

SPEECH OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR AT THE 9TH MATRICULATION CEREMONY OF GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY FEB 24, 2018

STUDYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Protocol

On behalf of the staff and students of Godfrey Okoye University, I heartily welcome you to this 9th Matriculation of our university. I welcome particularly the parents and guardians of our fresh students who have come from every nook and cranny of our country to attend this very important academic ceremony. God bless you all!

My dear matriculating students, I congratulate you on your admission into Godfrey Okoye University, the Catholic University on the go! I welcome you to God's own university. I welcome you to a university with a sound spiritual background, robust academic setting and vivacious social environment. You are being admitted into a university with zero tolerance to cultism, sexual barbarism and harassment, and academic mercantilism. You are being admitted into a university that gives you the opportunity to travel to different countries of the world in order to get unfettered exposure and thus become a global citizen. You are getting your admission into a university where you know when you will finish your studies from the very day you entered the university. You are being admitted into a university where the vice chancellor is not a terrifying night masquerade with its guttural voice sitting in some impenetrable office and surrounded by red-eyed, straight-faced, muscled security Officers. Rather you are getting your admission in a university where the Vice Chancellor is a normal human being, teaching his classes, and walking briskly from one end of campus to the other, stopping intermittently to chat with students and staff and calling most of them by name. You are getting admission in a university where there are mentors who stand in place of your parents to support you and to help you finish your studies well. You are being admitted into a university with countless friends all over the world, who will also become your friends. My dear matriculating students, it is to this unique, lovable university that I welcome you!

This university is providing everything you need to join Harry Potter's soldiers of Dumbledore who will be changing and saving the world. You must make up your mind to change Nigeria and the world. This is the meaning of the holistic education you will acquire here. I tell you: *"The ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones that do."* You must study like those who have only one thing on their mind: to change their world. Your country particularly is an ongoing, unfinished project. You must think about what your role will be in such a gargantuan project. Time has come to change the poor narrative of sharing the national cake. Time has come to have a generation of Nigerians who are no longer satisfied with sharing a tasteless musty cake baked many years ago with fossilized ingredients. Time has come to bake new cakes with fresh ingredients of human ingenuity and creativity. So today my dear matriculating students, I speak to you in the language of J.F. Kennedy: *"Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."*

Furthermore, to change your country and world you need to work assiduously. As Estée Lauder says, *"I never dreamed about success, I worked for it."* One sign that you work hard is that you do not miss your classes. I want to assure you that you will succeed in your studies if you do not miss classes. Promise yourself and your God today that you will never miss a class until you finish in this university. God will certainly hear your prayers and grant you success if you always remind him in your prayers before examinations that you never missed your classes. Also another sign that you work hard is that you make use of the library resources. A good student reads. A university is nothing but a collection of books. So if you read, you are a good university student. In this university we have prizes for students who use the library most. Why not win such prestigious prizes? You cannot be outstanding unless you read books. As Francis Bacon says, *"Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man."* Finally, avoid distractions: boy-friend/ girl-friend distractions, long telephone calls, social media distractions, too many social activities and events, etc. Remember, as Vidal Sassoon says, *"The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary."*

In addition, to change your country and the world, you must become entrepreneurial in the course of your studies. This university encourages you

to identify the professional sides of your chosen course of studies. Always ask yourself: where will I work after graduation? This question will guide you in whatever you are going to be doing and how you are going to be studying in the course of your education here. This is why we brought many companies and professional groups during the last convocation so that you can interact with them and identify areas of interest and research. The earlier you begin to study along the lines of your professional inclination, the better. Every year we send our students out to explore the entrepreneurial sides of their studies or to engage in projects or practical activities that can help them to be gainfully employed when they graduate. This method of educating our students explains why over 70 percent of our graduates get jobs within two years after graduation. **So spread your wings to fly to different directions of your professional callings!**

To you parents, I say a big congratulation on your choice of Godfrey Okoye University as a place for your child or ward to acquire university education. You will certainly be making huge financial sacrifices. But be assured of this: your sacrifices will never be in vain. We will educate your children or wards in such a way that you will get value for money spent. I would also like to assure you that we will instill discipline in your children or wards and this will make them outstanding among all your children and wards or relations. If you can afford it, please help them to get exposure in other universities in Europe, America or Asia, where our university has collaborations. God will certainly bless you!

Also, my dear fresh students, take these words to heart:

It's not a lesson to be taught
Or a skill to be acquired
It's the nudge to move forward
Open when the time is right
It's the spirit inside
God leading on the way
On the journey to discover
He is all you need
It's the courage to let go
Say yes instead of no
Reveal what you've been holding back

As Jesus takes the wheel
It's the realization that it doesn't matter
What others think of you
God leads you where you're meant to be
Just allow you to be you
It's the standing up to fear
Proclaiming "fear's not gonna win!"
The battle has been fought too long
Time to let the stalemate end
It's the inspiration you've been holding
For others and for yourself
The light we've been dimming
Rather than shining on His behalf
It's the spontaneity in the decision
To follow His call all the way
Discovering peace in being you
Wide open as the perfect creation you are
The world out there is brutal
But there's a Holy Man holding out His Hand
His bravery now is all we have
But His bravery of love is all we need
- [Kevin C. Martin](#)

Finally, remember you are born to change your world. This is what this university encourages you to learn every day of your stay here. So in the words of Glen Campbell, I say to you:

*If you see your brother standing by the road
With a heavy load from the seeds he's sowed
And if you see your sister falling by the way
Just stop and say "You're going the wrong way"*

*You got to try a little kindness, yes show a little kindness
Just shine your light for everyone to see
And if you try a little kindness then you'll overlook the blindness
Of narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded streets*

Don't walk around the down and out

*Lend a helping hand instead of doubt
And the kindness that you show every day
Will help someone along their way
You got to try a little kindness, yes show a little kindness
Just shine your light for everyone to see
And if you try a little kindness, then you'll overlook the blindness
Of narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded streets*

So rise, shine and change your world! God bless you all!

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VICE CHANCELLOR