

ADDRESS OF THE BISHOP EMERITUS OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ENUGU



**HIS LORDSHIP
MOST REV. DR. ANTHONY O. GBUJI**

INTRODUCTION

1. PROTOCOL

2. GRATITUDE:

I stand before this august audience to express deep gratitude to God Almighty, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ from whom all good things come.

To the proprietor, the V.C and the authorities of Godfrey Okoye (GO University), I am also grateful for the honour and recognition accorded me today. I consider it the Africa traditional respect for old age and a farewell to a "setting sun". I assure you all that you shall not miss your reward from God and our ancestors.

3. "YOUR OLD MEN WILL DREAM DREAMS". (ACTS. 2:17).

It was in the year **2002**; I had the dream to establish a Catholic University in Enugu Diocese. There were in existence during this period, several tertiary educational Institutions established and headed by individual priests of the diocese of Enugu. It was a period in the history of the development of education in Nigeria when all private tertiary institutions had to be affiliated to government universities. A committee of priests and lay experts in education was set up to study the possibility of the realization of the noble dream. The clear term of reference to the committee was to put together all the tertiary educational institutions in Enugu Diocese to become one university to be called "COR UNUM UNIVERSITY OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ENUGU" the University logo symbolizes it "as unity of knowledge". In the Igbo language "COR UNUM means "OFU OBI". It was our intention to forge a bond of unity at the intellectual level. Such unity had already been achieved at the spiritual and cultural levels in the diocese. This was made possible by the preparatory celebrations for the great Jubilee year 2000. The existing tertiary educational institutions then in Enugu were: The Institute of Ecumenical Education (IECE), St Paul International Institute for Evangelization Enugu (SPIIEE), Catholic Institute for Development, Justice and Peace (CIDJAP), which was offering an undergraduate course on Social Teachings of the Church, St. Bernard Seminary Hostel attached to Bigard Memorial Seminary and Olu Aka Ndi Mma.

4. The Lord came to our assistance when, about the year 2006, the NUC placed a ban on affiliation of private tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. This was our chance! At the same time a young able, capable and highly talented priest of Enugu Diocese had finished his post-graduate degree studies at the Jesuit University in Austria. He was promptly and readily offered a seat to lecture at the University in Austria. To our dear Rev. Fr. Professor Christian Anieke belongs the privilege to lay the foundation of GO University that today has become a very successful and excellent Catholic University, the first diocesan university in the whole of Africa.

5. EDUCATION IS CHILD CENTRED

The mission of GO University remains the same as the mission of the Church. This is to establish the kingdom of God here on earth, to bring Jesus to the students of this institution; to offer everyone the opportunity to excel in goodness and virtuous life and eventually to be happy here on earth and forever in the next.

This mission is achieved through the establishment, prosecution and realization of an excellent education policy aimed at an integral and wholistic formation of the human, moral, spiritual and intellectual life of the student and the acquisition of skills by the student to enable him fill the earth and subdue it (cf. Gen. 1: 28).

6. Furthermore, and in a special way, GO University is forever conscious of the main central principle of education. Godfrey Okoye University is strongly motivated in all its activities by the principle that **Education is Child Centered**. The African Child – the Nigerian child-is at the centre of education. All the policies, and research efforts of the university are geared towards the proper, conscientious and effective education of the CHILD. It is a sacred trust reposed on the teachers by the parents and the students at our educational institutions and establishments.

All universities and all institutions of learning enter into a serious contractual agreement – in fact a serious covenant- between parents, students and teachers to assist parents educate the child.

7. WE PLEDGE TODAY

We the founders, the proprietor, the Vice Chancellor and all the authorities of GO University today renew our pledge, to remain faithful to our promise and obligation to give the students the best of our attention, care and love. May God help us never, never to betray the sacred trust so placed on us.

We therefore reassure all our students and parents that GO University will never dream or contemplate any strike action while engaged in the education of the Nigerian Child. No undergraduate shall stay at this university beyond the mandatory four to six years required for a degree course. Unnecessary delays caused by the university would be immoral, unethical, unpatriotic, above all, a blatant betrayal of the sacred trust reposed on us by the parents and students who come to our educational institutions. It has never happened and please God it will never happen, that we in a Catholic Institution fail in our duties to the students.

We promise that instead of going on strike we would rather be prepared to take the noble course of an intelligent and justifiable dialogue and negotiation. If by any chance the above measure fails, we shall take the alternative resort: to find redress in a law court within or outside Nigeria according to established civilized standards.

8. In all this, the right of the Nigerian Child remains sacred and inviolable. While we pray to God to help us at GO University keep our pledge, we assure parents, students and our nation, Nigeria, that GO University shall endeavour to remain as ever financially self-reliant. The university has not depended on any funding agency within or outside Nigeria for its financial obligations and commitments. No external power therefore shall be allowed to dictate the tune of our approved academic pursuit and policy. Thus we shall always remain firm in the ivory tower of our university to influence what happens in the moral, political, social, technological and scientific development of the society in which we operate. We shall prove to the world that the pen is mightier than the sword. GO University shall forever keep far apart from all political influence.

We shall nevertheless endeavour to establish an endowment fund by appealing to kind and generous Nigerians to assist us seriously embark on research and inventive initiatives. The opportunities abound around us.

9. SPECIAL TRIBUTE

The Vice Chancellor, Rev. Fr. Prof. Christian Anieke has made the dream of GO University a reality. A golden chapter in the history of GO University shall be dedicated to him to record in an accurate way, his invaluable contributions, sacrifices and dedication to the task of making GO University the success it has turned out to be. May the good Lord bless this reliable, trustworthy, talented and hardworking young man, the Vice Chancellor of Godfrey Okoye University, and strengthen him to bring to fulfillment all the good plans he has for the continued excellence and progress of the university. Our beloved, Fr. Prof. C. Anieke, may the success and gratitude of every Nigerian child who shall pass the threshold of GO University be your greatest joy and recompense here on earth and may the prayers of the parents and children obtain for you eternal reward in heaven.

10. CONGRATULATIONS

I associate myself with others and heartily congratulate all of you our first graduates of GO University.

Your hard work has earned you the success scored. We encourage others to imitate your good example and strive to break your record. May God continue to assist and bless you in all your endeavours in life. This we ask through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

+Anthony O. Gbuji

Bishop Emeritus

Enugu Diocese.

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