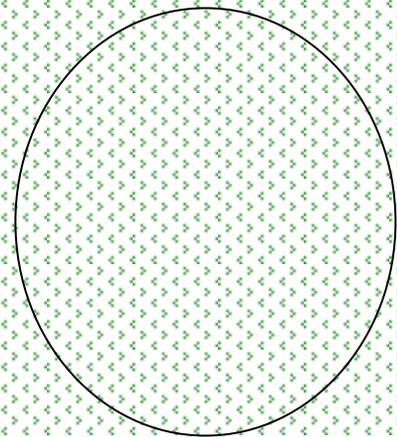


FOUR YEARS OF APPRENTICESHIP IN GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY

The Matriculation Speech of
the Vice Chancellor on the
8th Matriculation Ceremony of
Godfrey Okoye University



Rev. Fr. Prof. Christian Anieke

Friday, 20 January 2017

Protocol

On behalf of the staff and students of Godfrey Okoye University I warmly welcome each of you to the matriculation of the 2016/2017 set of Godfrey Okoye University students. You have come as parents, guardians or relations of the matriculating students. You have come here as friends of Godfrey Okoye University. You have come here because you believe in the transformative, spiritual and millennial project called Godfrey Okoye University. May God bless you for being here today!

Ladies and gentlemen, the vision of Godfrey Okoye University is to produce graduates who will be outstanding in learning, balanced in character and personality and ready to pursue epistemic unity in all its ramifications. In order to realize this vision we have borrowed a leaf from traditional education where education is targeted at helping people to become responsible citizens of their community by learning the trades and skills available in the community. According to Paul Monroe, in traditional education learning is not separated from doing. Traditionally, education is seen as a period of apprenticeship when the learner is attached to a master and gets practical experience and skills that will enable them to make their own contributions to the development and wellbeing of their society. Products of traditional education are never unemployed.

This is the model we are employing here. This is also what informs our first town-and-gown assembly. We invited industrialists and professionals from different fields of human work and had a dialogue with them on areas of focus in the training of our students so that they can become employable on graduation. What emerges from that interaction is our resolve to pursue vigorously our understanding of education in the traditional sense of apprenticeship. Our students are encouraged not only to pursue the theoretical dimension of their chosen courses of studies but also to identify with professionals in their fields in order to learn practical skills from them as long as they are here. Those in the Mass Communication Department, for instance, have been helped to identify the areas of specialization and

professional branches in their field. Already in their hundred level, they are expected to choose an area of specialization and are encouraged to identify with professionals in their chosen area of specialization. Other departments and programmes are also designed in this fashion.

In addition, our entrepreneurial programme in this university exposes students to different areas of entrepreneurship so that they can be employers of labour on graduation. The expectation of Godfrey Okoye University is that no student of this university will be unemployed after graduation.

My dear matriculating students, it is in this university that sees your education as four years of serious apprenticeship that you are being admitted. It is very important that you realize that you are not just in this university to get one degree but to acquire a lot of talents and skills that will help you to employ yourself or to get a good job. Your university is interested in your success while you are on campus and also after your graduation.

Furthermore, you are in a university that encourages you to pray because success comes ultimately from God. This explains why our life here is defined by prayer in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening. Our success as one of the fastest growing universities in Nigeria is the result of our unceasing dialogue with God. In the words of a great spiritual mind, I say to you: ***Work as if everything depends on you. Pray as if everything depends on God.***

My dear matriculating students, you have chosen a university that is extending the space of your apprenticeship outside the shores of your university. We are collaborating with over 20 universities in Europe, Asia and North America. You can choose to study for a year or semester in any of our partner universities. Also we have secured the approval of the Austrian Government for some of our students to do their IT in Austria. So my dear

students the sky is your limit in this university. Make up your mind to be one of the greatest persons your country has ever produced.

In order to get the best result from these four years of serious apprenticeship, we encourage you to sit down and work. As long as we are in session you need permission to stay the night outside this university. The idea is to help you to stay focused on your studies so that you will achieve tremendous success. You know that when footballers are going for a serious tournament, they are usually called to the camp and they stay there, cut off from all distractions, working hard for a successful encounter. This is what we are doing here. Being here and sitting down to work will make the difference that we and your parents or guardians want to see in you in the next four years. I am convinced that if we do our job well, your parents or guardians will be proud of you and your university.

In addition, your university is a residential university. This means that you are expected to live on campus and cannot live off campus unless you have the approval to do so. This is in line with our commitment to make you great leaders and successful persons.

Also discipline is boldly written in our university. Only a disciplined mind can achieve great success. As Bob Richards says, "One of the great lessons I've learned in athletics is that you've got to discipline your life. No matter how good you may be you've got to be willing to cut out of your life those things that keep you from going to the top." So do the best you can to keep the rules and regulations of your university which are designed to promote your success and well being.

Finally, dear parents and guardians, I thank you immensely for encouraging your children and wards to study in this God's own university. Please help them to keep the rules and regulations. Do not invite them to return home without getting permission from the officers in charge of them in their hostels. Do not encourage them to break the rules and regulations of their

university. Also ask them about their result at the end of every academic session in order to follow their academic progress. Of course you can always get the result from us if they begin to tell stories. Furthermore, please continue to pay their fees in time. This is one way you can encourage us to continue our unbroken success story in the university.

I will not conclude this speech without thanking the officers of Student Affairs Unit, the Dean of Student Affairs and his team, for a successful orientation and preparation for this event. Also my gratitude goes to the ceremonies committee under the headship of Prof. Gloria Njoku for working hard to ensure the success of this occasion. Finally, I thank all members of staff for their commitment to administrative and academic excellence in this university. I thank particularly the administrative staff in our Works Unit for making this university the cleanest university in Nigeria. I thank you all for being here.

United as one family let us sing with Celine Dion that a new day has arrived in the life of our young matriculating students:

*I was waiting for so long
For a miracle to come
Everyone told me to be strong
Hold on and don't shed a tear*

*Hush now
I see a light in the sky
Oh it's almost blinding me
I can't believe I've been touched by an angel
With love*

*Let the rain come down
And wash away my tears
Let it fill my soul
And drown my fears
Let it shatter the walls
For a new sun
A new day has come
A new day has come*

*Where it was dark now there's is light
Where there was pain, now there's joy
Where there was weakness, I found my strength...
Hush now
I see a light in the sky
Oh it's almost blinding me
I can't believe I've been touched by an angel
With love*

*Let the rain come down
And wash away my tears
Let it fill my soul
And drown my fears
Let it shatter the walls
For a new sun
A new day has come
A new day has come*

God bless you all!

Godfrey Okoye University

*(The Catholic University
of Enugu Diocese)*