

MOUNT MARTY UNIVERSITY



COMMENCEMENT

MAY 2, 2026

10:00 A.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

Taya Pawlowski '26

**“The Mount Marty
University Prayer”**

by Anthony Maglione

WELCOME

Dr. Mark Brown

President

STUDENT AWARDS AND RIBBON CEREMONY

Dr. Katie Harrell

Vice President for Student Success

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Michael “Mick” Gibbs

President and CEO

Avera Heart Hospital

PRESENTATION OF

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

Dr. William J. Miller

Provost

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Mark Brown

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

WELCOME

Mitchell Lonneman '21, '24

Mount Marty Alumni Council

BENEDICTION

Father Grant Lacey

Chaplain and Director of Campus

Ministry

“Come to the Water”

arr. Lynda Hasseler

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.*

CLASS RIBBON CEREMONY

In 2020, Mount Marty embarked on a new phase of our history by changing our name from College to University. To commemorate the moment, our students and administration created a new tradition to be conducted during the commencement ceremony to honor and celebrate the graduation of the senior class and the introduction of the next.

During the Class Ribbon Ceremony, the graduating president of the Student Government Association will be joined on stage by the president-elect. Together, they will tie a ribbon representing the new senior class to the shield. The ribbon, selected by members of the incoming senior class, may contain a Bible verse, quote or other meaningful representation intended to forever mark their impact on the Mount Marty community.

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.

