

Vice Chancellor's Speech on the Occasion of the Lying-in-state of Prof. Julius Onah

3/9/2015

Prof. Julius Onah!

Okosisi!

The Chairman of Planning and Implementation Committee of GO Uni!

Foundation member of GO Uni BoT!

NUC distinguished professor!

Professor of Marketing in Godfrey Okoye University!

My dear friend!

I salute you!

I can't believe I'll call you these names without seeing your lovely smiles and your dimpled face. I can't believe it.

Since my first encounter with you in 2007 you have left a deep impression in me which can never be diminished by any human or spiritual force. I recall vividly your reaction when I mentioned my intention to go to the NUC to obtain an application form for our university. Your voice on telephone was so reassuring and motivating. When I met you I was convinced that you were a man I would work with for the realization of the new university project. After my explanation of the project you called Prof. Julius Okojie and cracked jokes with him, calling him Junior Julius, thus opening his heart to welcome us. And he indeed welcomed us when we got to Abuja. Your friendship with Okojie and the jokes you cracked with him paved the way for a smooth ride in the long journey of getting a university licence.

When we formed the Board of Trustees, it was clear to me that there couldn't be a better Chairman than the one who was part of the very beginning of the project. You gladly accepted the offer of Chairman and worked assiduously and cooperatively with the other members to actualize our dream of having a new

university. You trusted me and I trusted you. And we worked together in all our plans and actions. I was enriched by your ideas and you were happy with my willingness to provide the funds needed for the big project.

I recall vividly your joy when I called you to inform you that we had received our licence. You were overjoyed! For you getting the licence was one thing; getting the university to hit the ground running another. You continued to work, to encourage and to pray for the success of the new university. In fact I can say, without any fear of contradiction, Prof. Julius Onah, there are few persons who love our university the way you did. A day could hardly pass without your mentioning Godfrey Okoye University. Nobody came in contact with you without hearing your desire to see the university grow. Even when you lost your beloved wife, the cloud of grief never dimmed your interest in Godfrey Okoye University. You would end most of discussions with some remarks about GO University.

I saw another unforgettable side of you when Architect Odumodu, your friend and a member of the Planning and Implementation Committee, died. You invited us during our BoT meeting to accompany you to celebrate a mass for him in his house. You organized the whole event and ensured that everything was put in place before the mass. After the mass, I invited you to speak. I will never forget the tears you shed as you tried to recall the life of your friend. Your sorrow was palpable. Your tears, heart-rending. And we all wept as we tried to console you.

Prof. Julius Onah, you are singular! You touched many lives on earth. I'll remain grateful to you. And Godfrey Okoye University owes you eternally its gratitude. Go in peace my dear friend and mentor! You will live forever in my heart! And in the heart of GO Uni! Bye...