

ACADEMIC REGALIA

The tradition of academic costume has a history of nearly eight centuries. In medieval Europe, all townsmen wore long flowing robes or gowns. The materials and colors varied greatly, according to wealth and rank of the individual and were governed by royal decree. Gradually, distinctive gowns developed for the various professions, trades and guilds. This tradition survives today in gowns of religious orders, the judiciary and the academic regalia.

Most distinctive of the academic regalia is the hood, which identifies the graduate degree and the institution where the degree was awarded. The hood is lined with silk in the official colors of the institution. The velvet edging indicates the degree as follows:

Arts, Letters, Humanities: White
Commerce, Accountancy, Business: Drab
Education: Light Blue
Fine Arts: Brown
Music: Pink
Nursing: Apricot
Philosophy: Dark Blue
Physical Education: Sage Green
Science: Golden Yellow
Theology: Scarlet

PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION

The Presidential Medallion represents the authority granted to the President of the institution by the Board of Trustees. It carries the seal of the university as well as four banners with the core values: awareness of God, community, hospitality and lifelong learning. They serve as a constant reminder that these values are believed in and carried out from the leader of the institution on to the various internal and external publics that Mount Marty University serves. On the bottom of the medallion are the words; scientia (knowledge), veritas (truth) and sapientia (wisdom). It is a symbol that will inspire the quest for knowledge by the faculty and our students. It is a symbol that will inspire the pursuit of spiritual wholeness for all the members of our community.

MOUNT MARTY UNIVERSITY

Mount Marty University is a Catholic, Benedictine institution of higher learning founded in 1936 by the Sisters of Saint Benedict of Yankton, South Dakota. The institution is named in memory of Martin Marty, a Swiss monk, who came to the Dakota Territory in 1876 and became the territory's first Catholic bishop. As bishop, he invited the Benedictine Sisters to establish a religious community in South Dakota.

The university functioned as a junior college for women for 15 years; in 1951 it awarded its first Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. In 1969, the college became coeducational. Associate of Arts degree programs were introduced in 1975 in areas compatible with already existing programs. Graduate study came to the institution with the first Master of Science degree being awarded in 1983, followed by the first Master of Art degree in 1999. The first doctorate in Nurse Anesthesia Practice was approved in 2016. Mount Marty University is the first private university in South Dakota to offer doctoral degrees.

Mount Marty University's main campus is located in Yankton, SD. There are two additional locations in Watertown, SD, and Sioux Falls, SD.

Mount Marty University-Watertown has been serving northeast South Dakota since 1972 and offers numerous undergraduate degrees in non-traditional formats. This non-residential learning environment offers flexible options that cater to all students and working professionals looking to enhance their lives and further their careers through higher education.

Sioux Falls is home to the Mount Marty Doctorate of Nurse Anesthesia Practice graduate program, a program that has been producing successful nurse anesthetists since 1942. This 36-month program prepares the next generation of advanced practice nursing professionals for commitment to excellence in clinical care, advancing the profession and service to the human community. The Sioux Falls location is also home to Mount Marty University's Master of Science in Biotechnology degree and the Master of Science in Regulatory Science degree, both the first such degrees in the state.

In keeping with the Benedictine tradition, the university exists as a community of learners. Primary emphasis is placed on the development of each person as a complete human being with intellectual competence; professional and personal skills; and a composite of moral, spiritual and social values.

MOUNT MARTY UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Mount Marty University, an academic community in the Catholic Benedictine liberal arts tradition, prepares students for a contemporary world of work, service to the human community and personal growth.

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