



Belmont Abbey
COLLEGE
*That in all things God
may be glorified*

For Immediate Release

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Belmont Abbey College Celebrates 150th Anniversary with Year-Long Celebration

Belmont, N.C. (April 21, 2026) – Belmont Abbey marks its 150th anniversary with a year-long celebration beginning on its Founders' Day, April 21, which commemorates the arrival in 1876 of the first monk and students who came to establish a monastery and college in North Carolina. From that until now, the abbey and college have not only helped found and invigorate the life of the Catholic Church in North Carolina but have also played a leading role in higher education in the South.

"For 150 years, Belmont Abbey College has formed generations of students to think critically, lead faithfully, and serve others with purpose. Since 1876, we have remained dedicated not only to preparing students for successful careers but also to forming lives rooted in truth and virtue," said Dr. Jeffrey Talley, President of Belmont Abbey College. "As we celebrate this milestone, we remain committed to our founding mission and to the graduates who carry that mission into the world each day."

Today, Belmont Abbey College is the region's only Catholic private liberal arts college. The college has more than 17,000 alumni and currently serves over 1,700 students through 30 undergraduate and 7 graduate programs. This year, Belmont Abbey College announced the highest total enrollment in its history — 1,741 students for Fall 2025, a 3.2% increase over last year. Belmont Abbey continues to earn national recognition for academic excellence. It is ranked number two for Best Undergraduate Teaching among Regional Colleges in the South for the second consecutive year in the 2026 U.S. News & World Report rankings. The college also rose 10 places to number 12 among Regional Colleges in the South, placing it in the top 10% percent of institutions in the region.

With exciting new initiatives, including the American Semester in Washington, D.C., which offers students opportunities for internships, academic coursework, and firsthand experience in the nation's capital, Belmont Abbey continues to expand opportunities for student formation and professional development. The Honors College remains a cornerstone of the academic experience, offering a rigorous and transformative program for high-achieving students interested in the Great Books. A vibrant athletic program also plays a vital role in campus life, competing at the NCAA Division II level as members of Conference Carolinas. Belmont Abbey College has earned national and regional recognition, including multiple conference championship titles and the Messick award for overall sportsmanship 37 times in the past five years.

The college has formed servant leaders who bring the excellence and virtue of Christian leadership to their employees, colleagues, parishioners, and communities. Through its Benedictine tradition of prayer and work, the Abbey continues to form students through a liberal arts education rooted in truth, goodness, and beauty.

The first monks devoted themselves both to building up the church and founding a college, laying the foundation for a mission that endures today. Early leaders such as Father Herman Wolfe, Bishop Leo Haid and Father Felix Hintemeyer began this work. Through the years, others such as Saint Katharine Drexel whose generosity helped establish and sustain the Abbey and college, and the men and women of the college community have continued and developed this legacy of service.

"Beginning with our first abbot, Bishop Leo Haid, who was responsible for the Catholic Church in the entire state of North Carolina, Belmont Abbey has played an active role in the Church in the Southeast," said Abbot Placid Solari, the current Abbot of Belmont Abbey. "Together with the Sisters of Mercy, the monks began Catholic education in North Carolina and established monasteries and schools also in Florida, Georgia and Virginia."

Unique in American Catholic history, Belmont Abbey existed as an independent diocese from 1910 until its incorporation into the territory of the Diocese of Charlotte in 1977. The Abbey plays a significant role in the Charlotte Diocese by providing the academic formation for the seminarians of the Saint Joseph College Seminary and the academic formation for candidates for the permanent diaconate in the Dioceses of Charlotte and Raleigh. Belmont Abbey regularly hosts diocesan events on its campus, including the Bishop's Youth Pilgrimage, as well as vocational discernment retreats such as Duc in Altum, and Quo Vadis Days. Our students regularly assist in leading youth tracks at the diocesan Eucharistic

Congress and serving in the Bishop's Youth Pilgrimage. Over the years, numerous alumni have gone on to serve the Church as bishops, priests, deacons and consecrated religious.

Throughout the college's 150th year, Belmont Abbey College will host a series of special events designed to bring together students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the surrounding community for celebration. The celebration will kick off with a campus-wide celebration honoring the founding monks and the college's Benedictine legacy. For more information about Belmont Abbey's 150th anniversary celebrations, please visit www.bac.edu/150.

About Belmont Abbey College: Founded in 1876, Belmont Abbey College is a private, Catholic baccalaureate and liberal arts institution. Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. Guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others. Our beautiful and historic campus is conveniently located just 10 miles west of Charlotte, N.C., and is currently home to more than 1500 students. For more information, visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/>.