

NEWS RELEASE

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University of Saint Mary Ushers in New Class of 'Saint Marians' At Commencement Ceremony

1 p.m. Saturday, May 12, 2007

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—The University of Saint Mary will usher in a new class of Saint Marians, as it confers degrees for the Class of 2007 at Commencement, while honoring a special Saint Marian in the process.

Commencement 2007 will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, May 12 in McGilley Field House, on the University of Saint Mary campus, Leavenworth, Kan. There are 239 graduates in the Class of 2007.

Of the 239 graduates in the USM Class of 2007, 101 students will graduate with bachelor's degrees, while 138 students will graduate with master's degrees. The Class of 2007 holds a unique degree of distinction, as it was the first class to enter Saint Mary following its transition from Saint Mary College to the University of Saint Mary in 2003.

The University of Saint Mary will also honor Board of Trustees member Charles J. Berkel with an honorary doctoral degree at Commencement. Berkel has been an active member of the University of Saint Mary Board of Trustees since 1999. A U.S. Navy veteran and graduate of the University of Illinois, Berkel has spent much of his life as a civil engineer. In 1959, he opened Berkel & Company Contractors, a concrete foundation company that works throughout the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean. Today, he is currently the chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of the company he started nearly 50 years ago. He and his late wife Antoinette have three children and four grandchildren.

According to University of Saint Mary president Sister Diane Steele, Berkel embodies the mission and vision of the university.

“From time to time, we recognize individuals who embody the mission and vision of the university with honorary degrees for achievement or service,” Steele said. “Charles Berkel is a man of generous spirit, genuine humility, who has built his business on integrity, inventiveness and respect for people. Decades of charitable and professional service speak to the man he is and to his contributions to the greater Kansas City community. It is our privilege to honor him.”

The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan. Call (913) 758-6115 for more information about all of the 2007 graduation proceedings.

The University of Saint Mary is a private, co-educational applied liberal arts university founded by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations at 11413 Pflumm in Overland Park and inside Providence Medical Center at 8929 Parallel Parkway in Kansas City, Kan.

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