



April 16, 2025

Dear Members of the Saint Michael's Community,

With joy and gratitude, I am pleased to announce the distinguished individuals who will join us in celebrating our 2025 Commencement this spring. Each of them exemplifies the values we cherish at Saint Michael's—faith in action, compassion through service, and the courage to use one's gifts for the greater good.

We are honored to welcome **Fr. Gregory Boyle, S.J.**, founder of Homeboy Industries, as our **2025 Commencement Speaker**. A Jesuit priest, acclaimed author, and internationally respected advocate for social justice, Fr. Boyle has transformed countless lives through his steadfast commitment to kinship with those on the margins. His message of radical inclusion, dignity, and hope deeply resonates with our mission and will provide a powerful send-off to our graduates as they embark on their own journeys of service and purpose.

We are also proud to recognize two exceptional honorary degree recipients:

**Rita Whalen McCaffrey**, Trinity College Class of 1959 and founder of Dismas of Vermont, whose life's work has forged pathways of hope and healing for individuals transitioning from incarceration. Since opening the first Dismas House in 1986, Rita

has nurtured a statewide network of welcoming homes grounded in mercy, restoration, and human dignity.

**Phish**, the iconic Vermont-based rock band, whose musical innovation, cultural influence, and far-reaching philanthropy have inspired and united communities. Band members Trey Anastasio, Jon Fishman, Mike Gordon, and Page McConnell have long used their platform to advance causes such as food security, disaster relief, and environmental sustainability—demonstrating how joy, creativity, and generosity can be powerful agents of change.

Together, this year's honorees reflect the many paths through which one can lead a life of meaning—through ministry, music, advocacy, and everyday acts of courage. We look forward to honoring their extraordinary contributions and sharing in their stories during what promises to be a memorable and moving Commencement weekend.

Warmest Regards,

Richard Plumb, Ph.D.

President