



A New Decade Has Begun for Godfrey Okoye University: the Matriculation Speech of the Vice Chancellor on the Occasion of the 11th Matriculation, 8 February 2020

Protocol

On behalf of the staff and students of Godfrey Okoye University, I heartily welcome you all to the 11th Matriculation of Godfrey Okoye University. I welcome you to God's own university, the Catholic university on the go!

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, this matriculation is taking place in the new decade of Godfrey Okoye University after the first decade that ended with the unforgettable 10th Anniversary celebrations late last year. Whereas the first decade was the sowing of the seed, this new decade is the harvest of what has been sown. Whereas the first decade is the laying of the foundation of the university, this second decade will be the building on that robust foundation, finishing the building to taste, designing new structures and celebrating the epiphany of the university in a globally connected academia. Whereas the first decade was the period of infancy and taking of the first steps with their concomitant rising and falling, this second decade is the period of adolescence and adulthood that will be marked by youthful adventurism, clarity, virility and breathtaking speed. Godfrey Okoye University enters its second decade with such epistemic certainty and a bag full of experience. I therefore welcome you to this new, second decade of one of the fastest growing private universities in Nigeria.

My dear matriculating students, you are being admitted as the first set of the second decade of Godfrey Okoye University. You are therefore the pioneer students of the second decade of GO University. You are certainly a unique set. Your admission is happening at a time when Godfrey Okoye University is celebrating both its adolescence and adulthood. Interestingly some of you saw the occasion that marked the end of the first decade, which attracted all categories of human beings from Nigeria and outside Nigeria, including the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, the Papal Nuncio, two former foreign affairs and finance ministers of Austria, bishops, innumerable priests and reverend sisters scholars of different fields of studies, governors, top government officials, and a mammoth crowd. In other words, some of you really witnessed the transition from the first decade to this new one. This new phase will mark the full development of the main campus of the university at Ugwuomu Nike. Having tried our first steps on this Thinker's Corner Campus of our university, GO

University is now racing like Usain Bolt to its Ugwuomu main campus without any fear of falling or faltering.

With the construction of the GO Uni-European Industrial Park which begins in earnest in April, our main campus will be the hub of many European companies, which will offer you the opportunity of continuous entrepreneurial training while you are studying here. It is the plan of GO University not only to make you employable by the time you graduate but also to offer as many of you as possible employment opportunities in the different industries that will be domiciled at Godfrey Okoye University.

For the last two years our university has embarked on a project called STEP, which aims at training students in different entrepreneurial skills. The STEP, which has increased the employability of our graduates, will be transformed by the new College of Practical Skills and Start-up Projects, which is being constructed at the Ugwuomu Nike campus of our university for the training of our students and graduates in different areas and providing start-up funds for them to start their businesses or companies. This year the Austrian Prime Minister, Mr. Sebastian Kurz, will visit our university for the official commissioning of these projects.

My dear matriculating students, you have chosen to study at a university which will teach and train you so well that you will easily find jobs after your studies. This university is interested in your life today and tomorrow. Be conscious of this always!

You have come to a university that offers you the opportunity to travel to different countries of the world, especially Europe and America. The exposure programmes of Godfrey Okoye University involves travelling to our partner universities for a period, ranging from a few weeks to a semester. Most of those who have participated in these visits to our partner universities have got scholarships to study further in European or American universities after their graduation. This year four of them that travelled to Austria as students for a joint workshop at Kepler University in Austria have been offered admission on full scholarship by the Technical University of Cologne, Germany. I hope you will be able to participate in these exposure programmes outside Nigeria. This year a good number of our students (including our law students) will be travelling to Austria, Germany, the UK and the USA.

Furthermore, the exposure programmes of our university have received fresh wings with my election two weeks ago as an executive member of the six-member Board of the Austrian-African Uninet, an association of selected African universities and Austrian universities for the promotion of joint research and exchange of students and scholars. My duty is to represent

universities and institutions in Nigeria and West Africa. With this position you will expect that GO University will enjoy a lot of visibility and opportunities in European countries.

My dear matriculating students, what you need here is focus as well as discipline. A student of GO has a lot of opportunities to excel in life. GO University will give you the wings to fly. Are you ready to fly?

You must ensure that you remain disciplined. This is the tool you need to succeed at university. It is a choice (as Robert Frost in his famous poem on two roads indicates) that will make all the difference. I like this reflection on discipline by a young mind:

*As I sat dreaming about my chances of success
I stumbled upon a topic that could lead me to the crest
A topic my teacher was bent on making me learn
So that could, with ease let success be churned...
Discipline is what my teacher stressed on...
A word that could let me make up for the time that was gone
Be it in academic or sports or any other field...
There are countless benefits a confident mind could yield...
A confident mind is the product of disciplined approach...
That, through months of hand work, let the mind be coached...
Discipline in school plays an important role
In turning us into responsible citizens on the whole...
Discipline at home makes our parents shower on us praise.
Relieved they are to see that there is no need to mend our ways
Indeed, discipline and obedience often go together...
They help us to reach out to success in times of bad weather.
I now realize why my teacher scolds us for being naughty
If we are disciplined now, we shall be successful before forty.
Today, I am trying to be disciplined in each and every step.*

*Come tomorrow, I shall thank my teachers for turning me into the best.
(By **K.A.Manasa** from India)*

To discipline you must add prayers. You are in God's own university, where prayer is the heartbeat of academia. Praying has brought innumerable blessings to us as a university. Prayer has made us the best private university in the South East. Prayer has made GO University one of the most beloved universities in Nigeria. Prayer has kept us free from cultism and other criminal activities seen in many universities in Nigeria. To be a student of GO is to be prayerful, hardworking and disciplined. Make sure that you do not miss the hours of common prayers.

As you enter Godfrey Okoye University, you will be placed under the care of a mentor. Students who work with their mentors are known to excel in character and learning at GO. You must be open and sincere with your mentor. Your mentor represents you parents on campus, stands in loco parentis. Without working with your mentor you will have tremendous challenges on campus and will not get any mentorship clearance in your final year, a requirement for graduation.

Furthermore, since you are pioneers of the second decade, I pray that your work will contribute to the unstoppable narrative of success of GO University. I pray that the best brains Nigeria has ever seen will come from your set. I pray that the greatest leaders of our nation will come from your set. I pray that the greatest scientists of our time will come from your set. I pray that the greatest business men and women and managers of this century will come from your set. I pray that the greatest lawyers, media practitioners, and other professionals of our century will come from your set. I ask God to bless you today. I ask God to bless you tomorrow. I ask God to bless you all the days of your life!

Finally, dear parents and guardians, I thank you for choosing Godfrey Okoye University for your children. You have made the best choice for them. This university will help you realize your dreams and aspirations for your child or ward. We will ensure that they are found worthy in character and learning by the time they graduate. Here we not only score their intellectual performance but also carry out continuously character assessment. We will not hesitate to invite you if your child's character falls below the average. Also please support your child or ward in one of the exposure programmes outside Nigeria. It may not be cheap. **But ignorance is more expensive than anything you can ever imagine in this world.** I urge you to pay their fees directly to the university and on time to avoid missing of exams. The university senate has approved an assessment that takes place a day after reopening, which has ten marks. If you child does not return the day the university reopens, he or she loses ten marks and scores low in character. Please help us to get the best out of your child or ward. God bless you!

I will not conclude this speech without thanking our academic and administrative staff for their perseverance and hard work, which is the reason why GO University is what it is today! God bless you all!

Rev. Fr. Prof. Christian Anieke
Vice Chancellor