

**ADDRESS OF THE PRO-CHANCELLOR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE  
GOVERNING COUNCIL, PROF DR CHRISTIAN NWACHUKWU OKEKE,  
AT THE 4TH CONVOCATION CEREMONY OF GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY,  
HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY 2017 AT THE GOODLUCK EBELE JONATHAN  
CONVOCATION ARENA, THINKERS' CORNER, ENUGU**



**PROF. DR. CHRISTIAN NWACHUKWU OKEKE**  
**Pro Chancellor and**  
**Chairman of the Governing Council**

**Saturday, 25 February 2017**



Your Excellency, Rt. Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, Executive Governor, Enugu State,  
Hon. Members of the National Assembly and the Federal Executive Council,  
Your Excellencies and former Governors of State,  
Your Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Callistus Valentine Chukwuma Onaga, the Catholic  
Bishop of Enugu Diocese,  
Members of the State Executive Councils and State Houses of Assembly,  
The Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Professor Rasheed  
Abubakar,  
The Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Godfrey Okoye University,  
The Chancellor, Most Rev. Dr. Ignatius Ayau Kaigama,  
Your Majesties and Highnesses,  
My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,  
Distinguished Academicians and Administrators,  
Distinguished Audience,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

#### STEADY STRIDES - SURE SUCCESS Words of Welcome and Appreciation

It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome all of you here to this historic event, the 4th Convocation ceremony of our noble institution. Today's convocation event marks another great stride in the journey of Godfrey Okoye University to success, and in the life of our graduates who stand at the center stage of today's event. We thank God Almighty for guiding our every step with his blessing and for allowing us to participate at this year's celebrations.

On behalf of the Governing Council and the entire University community, I most heartily welcome our visitors to this occasion. My deepest appreciation goes to the Executive Governor of our host State Enugu, Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, who has early in his tenure registered deep interest in the University. I extend very warm regards to the Proprietor of the university, His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. C. V. C. Onaga, whose prayerful and material support to the university cannot be underestimated. We welcome our respected traditional rulers, other visiting dignitaries: Chancellors, Pro-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of sister Universities, as well as all overseas visitors who have come in their own right or as representatives of friendly organizations. I equally seize this opportunity to congratulate another eminent personality and Professor of our university Rev. Msgr. Prof. Obiora Ike, on his appointment as the President of Global Ethics, with a seat in Geneva, Switzerland. On behalf of the University, I seize this opportunity to wish him a successful tenure. The University welcomes you all for coming to



share the joys of the institution, and especially the joys of these young men and women who are officially being graduated by the University today.

Not long ago, Godfrey Okoye University celebrated her 7 year anniversary with many additional and outstanding achievements. Like a child of seven years, this is the time it is prepared to take important steps towards the encounter with the wider society and towards consolidating growth in personhood. In less than a decade of its establishment, the University has flourished even beyond the dreams of its founding fathers. It has continued to grow in academic excellence, in structural development, and it has achieved fits that qualify her to continue the journey towards more mature presentation of her position to the outside world. Today, it is turning out another set of graduates for the 2015/2016 academic session for the conferment of various degrees. It is our hope that the university would continue to wax stronger in the pursuit of its objectives, vision and mission.

#### The Stride towards Success

A bestseller, Robert H. Schuller, says that "Success, when viewed with a positive mental attitude, is a process. It is a journey - not the destination". I have chosen, at this particular convocation ceremony, to speak about steady strides towards success because, as Robert Schuller says, success is a process and a journey. Here, at Godfrey Okoye University, this journey to success will continue to advance with steady strides. The idea of strides implies movement in focused, progressive steps that are vigorous, regular, straddled and continuous. Strides depict an evolving process with multiple goals, and this actually mirrors what success implies. By implication, we must embrace the positive and mental attitudes that enable the quality strides that lead to success. This means, above all else, that we must never be agents of negativity. The opposite of stride is stagnation and/or dormancy, a state of latency that could lead to delays in achieving anything, or frustration that could lead the University to exist without significant activity and without being visible to the outside world.

For Godfrey Okoye University which is an academic community, success should mean the ability to provide the atmosphere for learning and research. It is the ability to build a center of excellence where human capital development and high academic attainments, anchored in the fear of God, could be achieved. It is the ability to produce globally relevant, competitive and entrepreneurship-minded graduates whose strong personalities will ensure the promotion of



religious, cultural and epistemological dialogues. The success which our graduates have achieved is the fact that they passed their courses in the university because they used the opportunities which the university provides them to develop their minds and talents. We are sure that having been so successful; they are going to make a beneficial contribution to the human society.

