



# **The Infant Prodigy and Its Steps Towards Its Beautiful Home:**

**The Vice Chancellor's Speech on the  
8th Foundation Day of  
GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY**



*Rev. Fr. Prof. Christian Anieke*

**Friday, 20 October 2017**

## Protocol

On behalf of the senate, staff and students of our great university, GO Uni, the Catholic University on the go, I welcome you all to this great occasion of the celebration of eight years of Godfrey Okoye University. Your presence today reveals clearly your appreciation of our university. I welcome particularly the Obi of Onitsha, His Royal Majesty, Obi Nnaemeka Alfred Ugochukwu Achebe, Agbogidi, who, in spite of his tight schedules, accepted to deliver the Foundation Day Lecture. God bless you Agbogidi!

As I reflected on this Foundation Day, a poem I wrote sometime this year broke through the seemingly secure fence of my mind like a rat smoked out of its hole by young hunters:

*My Beloved GO Uni*

*Today sitting in my office I admire your incandescent beauty  
I gaze at your broad chest and watery waist  
Ringed by long flowing green kaftan  
An orchestra of birds and bats playing for you.*

*Today sitting in my office I mediate on your two liquid hands  
Dancing hands of variegated complexions and shapes  
With a melting heart I eavesdrop to catch the clapping of your hands  
Your liquid music sipping through my veins: soft and soothing.*

*Today sitting in my office I watch fat parading cows  
Out of fear or excitement they break into trumpeting  
Necks bent and feet thudding in perfect accompaniment  
With an army of flies and insects dancing in circles and labyrinths.*

*Today sitting in my office I glare at a green parade of trees  
Trees yet unrecorded by biologists and researchers  
I gawk at plants of all colours: blue, red, yellow, white, gold, orange  
And fascinating shapes: snaked-shaped, tortoise-shaped, grass-cutter shaped.*

*Today sitting in my office I muse on your beauty  
And today I have fallen in love with you again.*

Anybody who knows our university well will quickly realize that the images in this poem have their place of nativity at the Ugwuomu Campus of our university. These images are escapees from a mind immersed in ecstatic

feelings about the spectacle of the unfailing steps of the infant prodigy (Godfrey Okoye University) towards its home: Ugwuomu-Nike.

Ladies and gentlemen, this university, which celebrates eight years of its existence today is taking a giant step towards its Ugwuomu Campus. In the last eight years the child has grown with such a stupendous speed and infectious candor that can only be described as miraculous. It is indeed a miracle that a university that started with just two faculties has got three additional faculties (including the Faculty of Law) and a School of Postgraduate Studies within just eight years of its earthly existence. It is a miracle that a university that started with 215 students now has close to three thousand students. It is a miracle that a university as young as Godfrey Okoye University now has its students all over the world, working or studying, many on scholarships running into thousands of dollars. It is a miracle that a university as young as Godfrey Okoye University is the most famous Nigerian university in the German-speaking world. Isn't it a miracle that this university without any TETFUND or government assistance (state or federal) has continued to expand beyond human imagination and pay the salaries of its 570 members of staff? It is indeed a miracle that such a young university has given so many scholarships to Nigerians including 30 persons from the Northern states of Nigeria, and doing so without any government assistance. It is indeed a miracle that our young GO Uni Radio 106.9fm is rated the best campus radio in Nigeria. Very soon we will get our licence to run our campus television, which will certainly be the best campus television station in Nigeria. Finally, isn't it a miracle that we have the best university campus at Ugwuomu-Nike with our two beautiful lakes and indescribable landscape?

Because of the irresistible beauty of the Ugwuomu Campus, the university can no longer wait to move in that direction. Having reached the age of eight, Godfrey Okoye University is set to move to its beautiful home at Ugwuomu. The rare trees, birds, lakes, confluence of two rivers and blissful serenity are too attractive to resist. The Ugwuomu Campus of our university is the home of variegated trees and animals undisturbed by human madness called modern civilization. This explains why the university community will find in it the best environment for research and innovative breakthroughs.

Our Campus at Ugwuomu Nike will be a celebration of environmental consciousness and friendliness. We have signed an MoU with a Chinese company for the design and development of the Campus in such a way that it will become a centre of aesthetic excellence, with the biggest international conference centre in Nigeria overlooking our beautiful lake. Our Ugwuomu Campus will reveal human ingenuity, creativity and artistry. It will be a 21st century university in the real sense of the word.

On its Foundation Day Godfrey Okoye University expresses its gratitude to those who have continued to be the cornerstone of its robust foundation: the

Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Enugu, Most Rev. Dr. C.V.C. Onaga with his Diocesan Curia, the Emeritus Bishop of Enugu, Most Rev. Dr. Anthony O. Gbuji, Justice Anthony Aniagolu, Prof. Julius Onah, Prof. Joseph Ikechukwu Chidobem, Prof. Bartho Okolo and members of the Board of Trustees, and Prof. Christian Nwachukwu Okeke with members of the Governing Council. The university remembers all its friends in Austria, Germany and many other countries of the world. It waves its blessed hands to many friends in Nigeria. Godfrey Okoye University thanks the CWO, CMO and Enugu Deanery priests for different projects embarked upon at Ugwuomu. GO Uni thanks members of the armed forces of Nigeria, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps and the press for being good partners and friends of the university. Members of GO Uni Alumni Association and our beloved Parents Forum also receive the gratitude of Godfrey Okoye University on this beautiful day.

On this Foundation Day Godfrey Okoye University calls on all its friends and well-wishers to persuade the state government to construct the Ugwuomu road, which has witnessed more unfulfilled promises than any other project in Enugu State. Our university has done so much for Enugu State through the employment and education of Ndi Enugu. The sweet breezes of its reputation for a sound academic and moral life are also a very strong factor in the socio-economic life and progress of our state.

Finally, it is a day to recommit ourselves to the philosophy, mission and vision of the university. Our all-time question ‘Where is the evidence?’ must preoccupy our minds and provide a strong motivation for our academic pursuits. Our PG School must provide answers and solutions to the myriads of questions and problems of society. Our programme of mentoring our students must help them to ask and answer our question in their research and academic work. Our understanding of education as an apprenticeship must continue to help students to answer our all-time question as they learn from experienced members of their professional fields.

Let us then join hands together in building a formidable university as GO Uni moves gradually to its beautiful home at Ugwuomu-Nike! Thanks and God bless you all!

Rev. Fr. Prof. Dr. Christian Anieke, Eb.  
(Mitterkirchen, Austria)

**Vice Chancellor**