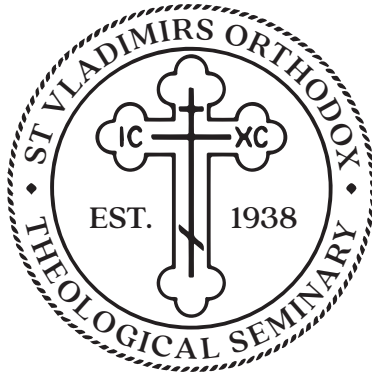




ST. VLADIMIR'S



ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



2025

COMMENCEMENT

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 2025



2:30 PM





Commencement Exercises

*Please silence all mobile phones
and other electronic devices.*

During the Procession: The Troparion of Pascha

Opening of the Commencement Exercises

THE MOST BLESSED TIKHON, Archbishop of Washington,
Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and Chairman of
the Board of Trustees

Welcoming Remarks

DR. IONUȚ-ALEXANDRU TUDORIE, Interim President and Academic Dean

Salutatory Address

MS. JAIME RALL

Commencement Address

THE VERY REV. DR. PAUL TARAZI

Conferral of Degrees on the Graduates of the Class of 2025

DR. IONUȚ-ALEXANDRU TUDORIE, Interim President and Academic Dean

Conferral of the St. Macrina Award

MS. LAURA IONESCU, President of the Student Council

Citation for Protodeacon Peter Danilchick

DR. IONUȚ-ALEXANDRU TUDORIE, Interim President and Academic Dean

Valedictory Address

THE REV. DN. MATTHEW WILEY

Gladsome Light by Jaime Rall (M.A. '25)

Koinonikon of Pascha—“*Receive the Body...*” by Tikey Zes, in memoriam
(1927–2025)

St. Vladimir’s Seminary Chorale,
directed by Zachariah Mandell

Closing Remarks

THE MOST BLESSED TIKHON, Archbishop of Washington,
Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and Chairman of the Board
of Trustees

Closing Prayer: “Shine, Shine, O New Jerusalem”

Recessional: The Troparion of Pascha

A reception follows.

*The SVS Press Bookstore will remain open after the Commencement Exercises.
Directions are posted on campus.*



The Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The valedictorian, who delivers the valediction, or parting words, at commencement, is normally the student who has earned the highest grade point average, with consideration also being given to performance in all other aspects of seminary life.

The salutatorian, who delivers the salutation, or greeting, at commencement, is normally the student who has earned the second-highest grade point average, with consideration also being given to performance in all other aspects of seminary life.

Commencement speakers must have completed at least forty-eight credits at St. Vladimir's Seminary as full-time degree candidates. Neither the valedictorian nor the salutatorian is required to write a thesis.

St. Macrina Award for Excellence in Teaching

Established in 2013, the Saint Macrina Award is an honor given each year to a professor elected by the student body to recognize his or her effort and excellence in teaching.

Past Recipients:

2013: The Very Rev. Dr. Alexander Rentel

2014: Dr. Paul Meyendorff

2015: The Rev. Dr. George L. Parsenios

2016: Hierodeacon Herman (Majkrzak)

2017: The Very Rev. Dr. Chad Hatfield

2018: Robin Freeman

2019: The Rev. Dr. Varghese M. Daniel

2021: The Rev. Dr. Bogdan Bucur

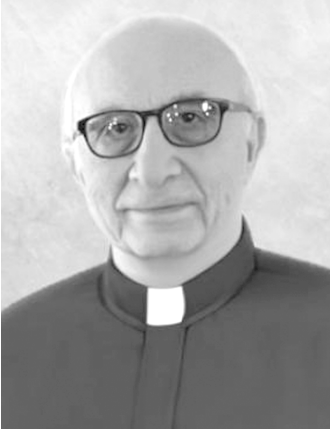
2022: Dr. John Barnet

2023: The Rev. Dn. Dr. Vitaly Permiakov

2024: Dr. Ionuț-Alexandru Tudorie

2025 Commencement Speaker

The Very Rev. Dr. Paul Tarazi



THE VERY REV. DR. PAUL TARAZI served as a professor at St. Vladimir's Seminary almost forty years before his retirement in 2014. He taught courses in Old and New Testament, Biblical Hebrew and Greek, and Academic Arabic. Fr. Paul also taught at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, MA and at St. John of Damascus Institute in Balamand, Lebanon.

A well-known scholar and speaker, Fr. Paul's many publications include the three-volume *Old Testament Introduction* (SVS Press), four-volume *New Testament Introduction* (SVS Press / OCABS Press), fourteen commentaries on both the Old Testament and the New Testament books (SVS Press and OCABS Press), and numerous scholarly articles. Most recently, he authored *The Rise of Scripture* (2017, OCABS Press) and *Decoding Genesis 1 - 11* (2020, OCABS Press).

