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## **Chart-Topping Catholic Podcaster Fr. Mike Schmitz to Deliver Commencement Address at Ave Maria University**

*Prestigious Catholic school celebrates its 2024 graduation class*

**AVE MARIA, Fla., Feb. 6, 2024** – Ave Maria University in Florida announced today that Fr. Mike Schmitz, host of “The Bible in a Year,” the most successful Catholic podcast of all time, will deliver the commencement address at its graduation ceremony, held at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 4, 2024, at the Golisano Field House on Ave Maria University’s campus.

Fr. Mike Schmitz serves as the director of youth and young adult ministry for the Diocese of Duluth and chaplain for the Newman Catholic Campus Ministry at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. He is well-known for his popular YouTube videos, released weekly on the [Ascension Presents YouTube channel](#), and he also streams Sunday Mass to a worldwide audience. He hosts two wildly successful podcasts, “The Bible in a Year” and “The Catechism in a Year.”

[The Bible in a Year \(BIY\)](#) was the No. 1 show on the Apple podcasting charts in all categories in both January 2021 and January 2022, and the No. 1 global podcast in “Religion & Spirituality” for most of the last three years (source: Chartable). [The Catechism in a Year \(CIY\)](#) podcast, the popular sequel to “The Bible in a Year,” also has enjoyed remarkable success. Following its debut as the No. 1 podcast on Apple at the beginning of 2023, it spent most of 2023 in the top three shows on Apple’s “Religion & Spirituality chart” while becoming, currently, the No. 2 global podcast in Religion & Spirituality (source: Chartable).

“It’s a tremendous privilege and honor to have Fr. Schmitz serve as Ave Maria University’s commencement speaker this year,” said Mark Middendorf, president of Ave Maria University. “Countless Catholics, including many of our students, have been edified by Fr. Schmitz’s commentaries on the Bible and Catechism, along with numerous other topics, on his podcasts and YouTube channel.”

Ave Maria University’s graduation ceremony will be preceded by a baccalaureate Mass at 5 p.m. Friday, May 3 at the Ave Maria Catholic Church and the president’s dinner at 6:30 p.m. Friday, May 3, also at the Ave Maria Catholic Church. Tickets are not required to attend Mass. The dinner, which is open to all graduating seniors, their family and guests, and to all faculty and staff members, requires advanced reservations and tickets. Seating is limited; tickets are available first come, first serve.

For more information about Ave Maria University’s graduation, Mass and dinner, please visit <https://www.avemaria.edu/commencement-2024>.

To schedule an interview with Mark Middendorf, please contact [insert name of press contact and his or her phone number and email address].

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### **About Ave Maria University**

Ave Maria University is a Catholic institution of higher learning located in Ave Maria, Florida. Ave Maria University was established in 2003 as a Catholic university, according to the guidelines of the Code of Canon Law by the Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane, Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida. The recognition of Ave Maria University as a Catholic University is granted upon the university’s commitment to continue to be guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church and faithfulness to the apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Ave Maria University is committed to helping its students develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life and grow in their appreciation of truth. The goal of AMU is simple: to build the foundation of a truly Catholic university that forms future generations of truly Catholic men and women faithful to the Magisterium of the Church. For more information about Ave Maria University, please visit [www.avemaria.edu](http://www.avemaria.edu).