

NEWS RELEASE

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New Students Welcomed to University of Saint Mary with Traditional, Candlelit Matriculation Ceremony

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—The University of Saint Mary officially welcomed its newest students—including freshmen and transfer students—to its time-honored community at the university’s tradition-rich matriculation ceremony on Wednesday, Aug. 24, in Annunciation Chapel on USM’s Leavenworth Campus. As is tradition, Matriculation precedes the official start of fall classes on Thursday, Aug. 25.

USM’s freshman class of about 100 students filled the chapel for the ceremony, proceeding into the structure from the center of campus. Following a greeting from USM President Sister Diane Steele, the students lit candles at the chapel altar, then formed a “circle of light” around the building’s interior. Administration, faculty, and upperclassmen in attendance offered a blessing of the new students before they proceeded outside. The lights of their candles symbolized both their potential, and the university’s mission being carried out into the world.

“As we commit ourselves to you, we ask you to commit yourselves to giving your best effort whether in the classroom, on the field, in the resident halls, or on the stage, for we believe in excellence in all things,” President Steele said. “You have entered your name in the roll; today you will be called by name as a member of the Saint Mary Community. This day you become Saint Marians.”

The University of Saint Mary is one of only a handful of American universities with a formal matriculation ceremony. Among institutes of higher learning, the tradition of a matriculation ceremony dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries. USM began holding its version of the welcoming ceremony in the 1980s.

You can view images from USM’s matriculation on www.stmary.edu, or on the university’s official Facebook page.

The start of the new school year represents several firsts and superlatives for the University of Saint Mary. The new freshman class continues the university’s recent string of sizable freshman classes; the nursing program—which includes juniors and seniors—has its largest ever crop of first-year students; the Spires Football program welcomed its first female player in kicker Meya Bizer; and the university’s proposed first doctoral program, the Doctor of Physical Therapy, has cleared a major hurdle in its development.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic co-educational applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations in Overland Park and Kansas City, Kan. Visit www.stmary.edu for more information.