

**ADDRESS OF THE PROPRIETOR, GODFREY OKOYE
UNIVERSITY, ON THE THIRD CONVOCATION CEREMONY
OF THE UNIVERSITY,**



**His Excellency
MOST REV. DR. C. V. C. ONAGA
Catholic Bishop of Enugu
Proprietor**

Saturday, 5 December 2015



On behalf of the clergy, members of the consecrated life and laity of the Catholic Diocese of Enugu, I welcome everyone to the third convocation ceremony of our University, Godfrey Okoye University, where we demonstrate our wholesome commitment to the education of our young people. It has always been the primary responsibility of the Church – the Catholic Church in particular, to promote the education of young people (*Pius XI, Encycl. Divini Illius Magistri. 31 Dec. 1929*). Our choice is of an education that is both integral and progressive. That has been the teaching of the Church especially as is very explicitly taught in the Vatican II Declaration on Christian Education: *'The sacred ecumenical Council has given careful consideration to the paramount importance of education in the life of men and its ever-growing influence on the social progress of the age... The Church as a mother is under an obligation to provide for its children an education by virtue of which their whole lives may be inspired by the spirit of Christ'* (Vat. II, *Gravissimum Educationis*, nos. 1 & 3) We are eternally grateful to all those who have been very cooperative with the university to provide quality education for our children. We appreciate all your numerous sacrifices.

In the face of the current destruction of peace worldwide, I feel it is now urgent and appropriate to teach our children what life is all about in general especially as it pertains to interacting with human beings of different ethnic background, worldview and with different religious beliefs. One would not fail to decry and bemoan the senseless killing of innocent people that is writ-large in various parts of Europe, America, Africa and Asia. It puzzles one to understand that people fail to bring their agitations under reasonable dialogue and seek reasonable solutions that respect life. In their quest to stamp their ideas and to make their voices heard, they prefer to engage in the destruction of life that needs to be preserved.

In our citadels of knowledge, emphasis should be made on academics while recognizing the great importance of the formation of the moral aspect. The latter is a formation of the mind and human self that possesses the certificates of the academic training. Education is not just an adventure for obtaining certificates and meal tickets; it broadens one's mind-set to

accommodate others' idiosyncrasies.

In the face of all this, one would see why our University has chosen dialogue as its basis and the spring board of every academic pursuit. Where there is genuine dialogue, there will be less blood-letting. We appeal to our fresh graduands to dissociate themselves from whatever militates against the prime value of existence, which is life itself. Never sacrifice the value of life on the altar of personal ideas, rights and privileges. Remain good ambassadors of this University with respect to life and good human relationships. An educated person is one who realizes the limitations of specific areas of specialization and is open to new horizons of knowledge.

I am particularly happy that the Chancellor of our university, Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama, the Archbishop of Jos and the President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, took time to be part of this convocation, which is one of his primary responsibilities as the Chancellor. Your Grace, we appreciate the sacrifices you made to be here with your team of collaborators. I very deeply and sincerely appreciate your persistent effort to promote harmonious co-existence between people of different cultures and religions. Early this year, during our second convocation ceremony, you came with your suffragan Bishops – an expression of partnership and good relationship between the North and the South. This time, you have come with some of your Traditional leaders to share ideas with some of our own leaders here: An exercise that would not only foster unity but also enrich our different cultural ideas and attitudes. You have in this way, demonstrated an edifying leadership quality that makes us ever thankful. May God bless you.

In the course of the ceremonies of this convocation, there were other important people that facilitated the academic discussions. In this respect, I thank Most Rev. Matthew Hassan Kukah, the Catholic Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, who was the chairman of the Round Table. To His Excellency, Alhaji Aminu Tambuwal, the Executive Governor of Sokoto State, I extend my unalloyed gratitude for giving a convocation lecture. I also thank Prof. Chidi Uhuegbu, who delivered an inaugural lecture. May God continue to bless all

of you.

I congratulate the Vice Chancellor, Very Rev. Fr. Prof. Christian Anieke, the Board of Trustees and the Governing Council for this outing. May God reward you for all your efforts and for the quality and value oriented education you give to our children. I also express my gratitude to all the academic and non academic staff of this our noble institution. The clergy, members of the consecrated life and laity of our diocese have been of immense moral and prayerful support. I pray that God may reward you for your various contributions.

Our dear students, it is for your sake that we are here. We cherish and honour you. Aspire to be and remain stars that direct the citizens of this nation to the land of hope, peace and unity. May our Lord Jesus Christ, through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Mary, continue to guide and direct our thoughts and actions in our ardent desire and effort to provide true educational opportunities in our country through this University.

Most Rev. C. V. C. Onaga
Catholic Bishop of Enugu Diocese &
Proprietor, Godfrey Okoye University.