BACHELOR OF ARTS

BAYLOR GOLDEN ALEXANDER

History
Georgetown, TX

SYDNEY RAE ALTENBURG*

History
Secondary Education
Harrisburg, SD
Cum Laude, Phi Alpha Theta

JUAN LUKAS AMAYA CAMACHO^

Business Administration
Bogotá, Colombia

DANIEL ANTONIO ANDERICO MOYA

Exercise Science
Caracas, Venezuela

HUNTER BAILEY

Elementary Education
Bridgewater, SD
Cum Laude

SIGNE VOGEL BANG

Exercise Science
Copenhagen, Denmark
Summa Cum Laude

ZACHARY JOHN BERGER

Criminal Justice
Crofton, NE
Cum Laude, Alpha Phi Sigma

MICHAEL BEYER

Exercise Science
Crooks, SD
Cum Laude

KAEL BLAUWET

Exercise Science
Larchwood, IA
Magna Cum Laude

EMMA DAWN BLOMME

Criminal Justice
Rapid City, SD
*Summa Cum Laude, Alpha Phi Sigma,
Psi Chi*

JAMES BRINSLEY*

Accounting
Seguin, TX

JADON LUCAS BRITS

Exercise Science
Benoni, South Africa
Summa Cum Laude

JACOB ROBERT CARBAJAL

Exercise Science
Oxnard, California
Cum Laude

ZACHARY MATTHEW CARLSON

Business Administration
Sioux Falls, SD

ZACHARY CLARK

Exercise Science
Omaha, NE
Magna Cum Laude

AMIR AHMINE CONLEY*

Business Administration
San Diego, CA

MAELIE CULBERT

Elementary Education
Special Education
Parkston, SD
Magna Cum Laude

ASPEN DAHL

Business Administration
Madison, SD
Cum Laude

OLIVER WOLFGANG DANZER

Exercise Science
Eschenbach, Germany
Cum Laude

DYLAN LEONARDO

DÁVILA AVAL*
Business Administration
Lima, Perú

**JOSÉ GUILHERME
DE ARAÚJO AMADO**

Exercise Science
João Pessoa, Brazil

RYAN MATTHEW DOBBS*

Criminal Justice
Alpine, CA
Summa Cum Laude, Alpha Phi Sigma

MATTHEW MALACHAI

ELLIOTT JR.
Exercise Science
San Diego, CA

SETH FARGO

Business Administration
Recreation Management and Tourism
Gayville, SD
Cum Laude

KAYDENCE BREANN FERGUSON

Exercise Science
Fortuna, CA

LANE WILLIAM FERGUSON

Business Administration
Sioux Falls, SD

LOGAN B. FERRARI

Business Administration
Brookhaven, NY

ALEXIS FOLKERS

Accounting
Crofton, NE
Magna Cum Laude

MIA ELIZABETH FURST

Human Service
Norfolk, NE

MOLLY KATHERINE GALLEGOS

Exercise Science
Omaha, NE

JOSE GARCIA

Criminal Justice
Santa Ana, CA
Alpha Phi Sigma

SAWYER L. GOEDEN

Pre-Professional Studies
Tabor, SD

IGNACIO GÓMEZ VÁZQUEZ

Business Administration
Sevilla, España
Summa Cum Laude

NICHOLAS DAVID HEATH*

Physical Education
Secondary Education
Ojibwa, WI

ZACHARY ADAM HEBDA

Business Administration
Yankton, SD

MITCHELL LANE HERRBOLDT*

Human Service
Sioux Falls, SD

TAYLOR ALEXIS HINOJOSA

Criminal Justice
Spring, TX
Magna Cum Laude, Alpha Phi Sigma

KYLE G. HIRSCH
Business Administration
Gayville, SD

CONNER HOCHSTEIN
Elementary Education
Special Education
Hartington, NE

MACALA HOOD
Business Administration
Alliance, NE

JAYDEN HORRACH*
Exercise Science
Newton, IA

KAYLEEN JACINTO
Business Administration
Fillmore, CA

JACOB ANDREW JENSEN
Business Administration
Meckling, SD
Cum Laude

WOUT KERKHOFS
Business Administration
Oirschot, The Netherlands
Cum Laude

RACHEL KNAPP
Elementary Education
Aberdeen, SD
Cum Laude

SHUGO KONDO*
Business Administration
Shizuoka, Japan

JACOB LAMBETH
Interdisciplinary Studies
Paso Robles, CA
Cum Laude

MOLLY LARSON
Elementary Education
Special Education
Gayville, SD
Summa Cum Laude

ZACHARY LEUSCHEN
Business Administration
Burlington, IA
Magna Cum Laude

ASMEROM MAHAMMAD^
Business Administration
Sioux Falls, SD

**EDWIN JAVIER
MARQUEZ REYES**
Exercise Science
Platteville, CO
Cum Laude

KAELA MARTINEZ
English
Secondary Education
Sioux Falls, SD
Cum Laude

CARL DEAN MASSA
Biology
Pre-Professional Studies
Edgemont, SD

DEVON MAYES
Psychology
Monrovia, CA

BROOKLYN GRACE MCNAC
Pre-Professional Studies
Cleveland, OK
Magna Cum Laude

GONZALO MEDINA*
Business Administration
Guayaquil, Ecuador

GABRIELLA GRACE MILLER

Exercise Science
New Underwood, SD
Magna Cum Laude

SAVIOR VALENTINE MKULIA

Theology
Masasi, Tanzania
Magna Cum Laude

EMMA MOLSKNESS

Accounting
Dell Rapids, SD
Cum Laude

EMILY JANE MOODY

Exercise Science
Mitchell, SD
Summa Cum Laude

MARCOS MORENO NAVARRO

Accounting
Business Administration
Porto Cristo, Spain
Summa Cum Laude

DANIEL MOSARAH

Exercise Science
Salida, CA

**JEREMY JOHNATHAN
PATERSON***

Accounting
Business Administration
Winnetka, CA
Magna Cum Laude

DAVID JOHN PHILLIPS

English Writing
Crofton, NE

DANIEL A. PIERCE

Psychology
Oxnard, CA
Summa Cum Laude, Psi Chi

JASON PROUDFIT*

Recreation Management and Tourism
Eugene, OR

AVERY R. REIFENRATH

Exercise Science
Yankton, SD
Cum Laude

**WILLIS JON STANAGE
ROBERTSON**

Business Administration
Vermillion, SD

TABITHA SADLER

Elementary Education
Mitchell, SD
Summa Cum Laude

TYLER SANDOVAL^

Business Administration
Omaha, NE

TEEGAN SCHLIMGEN*

Physical Education
Secondary Education
Sioux Falls, SD

**THALEN JOSEPH ILIJA
SCHROEDER**

Accounting
Business Administration
Epiphany, SD
Summa Cum Laude

KIERRA CHANTEL SILK*

