

Commencement speakers at Maryland Catholic universities announced

The three Catholic universities in the Archdiocese of Baltimore have announced the speakers for their 2018 commencement ceremonies.

Miguel “Mike” Fernandez will speak at the commencement ceremony for Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore May 19 at Royal Farms Arena. Fernandez is a healthcare businessman and philanthropist, and published an autobiography, “Humbled by the Journey: Life Lessons for My Family ... and Yours,” in 2014.

“Every year we try to identify a speaker who can give our graduating undergraduate and graduate students a message to carry with them as they leave Loyola,” said Jesuit Father Brian F. Linnane, president, in a press release prepared by the university. “This year, particularly with the conversations around DACA and American immigrants, Mike Fernandez will have a compelling story and important message to share with our community. He also speaks powerfully about making the most of the educational opportunities you encounter and working to give back to your community.”

Born in Cuba, Fernandez and his family were forced to leave in 1964. After a few months in Mexico City, they moved to New York, where he attended a Jesuit high school.

He went into insurance and then healthcare business after serving in the U.S. Army. Fernandez, his wife and five children live in Coral Gables, Fla., and he serves on Loyola’s Board of Trustees.

Mount St. Mary’s University in Emmitsburg will welcome alumna Agnus “Aggie” Berenato, class of 1980, May 13 as the speaker for commencement, which will take place in the university’s Knott Arena. Berenato is a nationally acclaimed basketball coach, and has won 461 games since 1982 at Rider University (1982-85), Georgia

Tech (1989-2003), University of Pittsburgh (2003-13) and Kennesaw State University (2017-18).

“We are thrilled that Aggie, an accomplished alumna and leader on and off the basketball court, will be joining our graduates for commencement,” said Timothy E. Trainor, president, in a press release prepared by the university. “Her career accomplishments and demonstrated commitment to living significantly in keeping with the Mount’s values set a terrific example for the Class of 2018 as they begin their lifelong career journeys.”

Berenato was a three-year starter and two-time captain on the Mount’s basketball team while she studied for her bachelor’s in sociology. She served on the university’s Board of Trustees for eight years, and is now a trustee emeritus.

A New Jersey native, she and her husband, Jack, have five children. Her daughter, Christina, will also participate in the university’s commencement as she receives her master’s in business administration.

Dr. Susan Love will also return to her alma mater, Notre Dame of Maryland University, to speak at the school’s 123rd commencement May 20 at Royal Farms Arena. Love is a world-renowned breast cancer surgeon and author of The New York Times bestseller “Dr. Susan Love’s Breast Book.”

Love studied at Notre Dame during the 1970s.

“Back then, people didn’t suggest women to go to college. But I really liked Notre Dame because it had such a strong science program even then, which was unusual at an all-women’s college at the time,” she said, according to an article on the university’s website. “Also, the School Sisters of Notre Dame were exceptional role models. In fact, I wanted to be a nun for some time because of their example.”

Love is the chief visionary of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation (DSLRF), which focuses on the prevention and research of breast cancer. She founded the Faulkner Breast Center in Boston and the Revlon UCLA Breast Center in Los Angeles.

“She is an inspiration to women in the STEM field,” said Katie Salim, a senior

chemistry major and student government association president. “Also, as a senior at a women’s college, it’s humbling to see a woman activist fighting to make a difference in the role of women’s health.”

Email Emily Rosenthal at erosenthal@CatholicReview.org.