



News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RETIRED NYPD OFFICER GETS THE THIRD DEGREE**

(HOUSTON, April 19, 2006) – On May 20, during the University of St. Thomas' 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Commencement, Walter Mylett will receive his third diploma since he retired from the New York City Police Department and moved to Houston in 1988.

“In the last 14 years, I’ve done everything I’ve always wanted to do,” he said. “It’s been an incredible trip, and it’s not over yet.”

Shortly after Mylett arrived in Houston – he came here to be closer to his grandchildren – he signed up for classes at College of the Mainland, but he finished a bachelor’s degree in music at the University of St. Thomas in 1998, the year he turned 70. Without missing a beat, he entered the Master of Liberal Arts program and by 2000, had earned an MLA.

He put his music degree to work by singing and playing trumpet in the Dickinson area and with the De Burgos Ensemble, a group consisting mostly of the family of Dr. John Burke of the UST Political Science department. With the addition of the MLA in 2000, Mylett added drama to his repertoire. He has since appeared in 15 productions and still gets excited about the Study Abroad courses he signed up for at UST.

On the first trip, he went to England with Professor Charles Krohn, who taught Shakespeare’s England and Dr. Irving Kelter, who taught Medieval England. He remembers seeing Richard III performed outside by college students, seeing the movie Richard III, then seeing the Royal Shakespeare Company do Richard III at Stratford on Avon. He also saw a half-dozen more Shakespeare plays while he was there.

With the drama bug biting him deeply by now, the second Study Abroad trip took him to Ireland, where he got a seat on the front row of Dublin's legendary Abbey Theatre to see Euripides' tragedy Medea. "I was seated next to the Greek chorus. I was there!" he said. Drs. John Burke of Political Science and Joseph McFadden of History led those courses.

He also went to Jerusalem and walked the path on which Jesus traveled to his execution on the cross. In May, at age 78, Mylett will graduate with a Master's in Applied Theology.

Mylett began his career with the New York City Police Department. He served as a beat cop, a scuba diver and boat captain. "I worked in any part of New York City that had water," he said.

Now anticipating his third degree, Mylett says he's always been inspired by two quotes: One, by John Dewey, states that "Education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself," and two, the slogan from the United Negro College Fund, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." These are words for the wise from one who dropped out of high school in his freshman year.

University of St. Thomas is a private institution committed to the liberal arts and to the religious, ethical and intellectual tradition of Catholic higher education.

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