In order to attain the kind of success we intend, it is of utmost necessity that we engage ourselves in some attitude adjustments for the success trip. The first step towards success must be for us to know how to live and work in a highly competitive society. These days, competition has become most vibrant and pulsating in the field of education. Across the country, many universities have sprung up and are still springing, with very attractive visions and missions, which are competing for the same customers - young Nigerians in need of education. We must therefore make practical efforts to understand the challenges this situation presents for our existence and stand on top of them, without losing sight of our vision and mission. Secondly, we must work with clearly defined goals and develop strategies that will lead to the achievement of the goals. I am usually impressed by the Vice Chancellor's yearly articulation of achievable goals and strategies, which also includes a definition of set of values to be imbibed. Clearly stated goals are important for the creation of common vision that enables responsible participation of each member and a sense of belonging. I laud this practice as a good and steady way to make great strides towards success.

The Governing Council is resolute on ensuring the application of quality assurance, transparency and prudence to all areas of its mandate. We shall continue to put in place structures and policies that will make this University a destination of choice for students and employees in this citadel of learning. We shall also support all steps and ideas initiated by the Management for the improvement of the welfare of both the students and the staff of this University. Many of our students who graduated the previous year with first class honors have received various levels of scholarships from different universities all over the world to do post graduate programs. The Governing Council, in liaison with other organs of governance in the University, is strategizing to attract non-governmental fund to the University so as to enhance its further development, research capacity and scholarships.



I am happy to inform you that the National Universities Commission (NUC) will soon visit the university to inspect the university's resources with a view to approve in the mounting of new programs in the university. This includes the Faculty of Law, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences and a Postgraduate School. For the

Faculty of Law, I, as an international lawyer pledge my unflinching support in ensuring that a world class Law Faculty is established in the University.

Thanksgiving

Our University has come this far by the grace of God and the concerted efforts of several stakeholders. It is by the grace of God that this occasion has taken place and is turning out to be a huge success.

I commend the clear mission, vision, sincerity of purpose and the financial commitment of the Promoter of the University, His Lordship, Most Rev Dr C. V. C. Onaga, the Catholic Bishop of Enugu.

I thank His Excellency, Right Honorable Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, the Executive Governor of Enugu State, for promising to construct the road leading to the Ugwuomu-Nike Campus of the University.

I am highly delighted by the candour and passion of the Vice Chancellor, Rev. Fr. Prof. Dr. Christian Anieke, whose dedication to duty and indefatigable spirit have helped to entrench an enabling environment for us to work together as a team to the benefit of the overall progress of the University.

Groups and dignitaries who have assisted the University deserve our expression of gratitude at this occasion. They include:

- The Chancellor, Most Rev. Dr. Ignatius Kaigama, the Archbishop of Jos
- The National Universities Commission and its Executive Secretary
- The Bishop Emeritus of the Catholic Diocese of Enugu, Most Rev. Dr. Anthony O. Gbuji
- The Board of Trustees, with Professor Bartho Okolo as Chairman
- The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love
- The University Parents' Forum
- The Catholic Women Organization of the Catholic Diocese of Enugu
- Our benefactors and friends in Nigeria, South Africa, Europe and America.

I felicitate with our dear graduates, whose day of joy we are celebrating today. I congratulate you all. We have trained every one of you to go and become useful



citizens of our nation. Continuing professional education is key to your personal development throughout life and this is what will differentiate you from others who stop to learn. As you join the labour market, please use the discipline that you have acquired during your years in this university to continually learn and improve your skills. We are very confident that you would not let us down.

I am grateful to the academic and administrative staff, who translate the vision and mission of our noble university into concrete reality, and who labour to keep the life of the University afloat the turbulent socio-economic storms that rock the education system in Nigeria. As I appreciate your achievements and contributions to the life of the University, I also enjoin you to recognize the efforts the University is making to take care of your entitlements and salaries in this period of recession, when many institutions owe their workers many months of salary. I assure you that Godfrey Okoye University will continue to be true to her promise to take care of its workers and students.

I congratulate the parents and guardians of the graduating students on the completion of the arduous task of financially and emotionally supporting their wards throughout their stay in the University.

Once again, thank you, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, for honouring our invitation. We wish you all a happy stay with us and we pray God to lead you safely back to your destinations as you make your departure.

Thank you all for being worthy partners of the university in its steady strides to success!

Professor Dr. Christian Nwachukwu Okeke Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council