

Example Letter to Bishop Rhoades

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]

Date

Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend
St. John Paul II Center
915 S. Clinton St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Dear Bishop Rhoades,

I hope this letter finds you well and strengthened in your ministry as shepherd of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. I write to you as a concerned member of the faithful, with deep respect for your leadership and a shared commitment to the preservation of our Catholic identity, particularly within the institutions under your care.

It has come to my attention that Saint Mary's College, located within your diocese, has selected Dr. Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland, as its commencement speaker for the class of 2025 and intends to confer upon her an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. While Dr. McAleese's accomplishments in public life are notable, her well-documented positions—particularly her advocacy for abortion access, same-sex marriage, and the ordination of women—stand in stark opposition to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Her public statements, including her enthusiastic support for repealing Ireland's Eighth Amendment, which protected the unborn, and her dismissal of Church guidance on moral matters, raise serious questions about the appropriateness of honoring her at a Catholic institution.

As you know, Saint Mary's College has faced scrutiny in recent years over decisions that appear to drift from its Catholic mission. The choice of Dr. McAleese as a commencement speaker—a figure celebrated by the college for views that undermine Church doctrine—risks sending a confusing and scandalous message to students, alumni, and the wider Catholic community. The commencement address is a pivotal moment, meant to inspire graduates to live out their faith with courage and fidelity. To platform someone who has devoted much of her post-political career to challenging the Church's authority and moral teachings seems to contradict this purpose.

I recall with gratitude your decisive intervention in 2023, when Saint Mary's proposed admitting men identifying as women—a policy you rightly addressed, leading to its reversal. Your action then demonstrated a firm commitment to upholding Catholic principles. I now insist that you take equally bold action here. This is not a mere matter of dialogue or gentle persuasion; it demands your immediate and unequivocal intervention. Saint Mary's must be held accountable to its Catholic identity, and as its bishop, you have the authority—and the duty—to ensure this. I strongly urge you to direct President Katie Conboy and the college's leadership to rescind this invitation and honorary degree, lest they further erode the Church's credibility in your diocese. Silence or inaction on your part will only embolden those who seek to secularize our institutions, and the faithful deserve better.

This is a defining moment for your leadership, Bishop Rhoades. The selection of Dr. McAleese is not an academic exercise but a public affront to the Church you are charged to defend. I implore you to act swiftly and decisively—issue a public rebuke, withdraw diocesan support, or take whatever measures are necessary to halt this travesty. The souls of the students, the integrity of Saint Mary's, and the trust of your flock hang in the balance. I am praying fervently for your resolve, but I expect results. Please respond to this pressing concern; the time for measured deliberation has passed.

Yours in Christ,

[Your Name]