

**ADDRESS TO PARENTS' FORUM BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, CALEB UNIVERSITY, IMOTA, LAGOS STATE
ON FRIDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2011**

Dear Parents,

I welcome you all to the third Parents' Forum of Caleb University and the second since I assumed duty as Vice-Chancellor on October 18, 2010. You will recall that this is the second forum in 2011, the first having held on January 12.

For the Record

Caleb University was licensed in 2007 and commenced lectures at the take-off site at Magodo, Lagos on January 21, 2008, though the formal opening took place on January 7, 2008. The University relocated to this permanent site on 23 November 2009, two years and a month ago.

We have completed four uninterrupted academic sessions and graduated the first set of students in 2010/11. From an initial enrolment of 156, our current student population stands at a little under 1000. All of our twelve degree programmes scaled through accreditation by the NUC in 2010. Unlike several other Universities, we had no single denied accreditation. Two of our programmes, Accounting and Architecture, have also obtained full professional accreditation for four and three years, respectively. Caleb University is fully compliant with the requirements of all regulatory bodies – JAMB, NUC and the professional bodies –and we are not in default in terms of the status of any of our programmes. We have recruited and retained quality staff in all our programmes, including one of the ten Nigerians with a PhD in Quantity Surveying and another with a PhD in Architecture. In the meantime, our substantive Registrar, Mrs Bamidele Awere, who was introduced to the Forum in January and the University's first substantive Librarian, who is also the National Chairman of the Nigerian Library Association, Mr. A.T. Agboola, have assumed duty. Since January 2011, we have migrated to the Federal Government salary scale for all categories of staff, though this has imposed a heavy burden on our finances. But it has made us competitive in the cut-throat competition for quality teaching staff. Dr. Chuma Okoro, a Senior Lecturer in the College of Pure and Applied Sciences (COPAS), spent several months in 2011 as a research fellow at the University of Calgary, Canada on the joint sponsorship of the University and three major transnational oil companies. We have added two new programmes, Political Science and International Relations, to our repertoire. A major initiative in our outreach to the community is the launch of the HND-to-Degree conversion and other part-time programmes, which will take off in the new year. We have also resuscitated our Foundation Programme, as is being done at many other

Nigerian Universities. We were the first and so far the only Nigerian University to send students' results to parents/guardians by text message and e-mail. As you can see, we are making steady progress in improving our physical infrastructure. As we announced in January, we did hold the Foundation Day Lecture delivered by Professor J.K. Olupona, NNOM of Harvard University on January 21, 2011, a highly successful event. In May, we organized the equally successful Idowu Sobowale International Conference on 150+ Years of Journalism in Nigeria. As was canvassed during the previous Parents Forum, our catering services have been outsourced to Tantalizers PLC, which opened for business in October 2011, when we resumed for the new academic session. I am glad to report that ECOBANK PLC is now on campus to satisfy a long-felt need of our students and parents for on-campus banking services.

We glorify our ever-faithful God, the Lord of Lords and the King of Glory, for these accomplishments and acknowledge the immense contributions of the Proprietor and Chancellor, Prince Ola Adebogun, PhD, the Chairman, Dr. Christopher Kolade, and Members of the Board of Trustees, the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council, Prof. 'Nimbe Adedipe, Members of the Governing Council, my predecessors in office, Management, Staff, Students and, of course, our supportive Parents, for making these things possible. I trust that we shall attain greater heights by working together and with God.

Constraints and Possibilities

As might be expected, we have faced challenges in the course of the year. Our adoption of the national University wage package has saddled us with a huge financial responsibility. But we have remained competitive in recruiting and retaining staff, expanding teaching and other facilities, ensuring regular power supply (via diesel-powered generators), and upgrading our hostel facilities. We have also provided campus accommodation to meet the demand of high-calibre staff that we are head-hunting. As can be seen we are working on the main access road, work on which will resume as soon as students vacate the campus for the Christmas break. The road will, hopefully, be ready for resumption and Convocation in January.

We hope that our friends, particularly, our ever-supportive parents, will assist in securing endowments, scholarships, bequests and grants for our staff and students. All endowments will be duly acknowledged and donated buildings or facilities will be named after the donors, if requested.

Moreover, I urge all of us to make a greater commitment to monitoring the spiritual and academic progress of our wards. We have had challenges of students taking their exeat on false premises, or overstaying their exeat by as many as two weeks! We have had cases of examination and miscellaneous

misconduct, and we implore parents and guardians to help in arresting such unbecoming practices. I would like to encourage you to regularly telephone or physically visit the campus to investigate or clarify issues.

In all, we solicit your support as stakeholders in this great enterprise of raising leaders for our country. As our people say, while there is only one set of biological parents, the entire community is sociologically responsible for the upbringing of children and young adults. The challenge is for everyone to resolve to be good role models.

Forthcoming Event: Maiden Convocation

Before I conclude this address, permit me to give advance notice of our maiden Convocation on January 21, 2012. It will be preceded by several activities, such as the press briefing and Convocation Lecture. The occasion will also witness the formal installation of the Chancellor and the conferment of Honorary Doctorate degrees on deserving persons. I wish to take this opportunity to urge parents to endow prizes in any discipline or to commemorate any loved ones in the promotion of excellence in character and learning at Caleb University. They can also donate books and equipment to our libraries, workshops and studios. Every bequest will be thankfully acknowledged.

Conclusion

Finally, I thank you once again for sparing time to be here and count on your understanding and unstinting support. Please spare some time to tour the campus and to ask questions on any matter of interest. Here's wishing you safe journey to your respective destinations, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

God bless.

Professor Ayodeji O. OLUKOJU

Fellow, Nigerian Academy of Letters

Vice-Chancellor

16 December 2011