Psychology
Sisseton, SD
Magna Cum Laude

CORBIN SOHLER

Physical Education
Secondary Education
Yankton, SD

ZELIE SORENSEN

Accounting
O'Neill, NE
Summa Cum Laude

JACOB GARY STOLNACK^

Exercise Science
El Segundo, CA

ANDREA BARBARA SUCHA*

Business Administration
Verdigré, NE
Magna Cum Laude

CADE SUDBECK

Elementary Education
Omaha, NE
Cum Laude

JEDIDIAH J. SULLIVAN^

Exercise Science
Rapid City, SD

**MOLIBETSANE RAYMOND
THETSANE**

Exercise Science
Maseru, Lesotho
Cum Laude

TEVIS TYLER VANCE

Exercise Science
Blackfoot, ID

DANIEL JOSEPH VONNEGUT

Business Administration
Hayward, CA
Magna Cum Laude

JOSEY EILEEN WAHLSTROM

Physical Education
Secondary Education
Custer, SD
Cum Laude

MICHAEL WALLIN

Exercise Science
Tea, SD

JACK T. WARE*

Exercise Science
Bennington, VT

JULIA ANN WEBER

Pre-Professional Studies
Emery, SD
Summa Cum Laude, Psi Chi

KAYLEE WHATLEY

Exercise Science
Sturgis, SD
Summa Cum Laude

DEEGAN WILLIAMS

Business Administration
Gillette, WY
Magna Cum Laude

LEAH WILLIAMS

Mathematics Education
Huron, SD
Summa Cum Laude

MYA RENEE ZOHNER

Business Administration
Battle Creek, NE
Summa Cum Laude

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

ZACHARY GONSOR^

Radiologic Technology
Aberdeen, SD
Cum Laude

ISAAC HEGDAHL^

Radiologic Technology
Nunda, SD

BROOKLYN NIELSEN^

Radiologic Technology
Lake Benton, MN

MASON PARKER^

Radiologic Technology
Winter, WI

ANGELINA PHOTHISARN^

Radiologic Technology
NE
Magna Cum Laude

ABBIGAIL SCHMIDT^

Radiologic Technology
Yankton, SD
Summa Cum Laude

LANDON SCHUKNECHT^

Radiologic Technology
Akron, IA
Summa Cum Laude

MCKENNA SPURRELL^

Radiologic Technology
Wakonda, SD

RILEY MADISON THEROES

Medical Laboratory Science
Wisner, NE
Summa Cum Laude

TAGUE CARTER TVEDT^

Radiologic Technology
Clear Lake, SD
Magna Cum Laude

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

JUAN JOSE BONDOC III
Laredo, TX

COURTNEY J. BRINK
Wayne, NE
Summa Cum Laude

BRIELLE GRACE BUSSINGER
Bassett, NE

ALYSSA L. CARLSON
Wayne, NE
Summa Cum Laude

REBECCA DIANE CLIMER
Crofton, NE
Psi Chi, Sigma Theta Tau

KYLEE KAY MARIE COX
Laramie, WY

ALEXIS ANNE EVEN
Parker, SD
Cum Laude

MAKAYLA A. GRAUNKE
Rockford, MN
Cum Laude

KYRA GRIESE
Aberdeen, SD

GRACE CARRINGTON HOLYS
Columbus, NE
Summa Cum Laude

JACOB KUENY
Rembrandt, IA

TATUM LIGTENBERG
Sturgis, SD
Summa Cum Laude

CHRISTA JOY LOTZ
Yankton, SD
Summa Cum Laude

TAYA RAY PAWLOWSKI
Gann Valley, SD
Cum Laude

CARSON RONALD PEDERSEN
Hayti, SD

DEAGAN CALE PUPPE
Coleridge, NE

ALEXANDRA RAE SALAZAR
Laredo, TX
Magna Cum Laude

MARY HOPE SIMPSON
Omaha, NE
Cum Laude

SIDNEY THUE
Brandon, SD

NATHANIEL TRINIDAD
San Antonio, TX

WILLIAM PHILLIP WALTHER III
Hill City, SD

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS

CHAD LARSON[^]

Business Administration
Alta, IA

JOSIAH D. A. NEGLEY[^]

Business Administration
Omaha, NE

EDWARD LEWIS

Business Administration
Omaha, NE

ZACHARY R. NORTHEY[^]

Business Administration
Lincoln, NE

JORGE L. MARTINEZ[^]

Business Administration
Tama, IA

CHRISTOPHER SANDBLOM[^]

Business Administration
Des Moines, IA

*** 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.

GRADUATION HONORS

Graduation honors are awarded to students earning bachelor degrees in recognition of superior scholarship. Latin honors are based on December grade point average.

Summa Cum Laude is the honorary title used to signify those with a cumulative grade point average of 3.9 and is recognized by navy/gold honor cords.

Magna Cum Laude is the honorary title used to signify those with a cumulative grade point average of 3.7 and is recognized by gold/white honor cords.

Cum Laude is the honorary title used to signify those with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 and is recognized by navy/white honor cords.

Alpha Phi Sigma is the honor society for criminal justice and is recognized by blue/gold cords and gold sash.

Phi Alpha Theta is an American history honor society and is recognized by a blue/red cord and red sash.

Psi Chi is the international honor society for psychology, which includes psychology and human service disciplines, recognized by a platinum/navy blue cord and platinum stole.

Sigma Tau Delta is the national English honor society and is recognized by a pin.

Sigma Theta Tau is the international honor society of nurses and is recognized by a purple and white cord.

Honors Program is Mount Marty University's program to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional academic skill and who explore areas above and beyond the standard classroom requirements and is recognized by a gold cord.

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.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2025 - 2026

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