The Class of 2025

CANDIDATES FOR THE MASTER OF DIVINITY DEGREE

MR. FERENC JÓZSEF FÉHÉRVÁRI (*commendation for service to the community*)
Semi-Pelagian or the Doctor of Grace? A Reevaluation of St. John Cassian's Soteriology in Light of the Semi-Pelagian Controversy
DR. IONUȚ-ALEXANDRU TUDORIE, advisor

THE REV. DN. ARGEY GIGI GEORGE
Overcoming Alcohol Addiction within the Malankara Orthodox Community
DR. ALBERT ROSSI, advisor

HIEROMONK STEPHEN GUIRGUIS (*magna cum laude; commendation for service to the community*)
The Life and Theological Works of Abbot Macarius of St. John the Baptist Monastery, AZ
THE VERY REV. DR. CHAD HATFIELD, advisor

HIERODEACON CYRIL HANNA
On the Spiritual Richness of the Blessings We Have Been Given, as St. Paul Describes in His First Chapter to the Ephesians
THE REV. DR. GEORGE PARSENIOS, advisor

MS. LAURA IONESCU (*commendation for service to the community*)

SUBDEACON SOLOMON VARGHESE JACOB (*cum laude*)
Spoken in Love: Divine Communication as the Heart of Pastoral Ministry
DR. PETER BOUTENEFF, advisor

THE REV. DN. ZAREH RAFFY MIRZAYAN (*commendation for service to the community*)

THE REV. ALEXANDER NELSON (*commendation for service to the community*)
Panentheism and the Cosmic, Ecclesial, and Eucharistic Bodies of God
THE VERY REV. DR. BOGDAN G. BUCUR, advisor

THE REV. DN. RICHARD OKELLO

Rethinking Missionary Work in Modern Times as an Act of Christian Charity

DR. ALBERT ROSSI, advisor

THE REV. SILOUAN PARCHERT (*summa cum laude; commendation for service to the community*)

Godforsakenness in Scripture: An Ascetical Hermeneutic for Understanding Divine Abandonment

DR. MICHAEL LEGASPI, advisor

THE REV. JUSTIN TAYLOR (*cum laude; commendation for service to the community*)

"Let the Children Come to Me": The Ecclesiological Consequences of the Dissolution of Infant Communion in the West

DR. IONUȚ-ALEXANDRU TUDORIE, advisor

MR. SILOUAN VALDEZ (*magna cum laude; commendation for service to the community*)

For the Redemption of Man, for the Restoration of the Universe: Sacrifice and Theosis in the Modern American Eastern Orthodox Milieu

DR. MICHAEL LEGASPI, advisor

THE REV. DN. MATTHEW WILEY (*valedictorian of the class of 2025; summa cum laude; commendation for thesis; commendation for service to the community*)

Disease or Death-Distributing Angel?: The Semantics and Reception of Deber in Psalm 91

DR. MICHAEL LEGASPI, advisor

CANDIDATES FOR THE
MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

MR. JOSHUA L. BRYANT (*magna cum laude*)
A Byzantine Humanist Eschatology of Creativity
DR. PETER BOUTENEFF, advisor

THE REV. JOSEF D. CANDELARIO (*magna cum laude; commendation
for service to the community*)
Concentration in Theological Scholarship and Research
*The Engomia Service to St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki: History, Analysis,
Metrical Translation*
DR. ALEXANDER LINGAS, advisor

THE REV. DR. ANTHONY DOSS (*magna cum laude*)
*Neuroscience and Asceticism in Dialogue: The Restoration of the Human
Person According to Nemesius of Emesa*
THE REV. DN. DR. MATTHEW VEST, advisor

MRS. ABBY CRIST LEGASPI (*summa cum laude; commendation for
service to the community*)
Orthodox Christian Theology and Voluntary Simplicity
DR. PETER BOUTENEFF, advisor

MS. ANA LEGASPI (*magna cum laude; commendation for thesis;
commendation for service to the community*)
Concentration in Sacred Arts
*Giving Thanks to God for All Things: An Exposition of Father Alexander
Schmemmann's Final Homily Through the Words of Saint John Chrysostom
and Saint Paul*
THE VERY REV. DR. SERGIUS HALVORSEN, advisor

MR. MATTHEW EDWARD NELSON (*commendation for service to the community*)
The Kenotic God: Orthodox Thought and the Post-Holocaust Vision of Hans Jonas
DR. JOHN BARNET, advisor

MR. CONSTANTIN MIHAI PLEȘA
Concentration in Theological Scholarship and Research
Suetonius' Influence on the Biographical Genre's Development in Procopius' Historia Arcana
DR. IONUȚ-ALEXANDRU TUDORIE, advisor

MS. JAIME RALL (*salutatorian of the class of 2025; summa cum laude; commendation for thesis*)
Concentration in Sacred Arts
Theophany on the Holy Mountain: Emergent Coherence in the Interior Decorations of the Monastery Katholikon on Sinai
THE VERY REV. DR. BOGDAN G. BUCUR, advisor

THE REV. NICHOLAS SKHULUKHIA
Philo of Alexandria on Logophanies: Background for Early Christian Logos Theology
THE VERY REV. DR. BOGDAN G. BUCUR, advisor

MR. BRIGHTON CONSTANTINE WHYTOCK
Concentration in Sacred Arts
Beauty Contested: Orthodox Christian Response to Certain Modernist Critiques
DR. PETER BOUTENEFF, advisor

CANDIDATES FOR THE
MASTER OF THEOLOGY DEGREE

MR. PAVLO KURGANOV (*commendation for service to the community*)
Offering of Mercy in Didascalia Apostolorum
THE VERY REV. DR. VASILY PERMIAKOV, advisor

MR. MIHAILO VLAJKOVIĆ
*The Importance of Fasting and Its Observance Today: Canonical
Tradition or "Oikonomia" of the 21st Century?*
THE VERY REV. DR. VASILY PERMIAKOV, advisor

THE REV. JOSEPH WINSLER (*commendation for service to the community*)
*St. Maximus the Confessor in the Teaching of Elder Aimilianos of
Simonopetra*
THE VERY REV. DR. BOGDAN G. BUCUR, advisor

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